NewsGate v0.8γ3
by Lelio della Pietra

User Manual

1 Introducing NewsGate

First of all, excuse me for my bad English, but everything has been done in a hurry.

1.1 What is NewsGate?

I decided to write NewsGate when I thought it might have been a nice idea making news and email available to my BBS users. Unfortunately here in Italy there are no Internet provieders knowing what "no profit system" means, so costs of UUCP connections are too high for me. I've had the luck to find a Canadian provider selling me an UUCP via TCP connection for only CDN6/month (if you want to contact him write to paul@egate.net); however the low transfer rate and - mainly - news distribution troubles around the net suggested me to write a program to poll news directly from news server of my PPP provider. Here is how the idea was born.

NewsGate is a program that connects to NNTP (news) server of your dialup internet provider, transfers news to and from the server and then converts them in .PKT file format, so you can send files directly to mail processor of your BBS. BBS users will see newsgroup exactly as a normal echomail area, handling even replies in the same manner.

NewsGate has the following functionality:

> Compatibility with standards RFC1123, RFC1036, RFC977, RFC850, RFC822, RFC724;
> Compatibility with standards FTS-0001, FTS-0004, FSC-0004, FSC-0039 and FSC-0041;
> Compatibility with most common news servers and news readers abnormal conditions;
> Is fully handled by command line, so you can easily automatize poll process;
> It makes all message conversions off-line, saving your moneys;
> It can hanles more than one NNTP server.

Within NewsGate there is a list of free NNTP servers. Give it a look.

1.2 Disclaimer

NewsGate is provided "AS IS" and user uses NewsGate at his own risk. All efforts have been made to make the program "solid", but the author does not assume any responsability for damages due to use, misuse or unuse of NewsGate and its documentation.

1.3 Registering

NewsGate is a shareware program. That means that the public release is a version with some limitations (you cannot download more than 3 newsgroups and only one server) and some "questions" somewhere.

You can use NewsGate unregistered for no more than 30 days. Passed a month you have to chose to register the software or to destroy your copy. To register follow the istructions in the REGISTER.xxx file, where xxx is your coutry code.

Registered users will get a key that will "unlock" the program. It's obvious that the key is personal and registered users states not to distribute, lent or give the key to other people.

NewsGate homepage is http://www.logicom.it/NewsGate. My email address, for registrations and infos, is ldellapi@tin.it. If it doesn't work try, in order, the following: dsmod@freenet.hut.fi, root@hobbit.egate.net.

Latest software release is available in F/R at the magic NEWSGATE on my board.

1.4 Credits

I've to thank first of all Paul Andersen, my UUCP provider. Also, to all my betatester group (random order): Gaetano Monfrecola, Aris Ferrara, Oreste Dimaggio, Fausto Iannuzzi, Paolo Polce, Emiliano Chirchiano, Sean Rima.

2 How NewsGate works

2.1 General concepts about NewsGate

As I told in the introduction, NewsGate works in two phases. A first phase is the connnection to the server, news (bidirectional) transfer and their saving in a temp file (in the standard RFC850 form). Then, in a second phase, NewsGate converts RFC850 files in FidoNet compatible packets. It's a really good idea making the conversion BEFORE and AFTER the poll, the first time to gate outgoing news and the second to gate incoming ones.

2.1.1 Configuration file structure

The configuration file is NEWSGATE.INI and it's located in the same directory of NewsGate. NewsGate can handle more than one NNTP server, so configuration file is divided in more section: a general one, containing setups not server-dependent, and one for each server. When you call NewsGate you specify which server you're about to call.
A typical config file is the following:

```
[General]
DefServer=Server1
... general configurations ...

[Server1]
... Server1 configurations ...

[Server2]
... Server2 configurations ...

[Server3]
... Server3 configurations ...
```

Calling NewsGate specifying no parameter Server1 will be connected (as specified in DefServer line in General). If you want to connect Server1, Server2 or Server3 just specify its name on the command line calling NewsGate.

WARNING: server names are case sensitive.

The voices of configuration file will be shown in detail chapter 3.

2.2 Command line parameters

NewsGate has two possible working modes with two different command line syntax. The first one is used to call NNTP server and the second one to convert messages. To get an help about command line options you can type:

```
NEWSGATE /?
```

You can shortcut options typing their first letter only. So /G can be used instead of /GATE.

2.2.1 NNTP poll syntax

To poll NNTP server NewsGate has the following syntax:

```
NEWSGATE [/LIST] [/NONEWS] [ServerName]
```

If used with no parameter, NewsGate will connect to server specified as `DefServer` in config file and will get the news (obviously it will send outgoing news, too). If you chose another server you can type its section name in config file in `ServerName`. The /LIST option is used to retrieve the list of available conferences on the server; that list will be saved in the file specified in `ListFile` in the config file; if this option is not specified, `list_of_server` will be used instead. The /NONEWS option is used generally with /LIST to skip every news transfer.

2.2.2 Syntax for RFC850 <-> .PKT conversion

To convert messages from news to Fido and vice versa type:

```
NEWSGATE /GATE
```

There are no other parameters.

2.3 Users file

To fill the From field of outgoing news NewsGate needs to know the user email address. So it's necessary to provide a file filled with that informations. This file name is `NEWSGATE.USR` in the same directory of NewsGate; you can change its name with the `EmailFile` voice in config file.

The file has the following syntax:

1) All lines beginning with # are considered comment
2) The first 36 characters of each line are user's FidoNet name
3) Characters 38-52 are user's FidoNet address
4) Characters 54 and following are user's email address.

(Obviously you'll find some useful comments in the file itself).

There are some notes to keep in mind. First of all, the name and Fido address must be EXACTLY equal to the sender ones (except case). So, if Lelio della Pietra writes sometimes from 2:335/244 and sometimes from 2:335/244.1 you'll have to insert TWO lines. And you need to insert two lines is the user Donald Duck sometimes writes with the Quack alias.

Second, you can use some patterns. In the FidoNet address you can use the asterisk (*) to fill some fields (WARNING: all fields need to be filled, so to specify all FidoNet addresses you have to use *:*/*.* and not only *). In the email field you can use two patterns: %F means user's name with spaces filled with points (ie: lelio.della.pietra) and %D is for the standard FidoNet notation for email (p0.f244.n335.z2).

I think that the easiest thing is an example:

The user Lelio della Pietra writes sometimes with AKA 2:335/244 and sometimes with 2:335/244.1. Also he sometimes writes as Lelio della Pietra and sometimes as Master of Darkness. His email address is lelio@na.flashnet.it. Also, all users of 2:335/244 have email name.surname@hobbit.egate.net and all the other FidoNet users have the usual email name.surname@p#.f#.n#.z#.fidonet.org.

Here the corrisponding file:

```
#
#<----------- User Name ----------> <Fido Address > <     EMail
Lelio della Pietra                  2:335/244       lelio@na.flashnet.it
Master of Darkness                  2:335/244       lelio@na.flashnet.it
Lelio della Pietra                  2:335/244.1     lelio@na.flashnet.it
Master of Darkness                  2:335/244.1     lelio@na.flashnet.it
*                                   2:335/244.*     %F@hobbit.egate.net
*                                   *:*/*.*         %F@%D.fidonet.org
```

Users lines are obviously read as they appear in the file, so the first line has priority on the last.

NOTICE: If the email address of an user cannot be found his message won't be exported. So, if you remove last line from the user file shown above only 2:335/244 users will be enabled posting news. And if the last line address is 2:335/2*.* only Hub 2:335/200 users will be authorized posting news.

2.4 Header e footer files

Having a gateway it might be useful send, within the message, some additional informations, as gateway address, double user's address FidoNet/email and, generally, a disclaimer about sysop no-responsability on users mail.
To do this you can add these disclaimers at the begin (with an header file) or at the end of the message (with a footer file). To add an header or footer file just specify it in the `Header` and `Footer` options of configuration file.
Header and footer file are normally text files that can carry the following patterns:

`%f`	Sender name	ie. Lelio della Pietra
`%t`	Addressee name	ie. All
`%e`	Sender email	ie. lelio@na.flashnet.it
`%s`	Subject	ie. Nuova release di NewsGate!!!
`%i`	Sender FidoNet address	ie. 2:335/244.0
`%d`	Sender FidoNet address in email form	ie. p0.f244.n335.z2
`%g`	Gateway FidoNet address	ie. 2:335/244.99
`%%`	% Character	

2.5 How to "read" NewsGate video output

To show on the monitor the maximum numer of information in the minimum space NewsGate uses a lot of shortcuts, so it might be hard to understand its output. Let's see an example:

```
+----------------------------------------------------------------------+
¦                             ¦      Outbound     ¦      Inbound        ¦
¦-----------------------------+-------------------+---------------------¦
¦                             ¦SNT¦REJ¦SKP¦Tot Bytes¦LIST¦RCV¦SKP¦Tot Bytes¦
¦-----------------------------+---+---+---+---------+----+---+---+---------¦
¦ rec.humor.funny             ¦  0¦  0¦  0¦        0¦ 581¦513¦  0¦   172402¦
¦ hobbit.test.1               ¦  0¦  0¦  0¦        0¦  37¦ 37¦  0¦    14603¦
¦ hobbit.test.2               ¦  0¦  0¦  0¦        0¦   2¦  2¦  0¦     3712¦
+----------------------------------------------------------------------+
```

As you can see, for each group there are some data both for outgoing that for outgoing mail.

In the outgoing mail we can see four columns:

1) SNT: Is the number of messages sent to server
2) REJ: Is the number of messages that server rejected
3) SKP: Is the number of messages that the server asked to "post later". If only one of this request happens the send process will be deferred to the next session.
4) Tot Bytes is the total number of bytes sent (excluded, obviously, handshaking sequences)

Similarly, in the incoming section:

1) LIST: is the number of messages that the server told us to get
2) RCV: is the number of messages effectively got
3) SKP: is the number of messages rejected because dupes
4) Tot bytes is, again, the total number of bytes got.

3 Configuration file in detail

In this chapter single voices of configuration file will be analyzed. With `[path]` symbol will be indicated the complete path of `NEWSGATE.EXE` file.
Configuration file name is `[path]NEWSGATE.INI` and it's the only NewsGate file which name cannot be changed. For its structure please refer to paragraph 2.1.1.

3.1 General Section

3.1.1 DefServer

`DefServer` is used to define the default server section to connect to when no server name is specified on command line. Server name is case sensitive.
Please refer to paragraph 2.1.1 for sections and configuration file structure. This parameter is necessary.

3.1.2 LogFile

`LogFile` contains the [path] relative pathname of the NewsGate logfile. If not specified the default is `[path]NEWSGATE.LOG`.

3.1.3 LogItems

In `LogItems` are specified which voices are to be registered on the log and which are to be excluded. It's a string built with some special characters:

- `-`   Actives information logs
- `*`   Actives transfers logs
- `?`   Actives errors (critical and warings) logs
- `:`   Actives server transfer logs

The last voice is useful only for program debugging (maybe to report me some errors) and makes the log files dramatically bigger.
If not specified, default value is `-*?:` for beta releases and `-*?` for public releases.

3.1.4 WorkPath

`WorkPath` contains the name of the directory where NewsGate stores the control files and the news I/O. IT ISN'T A TEMP DIRECTORY: some file are KEPT here and not all files are deleteable. If not specified, default value is `[path]WORK`.

3.1.5 PktIn

`PktIn` contains the path where NewsGate stores .PKT files once done the conversion from RFC850 (In is for "incoming in BBS"). NewsGate will take care not to overwrite any existing .PKT file in this directory, so it may be directly the work directory of your mail processor. If not specified, default value is `[path]PKTIN`.

3.1.6 PktOut

`PktOut` contains the path of the directory where NewsGate will get the .PKT files to be converted in RFC850 for posting (Out is for "outgoing from BBS"). When converted files will be removed. A batch will be necessary to make .PKTs available to NewsGate. An example is shown in chapter 4.
If not specified, default value is `[path]PKTOUT`.

3.1.7 Gateway

`Gateway` is used to specify the necessary gateway FidoNet address. Generally [yourAKA].99 or [yourAKA].999 will be used here.

3.1.8 RouteTo

`RouteTo` is used to specify the necessary FidoNet address where to route the mail (your mail processor one). Generally it's the AKA of the BBS where the gateway is located.

3.1.9 Path

`Path` contains the path line to insert in the message. If not specify, no PATH line will be added.

WARNING: Path does not contain neither the zone neither the point, so the path of 2:335/244.99 is 335/244.

3.1.10 SeenBy

Just like `Path`, `SeenBy` contains the SEEN-BY kludge of your message. Even here, if nothing is specified, no SEEN-BY line will be added.

WARNING: Even SEEN-BY does not contain neither the zone neither the point, so the seen-by of 2:335/244.99 is 335/244.

3.1.11 Origin

`Origin` contains the textual section of your message origin. The gateway will add the right header and final address. As example, the line

```
Origin=The Hobbit BBS Internet Gateway
```

will generate an origin:

```
 * Origin: The Hobbit BBS Internet Gateway (2:335/244.99)
```

3.1.12 MsgSize

`MsgSize` contiains the maximum dimension of a FidoNet message, header and footer included. Longer messages will be splitted if incoming (Internet -> FidoNet) or trashed if outgoing (FidoNet -> Internet).

3.1.13 From

`From` specify how to handle sender's name in incoming (from Internet) messages. It can be one of the three following values:

`Name` If both name and email are specified, name will be preferred
`Email` Email will be always used
`Gate` All messages will be received from the dummy user "NewsGate"

Using of the name is ofcourse more intuitive and elegant, but email is a lot more useful when you reply from a news echo to a gated email (via netmail). In any case the message will keep track, at the first message line, of the sender name and email.

3.1.12 DateFmt

The voice `DateFmt` is one of the most important of Newsgate. In various test I've discovered that the RFC850 standard for date formatting is rejected from a lot of servers (what a standard!). Some servers requires data formatting in a way, others in another. And NewsGate offers the possiblity to be adapted: `DateFmt` may be one of the following:

`RFC1123`	RFC1123 Standard (default)	`Tue, 01 Jan 1997 00:00:00 +0100`
`RFC1123`	RFC1123 with GMT	`Tue, 01 Jan 1997 00:00:00 GMT+0100`
`RFC1036`	RFC1036 Standard (same as RFC822)	`Tue, 01 Jan 97 00:00:00 GMT+0100`
`RFC850`	RFC850 Standard	`Tuesday, 01-Jan-97 00:00:00 GMT+0100`
`RFC822`	RFC822 Standard	`Tue, 01 Jan 97 00:00:00 GMT+0100`
`RFC724A`	RFC724 Standard with shorted weekday	`Tue, 01 Jan 1997 00:00:00 GMT+0100`
`RFC724B`	RFC724 Standard with full weekday	`Tuesday, 01 Jan 97 00:00:00 GMT+0100`

A way to find the one recognized from your server is shown in chapter 4.

3.1.13 IHave

If you're enabled using IHAVE on news server you're calling set `Ihave=Yes`. Generally you can't use it (it's enabled only to NNRP feeds), so by default it's set to `No`. Using of IHAVE instead of POST doesn't enhance greatly transfer performaces.

3.1.14 BufSize and TxBufSize

`BufSize` is the size of incoming cache buffer. The greater it is the best it is, even if I think that is never necessary to set it more than 64k. Its default is 16384. The same thing for `TxBufSize`.

3.1.15 Timeouts e TimeoutMS

The voices `Timeouts` and `TimeoutMS` to specify the server-disconnection-timeout. `Timeouts` is the number of retries to do each time a single timeout occours and TimeoutMS is the duration (in milliseconds) of a single timeout.

The important thing is their product: a couple `Timeouts=10` and `TimeoutMS=100` has the same effect of the couple `Timeouts=1000` e `TimeoutMS=1` (ie to abort connection if server does not respond for one second). But the second choice will make 1000 tries of 1 millisecond each and the first one will make 10 tries of 100 milliseconds. The difference is fundamental: in the second case there is a better performance but an higher CPU overhead.

By default, `Timeouts=25` and `TimeoutMS=250` (6.25 seconds). If server to connect is slow you can raise adequatley their product (remember that raising Timeouts you can go faster in polling news, but you will degrade global system performance, while raising `TimeoutMS` you'll lose a bit in the polling but you won't use too much the CPU).

3.1.16 FirstNo

Each time that NewsGate reads the news it restart exactly from the first unread message. However, the first time you get a newsgroup NewsGate will get a fixed number of messages (the last ones). This number is specified in `FirstNo`. By default, `FirstNo=30`.

WARNING: The first news poll, for technical reasons about DupeTable building, is a lot slower than the following ones.

3.1.17 MsgID

The value contained in `MsgID` keeps track of the number of messages sent and it's used for message-identifier building both on FidoNet (FTS-0041) and on Internet (RFC977-RFC850) side. **NEVER LOWER THAT VALUE!!!** Or you'll begin sending duplicate news and FidoNet messages killed from other systems.

3.1.18 DupeBoard

NewsGate stores the MsgID of a number of messages for each group to avoid dupes. The number of messages/group kept in the DupeTable is specified in `Dupeboard`. By default, `Dupeboard=100` and cannot never be set lower than 50.

3.1.19 GMT

`GMT` is a number in the range -12 - +12 stating the difference of time from Greenwitch. In Central Europe it's `GMT=+1`. Is a necessary and important voice: news poll is based on last call time and an hour difference due to a bad GMT value may cause the loss of some news.

3.1.20 EmailFile

`EmailFile` is the name of the Users file described in paragraph 2.3. Path is relative to [path] directory and by default it's `EmailFile=NEWSGATE.USR`.

3.1.21 Organization

`Organization` is the string to insert in the Organization fied of outgoing news. It's not a necessary field and, if not specified, Organization line won't be added. Generally contains the name of the organization (=BBS) sending the message.

3.1.22 Identifier

`Identifier` is an other important parameter of NewsGate. All outgoing news (-> Internet) must be uniquely identificated. NewsGate makes this building an unique Message-ID joining the actual `MsgID` number followed that the `Identifier` string. So if `Identifier=.hobbit.egate.net`, a typical Message-ID may be `00000001.hobbit.egate.net`.

WARNING: RFC850 standard states clearly that server should make no assumptions about the string contained in Message-ID. Anyway a lot of servers refuses to get message if its Message-ID is not in the form ID@domain.tld. The news server of my ISP refused to accept messages with `00000001.hobbit.egate.net` ID so I've had to change it in `00000001@hobbit.egate.net` (`Identifier=@hobbit.egate.net`). This because I've an UUCP

domain. If you don't have a domain you can use something as `Identifier=.youruserid@your.provider.domain.`

3.1.23 Header e Footer

`Header` and `Footer` contain the [path] relative names of Header and Footer files described in paragraph 2.4. If you don't specify one or both of them the corrisponding file(s) won't be added.

3.1.24 FastRECV

`FastRECV` is the "fast receive" in polling news option (normally active). I've never found a server with incompatibility about that, but anyway you can disable it. `FastRECV` may be `Yes` or `No`.

WARNING: The fast receive is for technical reasons turned off during first poll, so it will be dramatically slower than the following ones.

3.1.25 OldStyle

`OldStyle` can be `Yes` or `No`: if `Yes` the video output will be the same of v0.8g (no progress indicator). Obviously its default is `No`.

3.1.26 PktPass

`PktPass` is the password to be inserted in the .PKT files made by NewsGate. It may be long up to 8 characters; if it's not specified the packets will be created without a password.

3.2 The server section

3.2.1 NewsServer

`NewsServer` contains the name of the news server to connect to. You can save a couple of seconds in your connection specifying directly, instead of server name, directly its IP address. Obviously it's a necessary parameter.

3.2.2 Port

The NNTP standard port is 119. If your server uses another port, specify it in `Port`.

3.2.3 ListFIle

Name ([path] relative) of the file containing the list of groups available on the server got with the /LIST option. The default value is `List=list_of_[server]`.

3.2.4 NNTPUser and NNTPPass

Some servers requires user authentication to allow access. Use these two fields to access to a protected server.

3.2.5 Group00, Group01, ..., Group99

Here you are the groups to get. If you want to get group it.pippo, insert the `Group00=it.pippo` line. Obviously if group 0 is yet filled, use the first free one (is not necessary to use consecutive number: you can use 0, 50 and 99, but why?).

You can get a maximum of 99 groups/server. If you need more:

 a) let's think if buying a direct line to your provider is a cheaper idea
 b) if a) is false, configure a second copy of the server with news groups. (see paragraph 3.3)

3.3 An example of NEWSGATE.INI

Here you are the NEWSGATE.INI of my board. Notice some details:

 a) a lot of voices have been inserted even if they're set at their default value
 b) I've inserted twice the news.flashnet.it server: by default I poll the "standard" news, but if I need to make some tests I poll only the it.test group using `NEWSGATE Flash2`

```
[General]
DefServer=FlashNet
BufSize=65536
Timeouts=2000
TimeoutMS=5
DupeBoard=100
GMT=1
Gateway=2:335/244.98
RouteTo=2:335/244
SeenBy=335/244
Path=335/244
From=Name
PktIn=c:\temp
PktOut=c:\uucp\news\pktout
Origin=The HobBIT BBS Internet Gateway
MsgID=00003645
Identifier=@hobbit.egate.net
Footer=footer.txt
DateFmt=RFC724A

[FlashNet]
NewsServer=news.flashnet.it
Port=119
ListFile=flashlst.txt
Group00=it.comp.demos
Group01=it.hobby.scacchi
Group02=comp.sys.ibm.pc.demos
Group03=it.arti.cinema
Group04=comp.mail.uucp
Group05=comp.graphics.algorithms
Group06=it.comp.musica
Group07=alt.bbs.excalibur

[Flash2]
NewsServer=news.flashnet.it
Group00=it.test
```

4 Installing NewsGate

The first thing to do when you install NewsGate is writing some script to automatize Gateway and news polling. I think that the best thing to do is posting the scripts I use on my board, every sysop is able to understand what they do and how.

4.1 The Gateway script

The Gateway script is the one to convert .PKT in news and vice versa.
Two details: the name of the arcmail packet of the point assigned to NewsGate is 954C4B70.* and I use FastEcho as mail processor, but different mailers have a slightly different syntax.

```
@echo off
CD C:\UUCP\NEWS\PKTOUT
PKUNZIP C:\MAIND\OUTBOUND\954C4B70.*
DEL C:\MAIND\OUTBOUND\954C4B70.*
CD ..
NEWSGATE /G
FASTECHO TOSS
```

4.2 The poll script: automatization of the news poll

Generally I connect to Internet at least once a day: in this case I launch NewsGate manually, being unuseful spending moneys for one more phone call to get news. I think that a lot of sysops are in the same condition. In this case, the script poll is obviously:

```
@echo off
CD C:\UUCP\NEWS
NEWSGATE
NEWSGATE Server2            If it exists
NEWSGATE Server3            If it exists
...
```

If you have only one server you can avoid using the batch. It's a good idea placing the Gateway script before and after the poll script.

Some troubles may happen if the batch has to be executed in automatic. NT should open directly the connection with your ISP, Win95 (at least the one I have) tells you that everything will do in automatic, but it will ask you to press OK when call starts, so you can forget the automatization.
There are a lot of *ware programs to automatize W95 dialup. The one I found useful, easy and powerful is the Ndial32 by Mark Gamber (DIALER.ZIP somewhere on ftp://volftp.vol.it, it's about 12-15k). It's obvious that the autodial packet must have also an autohang command... If you use an autodialer the script becomes (Ndial32 sytax):

```
@echo off
CD C:\UUCP\NEWS
START /W NDIAL32 FlashNet,flashnet.it,myaccount,mypassword
NEWSGATE
NEWSGATE Server2            If exists
NEWSGATE Server3            If exists
...
NHANG32 FlashNet
```

4.3 TroubleShooting

4.3.1 Server refuses connection

There are three possiblity: or a wrong network configuration or a wrong newsgate configuration (you're not polling a NNTP server). But there's another possibility: servers are often down for maintenance for some hours a day, so the first thing to do is retry at another time.

4.3.2 "Unexpected server response"

The server answered NewsGate with a non RFC977-standard response. Ther first thing to do when this happens is to activate server transfer logs (`LogItems=:-*?`) and check what the server answered (generally the server sends an human readable message with the numeric code). This might be useful to find where is the error.

4.3.3 Posting not allowed

The server has, for some reasons, refused the message. Even in this case the server-transfer log is really useful: enable it as shown in the last paragraph. The reasons of failure may be various:

a) The server is in maintenance. Try later
b) The server does not recognize the Message-ID: substitute the `Identifier` option with one like ID@domain.tld as shown in paragraph 3.1.22
c) The server does not recognize the date format: try with various date format, as shown in paragraph 3.1.11
d) If server answer that the message is too old it might be that he reads the year "97" as 0097 and not as 1997 (it has happened!). Even in this case, substitute the data type.

Before doing the retry, remove from the WORK directoty the *.OUT files "defective" and try again.

4.3.4 The server does not send news or program does not accept them

Check if the NewsGate work directory (WORK) exists. If yes, try disabling the FastRECV.

4.3.5 Fixing "manually" news files

.IN and .OUT files are normally ASCII files, which format is shown in chapter 5. In case of crash or various errors is extremely simple editing them to correct damages.

4.4 Bug reporting

Before segnaling a bug, do the following thing:

a) active server-transfer log and try to understand what's happened
b) discover in which group the trouble happened and if in incoming or outgoing news
c) try to reproduce the error
d) at the end send: the .INI file, the log, the .IN and/or .OUT file causing the trouble and a detailed description of what happened and all details necessary to reproduce the error

5 File Format

5.1 Generals

Of each group NewsGate keeps three files:

group.IN   containing inbound news
group.OUT   containing outgoing news
group.CTL   containing group control informations

Deleting .IN and/or .OUT files you'll remove, respectively, incoming and waiting to be converted news or outgoing and waiting to be sent news. Deleting the .CTL file you'll "reset" the group, just as it happens at the first poll: the next time NewsGate will get the last `FirstNo` messages of the group available on the server.

5.2 The .IN file

The .IN file is banally simple. It contains, row by row, the news got from server, in format RFC850-RFC977. The header is separed from the body of message with an empty line and the end of each message is marked by the sequence <CR-LF>.<CR-LF> (RFC977).

5.3 The .OUT file

The .OUT file is identical to the .IN one, except for the fat that the first line of each message (that will NOT be sent to the server) contains the Message-ID. This is useful when you use IHAVE.

5.4 The .CTL file

The .CTL file begins with the following structure:

```
struct CTL
 {
  char Identifier[4] ;  // Version of CTL-FILE. Actually 'CTL1'
  time_t tm ;           // Timestamp of last poll time/date
  int Dupes ;           // Dupeboard size of the group
  int Index ;           // Msg-ID effectively stored
 } ;
```

Followed by Index strings CR-LF terminated containing the Message-IDs of the dupeboard. The dupes are stored starting from the most recent one.

SUMMARY