The Scoutlink operators course
For channel operators

Introduction

Hi and welcome to the Scoutlink operators course.

This document is manual on how to be a channel operator on Scoutlink, and should give you a good start as a new operator on our network. For old operators this manual will work as a reference on the basic commands.

During your operator training you will be taught how to manage the channels with the command line functions. This will give you a better feeling on how Scoutlink works, although you will probably want to use various popup commands instead of the command line for everyday use.

The commands given in this manual should work in most IRC clients. Commands are shown in *italic* text. You may need to add *msg* in front of the commands that involve the services, like this:

> */msg Chanserv set #channel topic This is my fancy new topic*

> Instead of:

> */Chanserv set #channel topic This is my fancy new topic*

If you are having problems with any of the other commands please check the manual for your IRC client or ask in #irc_help.

An operator and their role in Scoutlink

As a channel operator you are our first line of contact with the users of Scoutlink. Your job is to ensure the safety and well being of the users in the channel. This task involves more than just kicking and banning the users. In fact, most of your duties will not even require the use of any rights or powers at all. You are the person that keeps the channel running and clean of problems, and should also be able to help users with any other problems they may have related to Scoutlink.

The most important thing to remember as an operator is that you are still a user of the channel. You should participate in the chat just as any other person.

Contents

Channel management

Channel modes

Channel modes define how a channel works. The channel modes can either add restrictions or give rights to users. Some modes are applied to users in the channels, while others are applied directly to the channel. All of the modes are case sensitive, meaning that mode +b and +B have different effects.

Modes that affect users	
Mode	**Effect**
v	The user is "voiced", meaning he/she can talk when the channel is moderated. The user can also talk with colors when they are disallowed.
o	The user is an operator. In addition to the rights granted to voiced user the operator can: • Kick users • Change channel modes • Change the topic of the channel • Ban/unban users • Voice users • Grant or remove operator rights to other users and themself
b	Mode +b bans the mask from joining the channel. Users that are affected by the ban may not: • talk in the channel • change nickname • rejoin the channel For more information see the chapter about banning.

User modes are changed with this command:

> /mode #channel +/-mode nickname

Where + enables the mode, and - removes it.

For example:

> /mode #english +o nickname

You can also bundle the modes into one line. To op two persons at a time you can use this command:

> /mode #channel +oo nickname1 nickname2

In this way you can change up to 6 modes at a time with only one line. You can also both add and remove modes in the same line:

> /mode #channel +o-o nickname1 nickname2

Modes that affect the channel	
Mode	**Effect**
B	Denies people that are connecting from hosts in the bot list to join the channel. This mode should never be used, as it will deny many legitimate users to join.
c	Denies the use of colored/**bold**/<u>underlined</u> text in the channel by regular users.
d	Users cannot send the same line twice in a row on the channel.
f	Limits the amount of lines a user can type per number of seconds. > /mode #channel +f x:f Where x is seconds, and f is the amount of lines that can be typed in that time period. For example:

	/mode #channel +f 5:2 Allows the user to type 2 lines per every 5 seconds.
i	Requires users to be invited to the channel before they can join. This mode should be set to prevent flood attacks.
k	Sets a password on the channel. */mode #channel +k password*
K	Notifies all operators in a channel when a user fails to join it because of the channel limit, password protection or the channel being set invite only.
l	Limits the number of users that can be in the channel. When this number is reached no more users can join. Surplus users are not kicked if the channel is already over the limit when it is set. */mode #channel +l 60*
m	The channel is moderated. This means that only operators and voiced users may talk in the channel. Users on the channel can't change their nicknames while this mode is set.
n	This mode denies users that are not in the channel to send messages to the channel. It is set as default in all channels.
p	The private mode removes the channel from the /list command. It should not be used on the main channels.
q	Removes quit messages from the channel. The users are instead told that the users have left the channel when they quit.
R	Only users registered with Nickserv may join the channel.
s	Hides the channel from /whois.
S	No spam mode. Denies the use of certain words from being typed in the channel.
t	Only operators can change the topic of the channel. This mode is set as default on most channels.

The channel modes are also set by the /mode command. Most of them are passed without arguments; the others are noted in the table above.

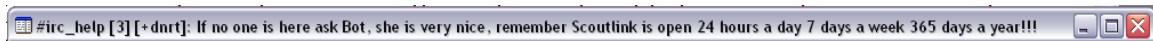To remove a mode use this command:

/mode #channel –mode

When you remove a mode you do not need to pass any arguments, only the mode character itself.

You can change the modes of both users and channels in one command.

Changing the topic

The channel topic can be used for giving out various kinds of information, for example about camps or other special events. The topic is the line seen in top of the channel.

#irc_help [3] [+dnrt]: If no one is here ask Bot, she is very nice, remember Scoutlink is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week 365 days a year!!!

The command to change the topic is:

/chanserv set #channel topic <u>new topic</u>

You do not need to be opped on the channel to use this command. If you are opped you can however do it in a different way as well:

/topic #channel <u>new topic</u>

How to op up

Most of your tasks can be fulfilled without even opping up. Many tasks can be done with Chanserv, but in some cases you need to op up. As a channel operator you can gain operator rights through Chanserv. Operators are normally only opped during special events like JOTI and TDOTI. At other times you are not expected to op up unless there are problems in the channel, or if you need it to change the channel modes.

To op up use this command with yours or another user's nickname:

/chanserv op #channel nickname

To deop a user again use this command:

/chanserv deop #channel nickname

These commands only work with one user at a time.

Note: Some IRC clients may require you to type /msg in front of the rest of the command.

Whois

You can get additional information about a user with the /whois command. The information that is displays comes out in different ways depending on your client, but all clients display the same information.

- The user's host mask, consisting of their username and hostname/ip-address.

- What channels the user is on.[1]

- What server the user is connected to.

- If the nickname is registered or not.

- The user's away message, if he or she is marked as being away.

- If the user is an IRC operator or techteam member.

- How long the user has been idle, both in channels and private chats. [2]

Most IRC clients have a button or menu option to whois a user, which is preferable when the user is in the same channel as you. If this is not the case you must use this command:

/whois nickname

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[1] This list may be empty, depending on the modes set on the user and/or the channel he/she is on.

[2] Some clients do not show this by default. If this is the case, use the command */whois nickname nickname* to show the idle time.

Host masks

The most important part of a whois reply is the host mask, which is used for banning users from channels. It consists of two parts, the username and the hostname/ip-address, and can look like this:

> *~som1@512-432.214.241.somenet.co.uk*

> *som2@432.214.241.512*

The username is the part in front of the @. This can be easily be changed by users of normal clients, while users connecting from webchats may have their IP-address here. The IP-addresses in the webchats are written in hexadecimal form. That means that it uses a different numbering system. An example of this is:

> *522d6ab2@webchat.scoutlink.de*

In this example *522d6ab2* is the IP-address *82.45.106.178*. That means that if you are going to ban the user you use the username instead of the hostname to ban it, so that you don't ban the entire webchat.

The second part of the host mask is the hostname. This is the computers address on the internet, and comes either in the form of a hostname or an IP-address.

IP-addresses consist of only numbers, separated into 4 groups with up to 3 numbers in each. These are shown instead of the host name of a user when the server fails to resolve the users host name.

The host name can have many forms, depending on how the user's ISP has configured their network. Some consists only of letters, while others have numbers or parts of the IP-address in them.

In front of some host masks you will see a ~. The ~ (tilde) is also called a non ident. In earlier years your user name on the computer was used to identify you on the server, and the server naturally checked this upon logon. This method is still around, but it is not enabled on all

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systems. The ~ is added when the server can't verify that the username specified in the host mask is the same as your username on the computer you are using.

Kicking users

At times you have to kick users that are misbehaving. Scoutlink rules say that a user should receive two warnings before they are kicked. These warnings can be sent in the channel or in private messages to the user, and should explain what the user has done wrong and why it is wrong. This gives the user a new chance before he or she gets kicked. In some special cases warnings are not needed. This is for example when a user is flooding or heavily abusing another user.

You should always kick users according to the channel rules.

Banning users

When a user has misbehaved and refused to behave better after being kicked it is time to ban him/her. Bans can be hard to set in the beginning, but with practice they are easier to set. You can ban a single user or a whole group if that is what is required. Banning users is done with the */mode +b* command, and have this syntax:

> */mode #channel +b nickname!username@hostname*

Wildcards

When you ban users you usually use wildcards. Wildcards are used to replace parts of the ban mask with anything else, so that it matches a larger group of users. There are two wildcard characters, "?" and "*". "?" replaces only one character at a time, while "*" allows any amount of characters in its space.

Banning based on nicknames

Banning nicknames is the least effective way of banning users, but it can be used to remove bad words in the nicknames if no IRC-operators are available. This is done with this command:

> */mode #channel +b nickname!*@**

Here wildcards are used to ban *nickname* coming from all host masks with all user names.

Banning based on usernames

Banning usernames are similar to banning nicknames. This task is primarily used when users have bad words in their usernames, or when you are banning webchat users. Usernames are banned in this way:

> /mode #channel +b *!username@*

Banning host names or IP-addresses

You can also ban only the users host name or IP-address. This blocks the user's computer, or the group of computers you chose to ban.

> /mode #channel +b *!*@host.name

The common thing about host names and IP-addresses is that they are made up in a hierarchical structure. With host names you come closer to the user the further you go to the left side of the host name. IP-addresses are the opposite way around, and go from left to right. This is used to ban different networks with wildcards. If you find yourself in the situation of having to ban a group of users coming from the same or similar host names or IP-addresses you replace parts of the mask with wildcards, for example like this:

> /mode #channel +b *!*@*-432.214.241.somenet.co.uk

> /mode #channel +b *!*@432.214.241.*

When setting bans with wildcards you must be certain that you don't ban a too large group, since you may affect innocent users as well.

Removing bans

Bans should not be set without a time limit. This varies with what the person did wrong. The default rule on Scoutlink is that only the operator that set the ban is allowed to remove it, even though it is possible for other operators to remove it.

Removing bans is done with this command:

/mode #channel –b <banned mask>

Or by using the interface in your client, which is in many cases the easiest way. The mask has to be exactly the same as the mask you banned.

Using the services

The services is the part of the Scoutlink network that manages authentication and administration of users and channels. Earlier you have seen some of the commands you can use with Chanserv. For a channel operator there are a few more useful commands at your disposal. Not all of them are enabled in all the channels, but they may be available in some.

Unbanning and inviting yourself

In some cases you may have been banned from a channel by error. If that happens you can either message another operator in that channel and get him/her to unban you, or you can unban yourself with this command:

/Chanserv unban #channel

Note: this only works on non-empty channels

In other cases you may need to join a channel that is invite only. You can then have Chanserv invite you to the channel with this command:

/Chanserv invite #channel

Note: this only works on non-empty channels

Clear users

If you need to empty an entire channel, for example when closing it at JOTI, you can use the *clear users* command. This command kicks all the users in the channel you select with this command:

/Chanserv clear #channel users

Clear bans

You can also remove all the bans in a channel at once with the *clear bans* command. It has this syntax:

/Chanserv clear #channel bans

Clear modes

With *clear modes* you remove all the modes set on the channel. This does not include bans or modes on the users. After removing the modes Chanserv will set the default modes on the channel.

/Chanserv clear #channel modes

Clear ops and voices

You can remove all the operators and voiced users statuses in the channel with these commands:

/Chanserv clear #channel ops

/Chanserv clear #channel voices

Stopping flood attacks

From time to time people decide to launch flood attacks against our channels. These flood attacks may vary in size, effect and method, but there are usually a large amount of users joining the channel at once. Most of these attacks can be fended off easily and quickly by normal channel operators. First you must op yourself, then you should make the channel invite only and moderated:

/Chanserv op #channel yournick

/mode #channel +mi

This prevents more users from joining the channel, and denies those who are there to talk to channel. If the flood attack is large you should voice the regular users in the meanwhile, so that their chatting is not affected by the flood attack. This can be done with the /mode command:

> */mode #channel +v nickname*

After that you should check if the floodbots have any parts of their nickname or hostmask in common. If they have anything in common you can proceed with kicking all the bots. Then you ban the part they have in common and open the channel again.

> */mode #channel –mi*

After opening the channel you should devoice all the users again.

If they do not have any common parts you will have to ban each host. You do not need to use time on adding reasons for kicking users that take part in a flood attack, so just use your clients bankick function for dealing with them.

If the floodbots come again you will have to do the same all over. You should in any case contact a IRC operator to get the bots banned from the servers.

Getting help

The help system
If you need any help you can use the help system on Scoutlink.

> */helpsys*

As a channel operator you have access to two important subcommands of the help system, *umodes* and *chanmodes*. They give out the lists shown in the channel and user modes chapter of this guide.

Finding IRC operators
If you happen to meet any users you can't deal with on your own you should find a IRC operator to help you out. To see a list of online IRC operators use this command:

> */ircops*

This shows you a list of the available IRC operators and techies. IRC operators can help you with problems with the users, while the techies are mainly there to fix server problems.

#irc_help

If you still can't find what you are looking for you can join #irc_help and ask the people there for help. If there are no one around you can ask Bot and see if she knows the answer for it.

Client help files

Most IRC-clients have a built in help file for the specific commands for that client. This can be very helpful when making scripts. If that does not help you can also check forums on the net to see if they offer any help to your problem.