Dialog and Menu Editor

The Dialog Editor

The Menu Editor

The Palette Editor

NEW dialog - Creating a New Application Resource File

To create a new file using the Dialog and Menu editor, select the NEW function from the menu *File* and then choose one of the options from the list box of the dialog which appears.

Dialog

Palette

Pull-down Menu

OPEN dialog - Opening Existing Files

An existing palette, pull-down menu or dialog file can be opened by selecting the OPEN function from the menu *File*.

Using the options available in the file type list, find the **.mnu**, **.mnp**, or **.dlg** file format and select the file which you wish to open. Confirm your selection with OK. Before altering a standard file we suggest that you always make a backup copy.

SAVE AS dialog

The **Save As** function allows the file to be saved under any valid drive and directory path.

The file extension (**.mnu**, **.mnp**, or **.dlg**) is automatically added to the file name before saving takes place.

Dialog Editor: Create, Open, Name and Rename Dialogs

When either creating a new, or opening an existing dialog window, this dialog window can be used to create, open, name or rename the specific dialog.

The Symbol Bar:

New dialog

 To create a new dialog in the form of a window click this symbol.

Open dialog

 With existing files, a list of the available dialogs will be shown in the selection area of the window. Check the file which you want to open and confirm your selection with *Open dialog*.

Rename dialog

 By clicking this symbol a further dialog window will be opened. Here you will be able to allocate individual dialog names or change existing ones.
Enter the designated name into the NAME input field. Any illegal names will be displayed in the Forbidden Name window below, these names have already been allocated and cannot be reused.

The Dialog Editor

The Menu and Dialog Editor enables you to create and edit dialog boxes. These can be called up at predefined times or during specific actions.

Dialogs can contain up to 256 control elements which direct certain actions. Some of these actions are described below.

- Input and Output of information
- Activation and deactivation of options
- Set or amend parameters
- Selection of elements (files, variables, etc.)

Dialog files are integrated into the application with the aid of program interfaces.

Dialog File Type

Dialog files are stored using the **.dlg** file extension. These files can contain numerous Dialogs, all of which can be displayed in the application when specific criterion are called up or met.

Create a New Dialog File

Create, Open, Name and Rename Dialogs

Editing Dialogs

Dialog Control Elements

Control Element Layout and Alignment

Dialog Editor: Control Elements

Dialog Editor: Dialog Element Properties

It is essential that an element has been placed within the dialog window before the editing window can be opened. To mark or select the element, click it with the mouse pointer. Either open the properties window using the properties option in the Elements, Pull-down menu, press the F7 function key, or double click the required element.

A number of definable properties and attributes can be found in almost all control elements.For this reason they will be summarized together

Control Name

The control name is the unique identification given to a control element. This name is used as a reference between the program code and the control element. Accessing the dialog element by its name will cause the appropriate event routines to be called up, inputs to be read, or specific entries to be output.

A control name may consist of up to 32 characters. Please note that a distinction is made between upper and lower case. Control names which have been used previously in the same dialog will be listed in the input and selection window and cannot be reused.

Caption

The caption entry is used to allocate a heading or title. This will be displayed in, or on the control element.

Bitmap action buttons (see below) contain a graphical representation instead of a text header.

Position/Size

These entries, measured in dialog units, define the X and Y co-ordinates of the top left hand corner of the control element as well as its height and width.

General Attributes

Visible

This determines whether a control element should be visible or hidden as a default.

Dependent on certain actions (calling up of specific commands, definition of variables, clicking certain buttons) this attribute could change status during program execution. The element will then change from visible to invisible or v.v.

Unavailable

Sets a default as to whether the element can be accessed, or if it is to remain inactive. Inactive elements cannot be selected and are displayed accordingly.

Dependent on certain actions (calling up of specific commands, definition of variables, clicking certain buttons) this attribute could change status during program execution. The element will then change from available to unavailable or v.v.

For example, the editing functions of a dialog box could remain unavailable as long as the corresponding drawing does not contain at least one element.

Tab

Specifies whether the control element can be accessed with the TAB key.

In most control elements this attribute is set to active. This does not, however, apply to Radio buttons, static elements or the scroll bar. All elements can be selected using the mouse pointer, or as part of a group with the cursor direction keys.

The sequence in which the elements are selected, or activated using the TAB key is usually directly related to the order in which the elements where inserted into the dialog box. This order can be amended if required.

The element sequence option can be found in the DIALOG, Pull-down menu, or in the Alignment Palette. The set sequence can be altered by changing the allocated reference number.

Group

This attribute allows you to group together a number of separate elements. The first element in the group must be activated with the group attribute. The group will include all elements up until the point at which the next group attribute is activated. The sequence can be defined by using the method described above.

The individual elements contained within a group can be selected using the cursor direction keys. The next group, however, can only be accessed with the TAB key, or mouse pointer.

Only one button within a group can be activated at any one time.

Frame

The frame attribute, when selected, will draw a frame around the control element. Some elements (e.g. the OK standard action button, HELP, CANCEL) have a default frame which cannot be deactivated.

Textattribute

These attributes are used in

- Control elements, displaying a variable text caption.

  The text can either be aligned to the left, or to the right of the control element symbol.

- Control elements used to enter or output text.

  In this case, both the text alignment and character case can be altered.

Property: Predefined Button

Some control element types can be set to reflect a predefined option. This has the effect of setting the control element to active, as soon as the dialog window is opened.

In dialog windows which contain default or standard values it is usual that the OK button is set up as a predefined button. In this case you will only need to press ENTER to confirm the selections.

This property can only be allocated once within a single dialog window.

Dialog Editor: Editing Dialogs

The application will automatically open a dialog editing widow each time a dialog is selected. As with all Windows interfaces, the screen can be maximized to fill the screen or minimized down to a symbol.

The dialog editing window is used to created and design the dialog window. At this stage you may use the typical commands contained in the File, (e.g. Open, Save, Close) Edit, (Cut, Copy, Paste, Delete) and Window, Pull-down menus.

Specialized commands which may be used to edit the window or insert and format control elements can be found in the other Pull-down menus. A large number of the commands can also be activated using the tools or formatting Palettes.

Insertion of a Control Element.

The insertion and positioning of control elements is carried out in two steps:

1. Selection of the control element type
2. Positioning the control element within the dialog window

Control Element Selection

Two options are available by which a control element type can be selected.

1. Select the *Controls* option from the menu bar. This will cause a pull-down menu containing the various element types to appear. An arrow behind the element type indicates that a further sub menu is available in which other type specifications can be made.

   Please note that this pull-down menu will only be displayed if a dialog window has already been opened.

2. Select the required element type with the mouse pointer or cursor direction keys
   The Dialog Editor contains a tool Palette to select the control element type. This palette is unveiled by selecting the *View* menu option or by pressing the F8 function key. With the aid of the mouse, the Palette can be moved to any position on the screen.

   By moving the cursor onto the tool Palette elements, you will cause a brief description of each button to appear in the status line.

   To select a specific control element type just click the corresponding button.

Placing a Control

Once a control element has been selected, the cursor display will change from an arrow to a cross and a symbolic representation of the control element will appear.

Move the cursor to the position at which you wish to insert the element and click the left mouse button. The control element will then be positioned using the cursor cross as a reference point.

Note: The program offers a number of versatile functions which enable you to place the elements directly below one another, or at a particular reference position within the window. These functions are introduced and explained in a later section.

Mouse Mouse and Keyboard Allocations

Work in the dialog editing window can be made more effective by adhering to the following mouse control and function keys instructions.

Clicking the left mouse button ...	**... will:**

... on a control element ...	
CLICK	Select a control element, de-select all previous control elements.
DOUBLECLICK	Open the Properties window of the corresponding control element.
SHIFT + CLICK	Deselect the control element, if it had be previously selected. The control element will be added to those already selected. (Multi-selection). Note: The element orientation is based on position of the last selected element.
CLICK + DRAG	The control element will be relocated within the dialog. By keepingthe STRG key pressed at the time of releasing the mouse key, you can duplicate the control element or elements.
... onto the border of a control ...	
CLICK + DRAG	Changes the size of the control element.
... on any dialog or empty window (except CAPTION) ...	
CLICK + DRAG	Will select all of the control elements contained within the frame at the time of releasing the mouse key.

Keyboard

F1	Help
F2	Show symbol bar on/off
F3	File: Save As
F4	Show status bar on/off
F7	Shows properties window of the selected control element
F8	Tool Palette on/off
F9	Alignment Palette on/off
F10	Grid on/off
DEL	Deletes the control element from the dialog
TAB	Selects the next control element from the list and deselects the current one.
TAB + SHIFT	Selects the preceding control element from the list and deselects the current one.

Dialog Editor: Dialog Window Properties

The size, position and layout of the dialog window which is to be created or altered is determined in the Window properties dialog.

This dialog window can be opened by:

- Double clicking the window surface, without touching any of the elements contained within the window
- Selecting the Properties function from the Element Pull-down menu
- Pressing the F7 key

Text and numeric values can be allocated to the following properties by using the alpha-numeric input fields and control buttons which govern the activation and deactivation of further options. Switching is possible by clicking the specific control field. A check mark in the control field indicates that the option is active, a blank signifies that it is deactivated.

Caption

Type in the desired heading or title which is to appear at the top of the dialog window. This text will only be shown once the Title bar attribute function has been activated.

Position

Absolute Coordinates

This control button is used to enter the positioning and alignment reference values.

If the *Absolute Coordinates* option is activated, then all further definitions will relate to positions within the full screen area. In this case the (X,Y) window co-ordinates will originate in the top, left hand corner of the screen. Any centered window alignments will be made according to the size of the full screen.

If the *Absolute Coordinates* option is deactivated then centering will be carried out in reference to the position of a superior window. In this case the window positioning co-ordinates will be ignored.

Center of Screen / Window

This option will ensure that the dialog window is placed in the center of the display area, both horizontally and vertically. This reference point will alter depending on whether the Absolute co-ordinate option is set at the full screen or superior window option.

X/Y Coordinates

The coordinates which are measured in dialog units, define the horizontal and vertical origin of the top left hand corner of the dialog window. As above, this is directly related to the absolute coordinate option setting and will either use the top left hand corner of the display area, or the superior window as a reference point.

Attributes

Title Bar / System Menu / Dialog Frame

This will determine whether the dialog window contains a title bar or not. This option must be active if you want the window caption and system menu button to be visible.

Size

The default values for the horizontal and vertical size of a new dialog window are 185, 92. These can of course be overwritten with your personal preferences.

Dialog Editor: Bitmap Buttons

This type of button depicts a **.bmp** file icon designed to mirror the functionality of the button.

Use the file selection window to select a suitable bitmap file. A number of such files are contained with in the application. If required you can use a graphics program or Icon editor to design your own files.

See also:

- Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Action Buttons

Action buttons are control elements which instigate a specific action, i.e. carry out a command or function. There are two different types of action button.

Standard action buttons

These buttons action a predefined function and can be inserted into a dialog window without the need for any further action. Standard action buttons are OK, Cancel and Help.

Freely definable action buttons

These action buttons can be allocated a control name within the program. This name can then be used to call up any command to which the buttons have been cross referenced or linked. The freely definable keys may be allocated a text title, or a graphical representation. (Icon)

Push Button

As opposed to the standard buttons, these buttons can carry a title made up of free flow text. This should mirror the command or function which will be carried out when the button is actuated.

Type in the text into the Caption input field, but remember that the button size will not automatically increase to accept your text.

The title will automatically be centered within the restrictions of the button size.

See also:

- Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Check Box

The Check Box control allows a program option to be switched on or off. Unlike the previous types, it is possible to select or deselect more than one option box from a group.

Apart from the standard properties and attributes, the following settings may also be made:

Button Type

Four possible button types are available, whereby a distinction is made between buttons with two or three selection modes, with or without automatic switching.

-Buttons with two selection modes can only be used to chose an active or inactive state.

- Three button switches allow a third option mode. This third option can be designated to carry out any particular action within the application.
- An automatic switching button will change mode as soon as it is selected.

Selecting non automatic switching will cancel this effect. Switching will only take place in accordance with predefined program steps. The switching operation is merely displayed in the dialog window.

The check boxes can be selected with the cursor keys or the mouse pointer. The switching operation is activated with the space bar or mouse button.

Text Alignment

Choose between having the text displayed to the right (default setting), or to the left of the Check Box.

See also:

Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Combo Box

A combo box links the properties of the list box with those of an input field. By doing so, it offers you the added option of not only being able to select an element, but also add a new element or entry to the list.

The combo box consists of a combination of both a display field and an input field. If activated, a complete list of entries will appear as soon as the open button, which is located at the side of the combo field, is clicked.

An example of a combo box can be seen by selecting the *Save As* command in any typical Windows application.

Apart from the standard properties and attributes, please activate or deactivate the following settings:

Type

This option determines what will be displayed within the combined input and list box.

The *simple* option, dictates that the input and list box is shown to the maximum. The input field will contain the list element which is currently selected.

Unfold will only display the list box if the open symbol located at the side of the input field is clicked.

Unfold (non editable) enables the combo box and displays the selected item from the list, but does not permit you to edit or make a new entry. The listed entries will only be displayed once the open symbol has been clicked.

Scroll

This option dictates whether horizontal and / or vertical scroll bars are to be included in the combo box. Activate or deactivate the appropriate check box.

List Box Entries

These will enable or disable the automatic height reliance option which adjusts the list box to suit the size and alphabetical order of the elements or entries. When deactivated, the list box will always be displayed according to the default size settings.

See also:

- Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Edit Control

The EDIT input field, allows alpha-numeric data to be typed in and processed by the application.

The control element can be defined as a single or multi-line input field and allocated vertical and horizontal scroll bars as necessary.

Apart from the standard properties and attributes, please activate or deactivate the following settings:

Single / Multi-input field

Use the available options to define either single or multi-line input.

Scroll

The horizontal scroll bar function can be assigned to single line input fields.

Multi-line fields can be allocated both a horizontal and / or vertical scroll bar.

In this case, the text will automatically scroll horizontally or vertically as soon as the input text becomes longer than the space available within the field.

Select the appropriate options in the scroll bar group.

Text alignment

The text alignment options are only available for multi-line inputs. The possible options are left alignment, right alignment and centered. Click the desired alignment with the mouse pointer.

Text effects

This option can be used to correct the case of the entered text. E.g. Upper case characters can be altered to lower case and v.v. if so desired.

Maintain highlight

Normally the text within a selected input field is only highlighted as long as the element is active, or being focused on. The NOHIDESEL attribute maintains the highlight effect even after the input focus has moved to another element.

Automatic Horizontal

If the user enters more text than can be displayed in the available space, then this option will automatically scroll or move the text 10 characters horizontally.

Password

The password option will cause every character entered into the input field to be displayed as an asterisks (*). This is useful if you do not want your entries to be seen on the screen, such a when entering a password.

CR Key Evaluation

When activated, this will cause the enter key to act as a carriage return or new line key, rather than as a send or confirmation key.

Read Only

Text within this type of input field can be read, but not edited. This allows you to restrict the situations where information can be entered.

Maximum Character restriction

It is sometimes necessary to restrict the number of characters which can be entered, this functions has a default setting of 0 which allows up to a maximum of 32 KB to be stored.

See also:

Filtered Input Control

Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Group Box

Group frames can be inserted into the dialog window and help create a more logical and clear structure within the dialog window.

These frames help the user to identify which elements are directly related to one another.

Only the standard properties and attribute settings are required for the group frame option.

See also:

- Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Filtered Input Control

The INPUT control allows data of a specific type to be typed in and processed by the application.

The properties and attributes of this control element are very similar to those in the EDIT control. The difference is that the filtered text input can be used to select specific information, whilst ignoring those entries which do not meet the filter criterion.

Information regarding text displays and text properties can be read in the previous section on Input field control elements.

The following selection options can be used when defining input filters:

INT	Integer (2 byte)
WORD	Positive integer (2 byte)
LONG	Integer (4 byte)
DOUBLE LONG	Positive integer (4 byte)
FLOAT	Floating point (basic accuracy)
DOUBLE	Floating point (double accuracy)
LONG DOUBLE	Floating point (very accurate)
TEXT	Free flow text

The filter can be selected from a list containing the standard filter options. This list appears as soon as the open button, located at the side of the FILTER display window, is clicked.

See also:

Edit Control

Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Static Control

A static element (LABEL) is either used to insert a text block and / or a raised surface in a dialog window. This enables you to title” other control elements or raise the surface of a button so as to give it a more textured and predominant look.

Apart from the standard properties and attributes, static elements also include further options to enable different graphical representations and text types within the control element.

Only one of the above options can be selected at any one time.

Frame or Rectangle

Selecting one of these options will insert a frame or rectangle static element. In this case no text will be displayed. Options are available to define the background color of the rectangle, or the color of the frame.

Text

This option sets the available parameters for the text block. Left alignment, left alignment without wrap around, centered or right alignment

No underline

This option deactivates the underline next character” option set with a preceding & symbol. The & symbol will now print normally.

Note: The selection of any one option from the text group will cause the static element color or design settings to be reset.

See also:

- Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Listenfeld

List boxes can display a number of different elements and are generally used for selection purposes. A typical example of a list box is the file selection window which is displayed when using the OPEN command.

Apart from the standard properties and attributes the following settings may also be made:

Scroll Bars

By selecting the appropriate options, it is possible to add either a horizontal or vertical scroll bar to the list box.

The *always display* option has the effect of displaying scroll bars, even thought they may not necessarily be needed. For example, when enough room is available within the list box to display all of the available options.

Extended Selection

When activated, this setting allows more than one element or entry to be selected from the list box. This can be achieved by pressing the Shift key during the selection process.

A prerequisite is that the items are located immediately adjacent to one another in the list.

Multiple Selection

This option is similar to the extended selection, however, it does not require that the items are displayed below one another.

Multiple Columns

Allows the elements or entries to be displayed in more than one column. The entries can then be viewed by using the horizontal scroll function.

Height Reliant

This option automatically selects the required height so that all of the possible options or elements can be viewed at one time. If this parameter is deactivated, the list will open to the dimensions which were defined at the time of its creation.

Sort List

The elements or entries will appear in alphabetical order.

Tabulated (Evaluate TAB)

If active, this function will cause the display to be tabulator sensitive. This allows the elements or entries to be shown in list format.

See also:

Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Radio Button

Radio Buttons serve to switch between a number of predefined options, but only allow one of the available possibilities to be selected.

When a number of button fields are used, these are usually grouped together. Selecting an option from one group, will cause the option which is currently active to be switched off.

Apart from the standard properties and attributes, the following settings may also be made:

Type

Select a button type from the following options.

Auto Switch causes the button to switch between the possible selection modes. At the same time each switch within a specific group will automatically change mode. i.e. selecting one button will automatically deselect all others in the same group.

Disable Switch has no automatic effect. Switching only takes place in accordance with predefined program steps. The switching operation is merely displayed in the dialog window.

Text Alignment

Choose between having the text displayed to the right (default setting), or to the left of the Radio Button.

See also:

Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Slider

Some of the described elements, such as list boxes, combo boxes and input fields can contain scroll bars to enable a specific section of text to be displayed within the window boundaries.

The Scroll control element is designed to display a range of values for selection. Instead of typing in a (numeric) value, you can use the scroll slider to move up or down until the desired figure is reached.

The slider position, as viewed within the scroll bar limitations, can be evaluated by the program and converted to a numeric value. This value could then be made to appear within a combo box display.

To enable this function it is necessary to program the slider range and step parameters into the application. The relevant information on how this is done can be found in the chapter, Programming interfaces for the Application.

The scroll bar properties window, contains the options required to enter the standard properties and attributes.

See also:

Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Image Window Control

An image WINDOW or output field can be inserted into the dialog. This enables messages and graphics to be displayed as required. The window is defined by setting the following standard properties and attributes :

Control name, position and size

Visible, Not available, TAB, Group and frame

See also:

Element Properties

Dialog Editor: Control Element Layout and Alignment

A number of features are available to help you position and align control elements within a dialog window. These features make it easy to achieve excellent results, with a minimum of effort and time investment.

Grid / Capture

The most simple feature is the grid option, this can be activated or deactivated at will during the dialog creation process. The following methods can be used to display the grid.:

- Select the Grid option from the View, Pull-down menu
- Press the F10 function key
- Click the GRID button in the alignment Palette

The -snap to- capture and grid functions allow control elements to be inserted into the dialog and aligned at absolute positions. This ensures that all elements can be aligned on both a horizontal and vertical plain.

The grid parameters and -snap to- capture options can be set in the GRID menu option shown in the OPTIONS, Pull-down window.

The following dialog window will open once this option is selected. Enter the grid spacing values (horizontal / vertical) into the appropriate input fields. The unit of measurement is stated in dialog units (DLE`s). The standard DLE value is four (4). By clicking the default button, you will return both the horizontal and vertical spacing to this standard value.

The capture function can be activated or deactivated by clicking the capture button. A check mark in the control box indicates that the capture function has been activated.

Alignment options

The Dialog and Menu Editor offers a number of different methods by which the control elements can be positioned and aligned, both below one another and in reference to the window itself.

The following results can be obtained by using the positioning and alignment options:

centered horizontally, or vertically in relation to the boarder limitations of the dialog window,

- below one another to the right, upper or lower left alignment,
- standard sizing
- standard spacing

Alignment Palette

The alignment palette can be activated or deactivated by using either the *View* menu option, or by pressing the F9 function key.

The *Alignment* menu offers the added ability of allowing the palette to be displayed in a one, two or three column mode.

The positioning and alignment functions are self explanatory and very easy to use. By moving the cursor onto one of the Palette icons, you will notice that a brief explanation of the button function will be shown in the status line

Testing a Dialog

Both during and after editing a dialog, you are given the option of checking the design, functionality, layout and alignment of your window.

This feature will display the window exactly as it will appear within the application. All switch, selection and input properties can be checked for correct operation.

To call up the test function use either of the following options:

- Select the Test option from the Dialog pull-down menu

- Click the Test button located in the alignment Palette

See also:

Element Selection

Element Selection

Please note that the control elements which you want to position or align, must have been selected or marked prior to the allocation on any alignment parameters.

The easiest way to select a control element is by mouse click.

To select a number of different elements at one time, hold the (shift) key until all elements have been highlighted, or use the mouse pointer to draw a selection frame around the required elements. Further instructions regarding the marking and selection of control elements can be found in the section entitled, Editing window, located at the beginning of this chapter.

Positioning and aligning a number of elements.

Functions which are used to position two or more elements will only become available when the appropriate number of elements have been marked or selected.

Alignment functions which position items below one another, will only work when at least two buttons or windows have been selected. The equal spacing function assumes that at least three elements are present and that they have been marked.

The Palette Editor

Palettes are tool boxes which contain a number of buttons linked to various commands and instructions.

These windows can be placed anywhere on the screen and act as an alternative method of calling up commands, in addition to those already offered by Pull-down menus or direct input.

Thanks to the direct command selection process, palettes offer a very effective method of dealing with frequently used commands or instructions.

Palette Files

Palettes are stored using the **.mnp** file extension identifier.

Palette Editor: Editing Palettes

Allocating a Button Label

It is important to chose a button label which clearly describes the command or instruction which has been allocated to that particular button. This is imperative for efficient use of the Palette. There are two methods of allocating a button label.

- A text entry, i.e. a description of the button (Text Button)
- A graphical representation or symbol (Bitmap Button)

For the functionality of the button, it is irrelevant whether a label is allocated before, or after the button has been assigned to a command.

The allocation of a text label or graphical representation is made by selecting the corresponding radio button located in the **(Palette), Button Properties** dialog window. The active choice is checked with a black dot.

Text Button

- Click the radio switch entitled Text Button, this is shown in the title section of the dialog window.
- Type the desired name into the relevant input field.

The name should of course make clear reference to the instruction or command which will be carried out when the button is selected. In the following example the command DELETE has been shortened to DEL.

Please note that the font size of the text label cannot be changed. Should the allocated label be larger than the button itself, then either shorten the label, or increase the size of the button using the Palette properties option.

Bitmap Button

The allocation of a graphical representation or Icon assumes that a suitable BITMAP format graphic file is available in the program, or that a suitable one has been created using a standard graphics application.

- Click the Bitmap button, located in the caption section.
- Type in the Bitmap file name including the path, or use the file selection window, to help you locate and select the desired BMP file.

Palette Editor: Palette Properties

A new palette must first of all be configured, to do so define the number of rows and columns needed. This process is called allocating the properties to a Palette. As soon as you attempt to create a new Palette, the *Palette Properties* dialog box will appear. If you want to change an existing Palette please use the **Properties** option listed in the *Palette* menu.

In both cases a number of different entries need to be entered into a special dialog window. e.g. the Palette title or name, the number of rows and columns as well as the size of the individual buttons (in pixels). The number of rows and columns entered, will of course dictate the maximum number of buttons available in the Palette.

Finish the Palette properties definition process with OK, or close the dialog with Cancel**.**

Menu- and Palette Editor: Allocating or Selecting a Command

The allocation of a command to the selected button is made using the Command selection and input field, this can be found in the Palette, button properties.

The well versed and experienced user can type the command directly into the input field. The following explanation, however, describes in detail the method by which an individual command can be selected from the command file.

Click the **Command...** button, which is located to the left of the input field. In the following window you will find an input field which is reserved for the command name. Please type in the name and path of the command file.

Alternatively, click the button located to the right of the input field. This will open a file selection window from which you can select and load the command file. The program command file can easily be identified by the **.cmd** file extension identifier. This file is stored in the APPLIC default sub-directory.

Once having loaded the command file, the following dialog window can be used to select the required command.

As commands are usually grouped according to topic, use the Topic selection field to choose the required topic. e.g. File or Edit. Click the downward arrow located next to the selection box. From the list which appears, select the instruction which is to be linked to the chosen button.

In the lower part of the selection window you will find fields for the following parameters:

- the start up command for the selected instruction
- the name of the help file containing the relevant information for the selected instruction.
- the key word used to search the help files
- the status line message entry.

When selecting an instruction from the command file you will notice that in most cases the above information will already have been entered by default. If this is the case you will be unable to amend the entries at this stage of the program. However if you use the instruction input field to type in the name of the instruction directly, you will not only find that you are able to branch to any help file, but also enter a self defined status bar message.

Confirm the instruction selection process with OK, the selection window will close automatically. The name of the chosen instruction, the help file information and the status line message will be entered into the relevant fields of the input and Button properties selection window.

This concludes the procedure needed to link an instruction to a Palette button.

Help / Status Bar Entries

As a matter of default, the keyword and status line input field entries will be displayed as soon as an instruction or function is selected.

Whereas you were not given the option to change the help file or status line entries in the Instruction selection window, it is possible to amend them in the button properties selection and input window.

The relevant dialog fields are located in the help section on the right hand side of the Button properties selection and input window.

To select a different help file, or change the Keyword and Status line entries, place the cursor in the relevant field and type over the existing entries.

Help

This field **Help File** is used to define which help file contains the relevant information for the instruction or function be linked to the button. The help file will be opened as soon as the F1

help function is activated, or the corresponding symbol is selected from the function bar. Enter the name of the help file including the path details into the input field, or open the relevant file selection window and chose a file from the list.

This entry **Keyword** determines which help file topic, relevant to the linked instruction, will be shown when the help function is activated.

Status Bar

By moving the cursor onto any symbol displayed on the program interface, you will notice that a brief description of the symbol will appear in the status line.

Using the Status bar dialog field it is possible to stipulate which message will appear for each group of Palette buttons. As a general rule, the same default entries will be displayed as were visible at the time of selecting the instruction.

In order to change the status bar message, move the cursor to the input field and type over the current entry.

The Menu Editor

The Dialog and Menu Editor enables you to create or alter pull-down menus. These can be embedded into the program using the MENU command. This offers increased flexibility and can either allow additional commands and functions to be incorporated into the menus, enable menu commands and functions to be combined, or alter menus according to your own preferences.

This method is easy to learn and simple to use and combines the effectiveness and clarity of a graphic interface, a fact which also makes this method suitable for less experienced users. One main advantage of using this method is that the results can be seen immediately and as such are easily checked and corrected as necessary.

Experienced users, especially those with programming skills, will be able to create new menus, or redesign existing ones by enlisting the help of a text editor.

Menu Files

Menu files are saved using the **.MNU** file extension. The may be opened, edited and saved using the Dialog and Menu editor. Before altering the standard menu file we suggest that you always make a backup copy.

Creating New Menu Files
Editing Pull-down Menus

Menu Editor: Editing Pull-down Menus

Once having created a new menu file, or opened an existing one, the following two windows become available to the user and allow the pull-down menus to be edited (illustrated below)

- An **Editing window** in which the menu structure can be configured or changed. This option allows existing Pull-down menus, menu points and sub menus to be added, changed or deleted as well as existing ones to be renamed.
- A **Properties window** in which the properties and link references of each menu option can be defined. The current settings of the active window option are displayed in the editing window.

When working with either of the Menu Editor windows please observe the following points.

Mouse and Keyboard Allocations

Mouse

Click a menu option with the left mouse button:	Select the information entries displayed in the Properties Pull-down Menu”
CLICK + Drag	Move the menu option to a new location in the menu
CLICK + Drag + CTRL	Duplicate an entry

Keyboard

Arrow left	Move the menu option to the left
Arrow right	Move the menu option to the right
Arrow up	Move the menu option upwards
Arrow down	Move the menu option downwards
Pos1	Move the menu option to the top left position (first pull-down menu)
End	Move the menu option to the top right position (last pull-down menu)
Scroll up	Move the menu option to the top position in the active pull-down menu
Scroll down	Move the menu option to the last position in the active pull-down menu
INS	Inserts and selects an empty menu option following the selected option
DEL	Deletes a menu option from the menu
RETURN	Activates the Properties window of the selected option

Function keys

F1	Help
F2	Activate / Deactivate the symbol bar
F3	File: Save as ...

F4 Activate / deactivate the status line

Editing a Menu Structure

Using the cursor keys or mouse click, select the menu option to be edited.

If you want to extend the menu structure by inserting a new option, either move the cursor to one of the empty fields which automatically appear at the bottom and at the right hand side of the current menu level. The empty option boxes are displayed with a surrounding dotted line.

Use the INS key to insert an additional menu field between the existing options of a pull-down menu. By actuating this key a new menu field will be inserted before the option which is currently activated.

Apart form being able to insert additional menu options, it is also possible to define sub menus of a certain option. Selecting one of these menus during program operation will automatically cause the sub menus and additional menu options to be displayed and made available for selection.

By combining commands into related groups, it is possible to structure the sub menus more clearly.

To insert a sub menu, first select the menu option from which you wish to start a sub menu and then choose the POPUP setting in place of MENUITM from the Properties window. This will attach a sub menu to the active menu option.

Editing Properties

To edit the properties of each individual menu option, move the cursor to the properties window. This is most easily achieved by clicking the selection field corresponding to the required property.

The individual menu items and their user definable properties are described in detail in the following section.

Please note the following points.

In most cases menu item properties can only be edited once the menu option has been give a valid name.

Empty menu fields (pop-up menus) cannot be saved. If you wish to save a menu structure containing empty fields, these must have been allocated a title or name.

Menu Properties

The following menu entry or menu option properties can be defined or edited in the *Properties* window. In certain instances the *Properties* window could be closed, e.g. when editing a number of pull-down menus. Should this be the case it can be reopened by selecting the Properties option from the *Menu* pull-down.

Field or Control Type

You may select one of the following menu option types.

MENUITEM

The MENUITEM option is the system default. Menu items are linked to commands and sometimes to help files, or to a status line message. When selected, the menu option in the user program carries out the command to which it has been linked

POPUP

This type of menu is designed to call up sub menus. When selected these automatically open and display further menu options for selection. For this reason, pop up menu fields cannot be linked to, or defined as program commands. It is, however, possible to link them to help topics and to define status line messages to them. A control type should be defined by clicking the corresponding button located at the bottom edge of the properties window.

Caption

The name which is to be allocated and used in the Menu option is defined using the Caption command. Move the cursor by either using the tab key, or clicking the mouse to the Caption option. Then type in the desired name.

Please take the following points into consideration.

Upper / Lower case

Upper and lower case characters do have an effect on the titling of the menu option. The title may contain umlauts, spaces as well as special characters. Exceptions to this rule are the **&** symbol and **\t** .

Number of characters

The maximum number of characters which can be entered as a field name, is only limited by the width or amount of space available in the Pull-down. This is governed by the longest menu title and can be extended at will, whenever practical.

Highlighted Characters

The **&** symbol is used to highlight a letter in the menu item so that this item can be called up using the key combination, ALT + Highlighted key. The menu editor is only in a position to display these key combinations; their definition has to be programmed separately.

The **&** character can be located at any position in the character sequence. The following entry **Precision &Aids** would produce this result: Precision Aids.

Right justification or alignment

The **\t** key combination causes any following characters to be displayed with a right hand justification or alignment.

It can be used to greatly increase the legibility of a particular menu item. The menu editor is only in a position to display these key combinations; their definition has to be programmed separately.

The **\t** character combination an also be combined with the **&,** so that the character sequence &End\tAlt+F4 would display the following result :

Exit Alt+F4

Command Selection

Style Properties

A number of properties and attributes are grouped together under the style heading. These define the face and availability of each menu option, depending on particular program conditions. In accordance with definable program variables it is possible to determine that a particular menu option only becomes active when for instance a drawing is opened or created and that the drawing contains at least one drawing element.

This type of configuration does assume a certain knowledge of the available program variables. Relevant information can be found in later chapters of this manual. The next sections are merely designed to show how, with the help of the Dialog and Menu editor, it is possible to select the style, the program variables and comparative values.

The selection and input fields located in the right hand part of the properties window are used to define both the style and help properties. To switch between the two editing possibilities, use the style and help radio buttons shown at the top of the input fields.

First of all check whether the **Style** button is active (default position). If not, click the button to change the selected option.

By doing so, the selection and input fields shown below enable you to alter the style, variable and value parameters.

Style

The style selection window allows you to change the style using the following parameters.

Standard

This style is used for menu options which can be activated at any time and are not intended to be especially marked. It is therefore **not** linked to program variables. The standard style is the default option.

Gray (Not selectable)

Allocate this style to the current menu option, if it is to be temporarily deactivated, according to the result of a comparison between a comparative value and a definable program variable. Once this style has been chosen, it becomes possible to open the previously locked, selection window variable and value parameters (see below).

Separator

By allocating this style the current menu option is no longer displayed as a caption, but is shown as a horizontal line. Any previous caption entry will be overwritten and deleted by the separator line. The height of the caption will also be reduced accordingly. Separators are seen as visible dividing elements and as such help to improve the clarity of the pull-down menu.

Checked

If you want to temporarily mark the current menu option with a check symbol, in accordance with the result of comparing the input value with a pre-defined program variable, then you may allocate this style to the menu option. This could for example be used to indicate the active or inactive state of a particular function. Once the checked style has been allocated you are able to open the previously locked selection window variable and value parameters.

Variable / Value

These selection or input fields are used to store the program variables and comparative values which when compared are used to determine the availability or checking of a selected menu option.

In order to be able to access these selection or input fields, they must have been allocated either of the following style definitions.

Gray (Not selectable) or
Checked

During the variable selection process you will be aided by a selection window, in which all of the possible variables are clearly listed. The selection window can be opened by clicking the button located to the right of the variable input field.

Select one of the global or local variables and enter the desired comparison value into the corresponding input field. Confirm the selection with OK.

The variables and their corresponding comparative values will then be automatically taken over and stored in the properties window. Here they can then be edited or accepted as they are.