

Imperium - Communication

Communication between players of Imperium is an integral part of the game. In some Imperium games it may be possible to use "pseudonyms" for your player name to enhance the feel of the game or to hide who a player really is. If the deity is allowing players to use pseudonyms, you might want to pick out a name that sounds appropriate for the particular race you choose to be. Some deities using Imperium as a "door" in a BBS may not allow you to choose your own name, and will instead assign you the name used by the BBS itself.

Basically in Imperium there can be communication relating to the game either within Imperium itself, or in some outside area (such as a BBS that hosts the Imperium game). When communication takes place outside of Imperium, it is suggested that there be a "communal" area in which general Imperium-related questions can be answered.

Inside Imperium itself there are 4 ways to communicate with other players. The most common method is with "telegrams". You can send telegrams to one or more players at a time, and the telegrams will be noted in the newspaper. If a player has telegrams waiting (new or old) they will be told when they log in, or immediately if they happen to be online when the telegram arrives. You can send telegrams via the "telegram" command, and you can read them with the "read" command.

When you send a telegram you will be put into one of two types of text editors. Either the built-in Imperium text editor, a very simple line-oriented text editor, or the text editor of your choice (if you used the "editor" command-line option when starting ConImp). Note that if you are accessing Imperium via a BBS or through a menu, you may not have a choice as to which editor you can use (for security reasons).

Note:

At the present time the built-in editor is based on the Amiga Empire editor, and so an excerpt from the Empire manual follows. In the near future there will be a new, fuller-featured editor, as soon as time permits it's integration into the Imperium library.

-----*(from the Amiga Empire manual by Chris Gray)*

You will see the prompt:

```
Enter text of telegram (max 1920 chars) . End with . :
1:
```

The character limit is a result of the way telegrams are implemented via messages to the Imperium server program. Initially, you will be just adding lines to the telegram. The prompt will be the number of the line that is to be typed. Blank lines are allowed. To end the input phase, simply type a line consisting only of a period ('.'). At that point, you will be presented with the prompt:

```
Send, List, Replace, Delete, Insert, Cancel?
```

Hitting a return is equivalent to 'Send'. Only the first letter of the option is needed. Option 'Send' will transmit the telegram as is to the recipient. Option 'List' will list out the body of the telegram, complete with line numbers. Option 'Replace' allows you to replace a single occurrence of a string in any line of the telegram. For example, if the telegram contains (via the 'List' option):

```
1: Hello there god!
2:
3: Could you be nice to a poor fool and guve me some more energy
4: in my ship #34?
5:
6: Thanks .
```

and you want to change the 'guve' in line 3 to a 'give', you could type:

```
replace 3 /guve/give/
```

to make the change. You will get the prompt again, and must do another 'List' to see the changed telegram. You could also enter the above as:

```
r3*guve*give*
```

since 'r' is sufficient for 'replace', the spaces are not needed, and any string separator character can be used.

The 'Delete' command allows you to delete any of the lines in the telegram. Simply type 'delete' (or just a 'd'), followed by the number of the line to be deleted. The 'Insert' command allows you to insert new lines into the telegram. Type 'insert' or 'i', followed by the number of the line to insert after. If you want to insert before the first line, use line number 0. Whatever text you type after the 'insert' command is added as the new line. The final option, 'Cancel', allows you to choose to not send the telegram at all.

-----*(end of excerpt)*

Note:

The built-in editor "knows" how long your telegram/message can be, and will warn you when you are getting near the end. When/if you use an external editor it does NOT know how long a message can be, and so can not warn you. You may enter a message as long as you like, but only the first 1900 bytes or so will actually appear in the message. If you are REALLY trying to send more than that, you should most likely be exchanging data via standard Unix email.

Most of the telegrams you will receive will not be from other players or the deity, but will be sent automatically by Imperium itself. These will be generated in many different situations, for instance, a ship you own is attacked or scanned, a planet you own is attacked or scanned, repayments on a loan by another player, etc. These telegrams are usually short, or just 1 line, and will be indicated as "anonymous".

Additionally you may turn on a flag which instructs Imperium to send you real-time messages, telegrams, or both, if you happen to be logged in when the event that generates the message occurs. The default is a real-time message (explained later) only, but this can be changed via the "change" command.

You may send copies of a telegram to more than one player at a time if the person hosting the game allows it. To send a telegram to ALL players use "*" as the player name. To send a telegram only to players ALLIED to you send it to "&". To send a telegram only to players who are neutral to you send it to "@". And to send a telegram to players who are at war with you send it to "!".

When you use the "read" command to review your telegrams, you will see each telegram in the order in which it was generated. If the telegram was not automatically generated (anonymous), you will be given a chance to reply to it. If you wish to reply to it, you will be placed into the Imperium editor and can compose your message just as if you used the "telegram" command. After the last telegram has been displayed you will be asked if you wish to delete them. If you delete them they will be erased, if not they will be marked as "old" telegrams, and will appear before any new telegrams when you use the "read" command. There is no way to delete specific telegrams.

The most used method of communication, although not usually for player-player discussions, is the newspaper. The "newspaper" is broken down into 4 sections, the first three of which are generated automatically by Imperium, and the last contains items created by players directly. Additionally the deity may create a short message which appears before section 1, and is usually used to spread information to all players. Above section 1 "headlines" may appear which summarize activity over the last three days (by default), if it was interesting. On the first three pages if an item occurs several times in a row it will only be include a count of the number of times it occurred, and only be listed once.

Description of sections:

1. Mainly military news
2. Misc. things like plague outbreaks, telegrams, etc.
3. Sales, loans, and other financial info

4. Player-generated items such as want ads, propaganda, etc. created with the propaganda command.

You can read the newspaper with the "newspaper" command. You can also specify a number of 'days' (48 Imperium Time Units (usually a half hour)) to be displayed and only news events that far back will be displayed.

If you only wish to see the summary "headlines" that appear before section 1, you can use the "headline" command, which also accepts an optional 'day' count.

Another way to communicate with other players is the "message" command. This allows you to send a message to another player who is also online at the same time as you. As soon as the player finishes another command, presses <return> at the "Command:" prompt, or waits the timeout length in "chat" mode (described below), the message will appear with the name of the player who sent it.

There are two ways to send a message with the "message" command. The first is to type the message and the command on the same line, for example:

```
mess god Yikes! I have no energy in ship #92 and it's being attacked!
```

The other method is to just specify the player name on the command line and create the message as if it was a telegram.

If the player should happen to log off before you complete your message you will be given a chance to send it to them as a telegram instead. Note that real-time messages do NOT show up on the newspaper.

The last method of player-player communication is the "chat" command. This works much like the "CB" mode on many major networks like CompuServe, with the exception that "channels" are not (currently) supported. When you enter chat mode you will be told which players are already in chat mode, and they will be told that you have entered as well.

When you are in chat mode any lines that you type and send by hitting <enter> that are not blank will be sent to all the other players in chat mode, prefixed by the name of the player who sent them. You can exit chat mode by typing "." on a line by itself and pressing <enter>.

You can see which players are in chat mode by using the "on" option of the "players" command. If a player is in chat mode, they will have a "<" after their player number.

Chatting is public - make sure that people who are in chat mode are people you want to receive what you type!

You will receive chat lines from other players every time you press enter (if there are any), or about every 1-2 seconds if you leave the line blank (if the client the deity is using supports this feature (the standard Unix client does)).