NAME

> msgs – system messages and junk mail program

SYNOPSIS

> msgs [– **fhlpq**] [**number | -number**]
>
> **msgs** – **s**
>
> **msgs** – **c** [– days] [**-V**]

DESCRIPTION

> The **msgs** program is used to read system messages. These messages are sent by mailing to the login `msgs` and should be short pieces of information which are suitable to be read once by most users of the system.
>
> *Msgs* is normally invoked each time you login, by placing it in the file *.login (.profile* if you use */bin/sh)*. It will then prompt you with the source and subject of each new message. If there is no subject line, the first few non-blank lines of the message will be displayed. If there is more to the message, you will be told how long it is and asked whether you wish to see the rest of the message. The possible responses are:
>
> **h**   print out the help (if any)
>
> **y**   print out the rest of the message.
>
> RETURN
> > synonym for y.
>
> **n**   skip this message and go on to the next message.
>
> –   redisplay the last message.
>
> **q**   drops you out of *msgs;* the next time you run the program it will pick up where you left off.
>
> **s**   append the current message to the file ''Messages'' in the current directory; 's–' will save the previously displayed message. A 's' or 's–' may be followed by a space and a file name to receive the message replacing the default ''Messages''.
>
> **m**   or 'm–' causes a copy of the specified message to be placed in a temporary mailbox and *mailx*(1) to be invoked on that mailbox. Both 'm' and 's' accept a numeric argument in place of the '–'.
>
> **?**   print out the help (if any)
>
> *Msgs* keeps track of the next message you will see by a number in the file *.msgsrc* in your home directory. In the directory */var/spool/msgs* the program keeps a set of files whose names are the (sequential) numbers of the messages they represent. The file */var/spool/msgs/.msgs_bounds* shows the low and high number of the messages in the directory so that *msgs* can quickly determine if there are no messages for you. This file is commonly called the *bounds* file. The standard name for this file is *bounds* but the program dynamically determines which file name to use giving preference to a file named *.msgs_bounds* if both files are present. If the contents of the *bounds* file is incorrect it can be fixed by removing it; *msgs* will make a new *bounds* file the next time it is run.
>
> The – **s** option is used for setting up the posting of messages. The line
>
> > msgs: "│ /usr/add-on/pcs/bin/msgs – s"
>
> should be included in the */etc/aliases* mail database (of *sendmail*) to enable the posting of messages by email.
>
> The – **c** option is used for performing cleanup on */var/spool/msgs.* An entry with the – **c** option should be placed in root's *crontab* to run every night. This will remove all messages over 90 days old. A different expiration may be specified on the command line to override the default.
>
> Options when reading messages include:
>
> – **f**   which causes it not to say ''No new messages.''. This is useful in your *.login* file since this is often the case here.

−**q**   Queries whether there are messages, printing ''There are new messages.'' if there are. The command ''msgs – q'' is often used in login scripts.

−**h**   causes *msgs* to print the first part of messages only.

−**l**   option causes only locally originated messages to be reported.

num   A message number can be given on the command line, causing *msgs* to start at the specified message rather than at the next message indicated by your *.msgsrc* file. Thus

      msgs – h 1

prints the first part of all messages.

−*number*

will cause *msgs* to start *number* messages back from the one indicated by your *.msgsrc* file, useful for reviews of recent messages.

−**p**   prevents long messages from being piped through *more*(1).

Within *msgs* you can also go to any specific message by typing its number when *msgs* requests input as to what to do.

FILES

/var/spool/msgs   This directory contains the message files and the *bounds* type file used by the program for operational purposes.

/var/spool/msgs/.msgs_bounds
      This file is the prefered *bounds* type file.

/var/spool/msgs/bounds
      This file is used as the *bounds* type file when a file named *.msgs_bounds* is not present.

˜/.msgsrc   This file (in the user's HOME login directory) contains the number of the next message to be presented. This file is used when the MSGSRC environment variable (described below) is not set.

ENVIRONMENT VARIABLES

The following environment variables are used by the program:

MSGSRC   This environment variable holds the name of the user's MSGSRC type file. The MSGSRC type file holds the record of which messages a user has already read. If this environment variable is not set, the default MSGSRC file is **˜/.msgsrc** which is located in the user's HOME directory as indicated. If this environment vaiable does not contain an absolute file path, the user's HOME directory is prepended.

MSGSDIR   This environment variable can be used to change the location of the spool directory used to hold the message files.

MSGS_SPOOLDIR   This environment variable can be used to change the location of the spool directory used to hold the message files. This environment variable is only used if the MSGSDIR environment variable above is not set.

LINES   This environment variable can be set to hold the number of lines that will be used by the program on the terminal screen.

SEE ALSO

crontab(1), mail(1), more(1), sendmail(1m), aliases(4)

AUTHORS

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The program has been enhanced (for PCS and POP3 bulletin compatibility) and otherwise modified substantially by David Morano.

BUGS

No bugs are known to exist at this time.