

Network Working Group  
Group  
Request for Comments: 1184  
Editor  
Obsoletes: RFC [1116](#)  
Inc.

Telnet Working  
D. Borman,  
Cray Research,  
October

1990

## Telnet Linemode Option

Status of this Memo

This memo describes a Draft Standard for the Internet community, and requests discussion and suggestions for improvements. This RFC specifies an IAB standards track protocol for the Internet community.

Please refer to the current edition of the "IAB Official Protocol Standards" for the standardization state and status of this protocol.

Distribution of this memo is unlimited.

Changes from [RFC1116](#):

Two new mode bits have been added, SOFT\_TAB and LIT\_ECHO. These bits allow the server to give the client some advise on how to echo tabs and non-printable characters.

Several new special character mappings have been added for cursor motion when visual editing is supported. These are: Move cursor one character left/right (SLC\_MCL/SLC\_MCR), move cursor one word left/right (SLC\_MCWL/SLC\_MCWR), move cursor to begining/end of line (SLC\_MCBOL/SLC\_MCEOL), enter insert/overstrike mode (SLC\_INSRT/SLC\_OVER), erase one character/word to the right (SLC\_ECR/SLC\_EWR), and erase to the beginning/end of the line (SLC\_EBOL/SLC\_EEOL).

Overview

Linemode Telnet is a way of doing terminal character processing on the client side of a Telnet connection. While in Linemode with editing enabled for the local side, network traffic is reduced to a couple of packets per command line, rather than a couple of packets per character typed. This is very useful for long delay networks, because the user has local response time while typing the command line, and only incurs the network delays after the command is typed. It is also useful to reduce costs on networks that charge on a per packet basis. Please send comments to the telnet-ietf@cray.com mailing list.



Table of Contents

1.	Command Names and Codes	2
2.	Command Meanings	3
2.1	The LINEMODE function	3
2.2	LINEMODE suboption MODE	4
2.3	LINEMODE suboption FORWARDMASK	5
2.4	LINEMODE suboption SLC, Set Local Characters	6
2.5	New control characters	10
3.	Default Specification	11
4.	Motivation	11
5.	Implementation Rules	13
5.1	User Interface	13
5.2	End of line terminators	14
5.3	Output processing	14
5.4	A terminal driver in Telnet?	14
5.5	Setting of Local Characters	14
5.6	FORWARDMASK and SLC_FORW1 and SLC_FORW2	15
5.7	Valid and invalid modes and values	16
5.8	Flushing input and output	16
5.9	State diagram for SLC	18
5.10	Example of a connection	19
6.	Other Telnet options and RFCs	22
7.	Security Considerations	23
8.	Author's Address	23

**1. Command Names and Codes**

MODE	1	
EDIT		1
TRAPSIG		2
MODE_ACK		4
SOFT_TAB		8
LIT_ECHO		16
FORWARDMASK	2	
SLC	3	
SLC_SYNCH		1
SLC_BRK		2
SLC_IP		3
SLC_AO		4
SLC_AYT		5
SLC_EOR		6
SLC_ABORT		7
SLC_EOF		8
SLC_SUSP		9
SLC_EC		10
SLC_EL		11

SLC_EW	12
SLC_RP	13
SLC_LNEXT	14
SLC_XON	15
SLC_XOFF	16
SLC_FORW1	17
SLC_FORW2	18
SLC_MCL	19
SLC_MCR	20
SLC_MCWL	21
SLC_MCWR	22
SLC_MCBOL	23
SLC_MCEOL	24
SLC_INSRT	25
SLC_OVER	26
SLC_ECR	27
SLC_EWR	28
SLC_EBOL	29
SLC_EEOL	30
SLC_DEFAULT	3
SLC_VALUE	2
SLC_CANTCHANGE	1
SLC_NOSUPPORT	0
SLC_LEVELBITS	3
SLC_ACK	128
SLC_FLUSHIN	64
SLC_FLUSHOUT	32
EOF	236
SUSP	237
ABORT	238

## **2. Command Meanings**

### **2.1 The LINEMODE function**

#### IAC WILL LINEMODE

The sender of this command REQUESTS permission to begin sub-negotiation of the editing/signaling status. This should only be sent by the client side of the connection.

#### IAC WONT LINEMODE

The sender of this command DEMANDS that sub-negotiation of the editing/signaling status not be allowed.



#### IAC DO LINEMODE

The sender of this command REQUESTS that the remote side begin sub-negotiation of the editing/signaling status. This should only be sent by the server side of the connection.

#### IAC DONT LINEMODE

The sender of this command DEMANDS that the remote side not begin sub-negotiation of the editing/signaling status.

### 2.2 LINEMODE suboption MODE

#### IAC SB LINEMODE MODE mask IAC SE

The sender of this command CONFIRMS, or REQUESTS permission for, a switch to the mode defined by "mask".

The "mask" is a bit mask of various modes that the connection can be in. Under normal operation, the server side of the connection will initiate mode changes, and the client will confirm the mode changes. The currently defined modes are:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| EDIT<br>functions, | When set, the client side of the connection should process all input lines, performing any editing and only send completed lines to the remote side. When unset, client side should not process any input from the user, and the server side should take care of all character processing that needs to be done.                                |
| TRAPSIG<br>normal  | When set, the client side should translate appropriate interrupts/signals to their Telnet equivalent. (These would be IP, BRK, AYT, ABORT, EOF, and SUSP) When unset, the client should pass interrupts/signals as their ASCII values.  |
| FLOW               | Logically, this belongs in the "mask". However, this would overlap the Telnet TOGGLE-FLOW-CONTROL option, so the Telnet TOGGLE-FLOW-CONTROL option is used instead. When DO/WILL LINEMODE is negotiated, DO/WILL TOGGLE-FLOW-CONTROL should also be negotiated. See <a href="#">RFC 1080</a> , "Telnet Remote Flow Control", for correct usage. |
| ECHO               | Logically, this belongs in the "mask". However, this would overlap the Telnet ECHO option, so the Telnet ECHO option is used instead. The client side should never negotiate "WILL ECHO". When the server has negotiated "WILL ECHO", the client should not echo data typed by  |

the

Telnet Working Group  
4]

[Page

user back to the user. When the server has negotiated "WONT ECHO", the the client is responsible for echoing data typed by the user back to the user. See [RFC 857](#), "Telnet ECHO OPTION" for a complete discussion on the use of the Telnet ECHO option.

**SOFT\_TAB** When set, the client side should expand the Horizontal Tab (HT) code, USASCII 9, into the appropriate number of spaces to move the printer to the next horizontal tab stop. When unset, the client side should allow the Horizontal Tab code to pass through un-modified.

**LIT\_ECHO** When set, if the client side is echoing a non-printable character that the user has typed to the users screen, the character should be echoed as the literal character. If the LIT\_ECHO bit is not set, then the client side may echo the character in any manner that it desires. (Many systems echo unprintable characters as two character sequences, for example, they will echo "^A" for an ASCII 1 value.)

When the client side of a connection receives a MODE command, it **MUST** agree with at least the state of the EDIT and TRAPSIG bits. If a MODE command is received with a mode mask that is currently in use (ignoring the MODE\_ACK bit), the MODE command is ignored. If a MODE command is received that is different from the current mode mask, then a reply is sent with either the new mode mask and the MODE\_ACK bit set, or a subset of the new mode mask. The only exception is that if the server receives a MODE with either the EDIT or TRAPSIG bits not set, it may set the EDIT and TRAPSIG bits in the response, and if the client receives a MODE with the EDIT or TRAPSIG bits set, it may not clear them in the response.

When a MODE command is received with the MODE\_ACK bit set, and the mode is different that what the current mode is, the client will ignore the new mode, and the server will switch to the new mode. This ensures that both sides of the connection will resolve to the same mode. In all cases, a response is never generated to a MODE command that has the MODE\_ACK bit set.

### [2.3](#) **LINEMODE suboption FORWARDMASK**

```
IAC SB LINEMODE DO FORWARDMASK mask0 mask1 ... mask31 IAC SE
```

The sender of this command request that the other side send any buffered data when any of the ASCII characters defined by the bit mask are received. Only the side of the connection that sent DO LINEMODE (the server side) may negotiate this. The mask is up to



32 octets long. Each octet represents 8 ASCII character codes. The high order bit of mask0 corresponds to an ASCII code of 0. The low order bit of mask0 corresponds to an ASCII code of 7.

The

high order bit of mask1 corresponds to an ASCII code of 8. The low order bit of mask1 corresponds to an ASCII code of 15, and so on. The mask list may be terminated before the end of the list,

in

which case all the rest of the mask octets are assumed to be

reset

(equal to zero). When the server side is in DONT TRANSMIT-BINARY mode, then only the first 16 octets of the mask (ASCII codes 0 through 127) are used. If any individual octet of the mask is equal to IAC, it must be sent as a double IAC.

```
IAC SB LINEMODE DONT FORWARDMASK IAC SE
```

The sender of this command requests that the other side stop using the forward mask to determine when to send buffered data.

```
IAC SB LINEMODE WILL FORWARDMASK IAC SE
```

This command is sent in response to a DO FORWARDMASK command. It indicates that the forward mask will be used to determine when to send buffered data.

```
IAC SB LINEMODE WONT FORWARDMASK IAC SE
```

This command is sent in response to a DO FORWARDMASK command. It indicates that the forward mask will not be used to determine when to send buffered data.

#### **2.4 LINEMODE suboption SLC, Set Local Characters**

The SLC suboption uses a list of octet triplets. The first octet specifies the function, the second octet specifies modifiers to the function, and the third octet specifies the ASCII character for the function.

```
IAC SB LINEMODE SLC <list of octet triplets> IAC SE
```

The sender of this command REQUESTS that the list of octet triplets be used to set the local character to be used to send to perform the specified function.

There are four levels that a function may be set to. SLC\_NOSUPPORT is the lowest, SLC\_CANTCHANGE is the next higher level, SLC\_VALUE is above that, and SLC\_DEFAULT is the highest level.

If the SLC\_LEVELBITS in the second octet are equal to SLC\_DEFAULT,

Telnet Working Group  
6]

[Page

then this particular function should use the system default on  
the other side of the connection.

If the SLC\_LEVELBITS in the second octet are equal to SLC\_VALUE,  
then this function is supported, and the current value is  
specified by the third octet.

If the SLC\_LEVELBITS in the second octet are equal to  
the SLC\_CANTCHANGE, then this is a function that is supported, but  
value for this function, specified in the third octet, cannot be  
changed.

If the SLC\_LEVELBITS in the second octet are equal to  
SLC\_NOSUPPORT, then this particular function is not supported and  
should be disabled by the other side.

If this is a response to a previous request to change a special  
bit character, and we are agreeing to the change, then the SLC\_ACK  
must be set in the second octet.

If the SLC\_FLUSHIN bit is set in the second octet, then whenever  
this function is sent, a Telnet "sync" should be sent at the same  
time to flush the input stream.

If the SLC\_FLUSHOUT bit is set in the second octet, then whenever  
this function is sent, output data should be flushed.

Only the client may send an octet triplet with the first octet  
to equal to zero. In this case, the SLC\_LEVELBITS may only be set

SLC\_DEFAULT or SLC\_VALUE, and the third octet does not matter.  
When the server receives 0 SLC\_DEFAULT 0, it should switch to its  
system default special character settings, and send all those  
special characters to the client. When the server receives 0  
SLC\_VALUE 0, it should just send its current special character  
settings. Note that if the server does not support some of the  
editing functions, they should be sent as XXX SLC\_DEFAULT 0,  
rather than as XXX SLC\_NOSUPPORT 0, so that the client may choose  
to use its own values for those functions, rather than have to  
disable those functions even if it supports them.

If any of the octets in the list of octet triplets is equal to  
IAC, it must be sent as a double IAC.

When a connection is established, it is the responsibility of the  
client to either request the remote default values for the special  
characters, or to send across what all the special characters should  
be set to.



The function values can be put into two groups, functions that are to be translated to their Telnet equivalents before being sent across the Telnet connection, and functions that are to be recognized and processed locally.

First, we have those characters that are to be mapped into their Telnet equivalents:

- SLC\_SYNCH Synch. See [RFC 854](#), "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", for a complete description.
- SLC\_BRK Break. See [RFC 854](#), "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", for a complete description.
- SLC\_IP Interrupt Process. See [RFC 854](#), "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", for a complete description.
- SLC\_AO Abort Output. See [RFC 854](#), "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", for a complete description.
- SLC\_AYT Are You There. See [RFC 854](#), "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", for a complete description.
- SLC\_EOR End of Record. See [RFC 885](#), "TELNET END OF RECORD OPTION" for a complete description.
- SLC\_ABORT Abort. See [section 2.5](#) for a complete description.
- SLC\_EOF End of File. See [section 2.5](#) for a complete description.
- SLC\_SUSP Suspend. See [section 2.5](#) for a complete description.

Next, we have the locally interpreted functions.

- SLC\_EC Erase Character. This is the character that is typed to erase one character from the input stream. See [RFC 854](#), "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", for a complete description.
- SLC\_EL Erase Line. This is the character that is typed to erase the entire contents of the current line of input. See [RFC 854](#), "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", for a complete description.
- SLC\_EW Erase Word. This is the character that is typed to erase one word from the input stream.



- leaving
- SLC\_RP Reprint Line. This is the character that is typed to cause the current line of input to be reprinted, the cursor at the end of the line.
- normally
- SLC\_LNEXT Literal Next. This is the character that is typed to indicate that the next character is to be taken literally, no character processing should be done with it, and if it is a special character that would get mapped into a Telnet option, that mapping should not be done.
- stop
- SLC\_XON Start Output. This is the character that is sent to resume output to the users terminal.
- SLC\_XOFF Stop Output. This is the character that is sent to output to the users terminal.
- is
- SLC\_FORW1 Forwarding character. This is a character that should cause all data currently being buffered, and this character, to be sent immediately.
- SLC\_FORW2 Forwarding character. This is another character that to be treated in the same manner as SLC\_FORW1.
- is
- SLC\_MCL Move cursor one character left. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will move the cursor one character to the left in the display.
- SLC\_MCR Move cursor one character right. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will move the cursor one character to the right in the display.
- SLC\_MCWL Move cursor one word left. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will move the cursor one word to the left in the display.
- SLC\_MCWR Move cursor one word right. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will move the cursor one word to the right in the display.
- SLC\_MCBOL Move cursor to the begining of the line. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will move the cursor to the begining of the line that is being edited.

SLC\_MCEOL Move cursor to the end of the line. When visual editing

Telnet Working Group  
9]

[Page

is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will move the cursor to the end of the line that is being edited.

SLC\_INSRT Enter insert mode. When visual editing is supported, after this character is typed, all normal characters that are subsequently typed will be inserted into the display.

SLC\_OVER Enter overstrike mode. When visual editing is supported, after this character is typed, all normal characters that are subsequently typed will overwrite any characters in the current display. If the SLC\_INSRT and SLC\_OVER variables are set to the same value, then that value is to act as a toggle between overstrike and insert mode.

SLC\_ECR Erase character to the right. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will erase one character to the right of the cursor.

SLC\_EWR Erase word to the right. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will erase one word to the right of the cursor.

SLC\_EBOL Erase to the beginning of the line. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will erase all the characters to the left of the cursor.

SLC\_EEOL Erase to the end of the line. When visual editing is supported, this is the character that, when typed, will erase all characters to the right of the cursor.

For SLC\_EEOL, SLC\_EWR, and SLC\_ECR, if a system has a cursor that is not displayed between characters, but is positioned over a character, that character is assumed to be to the right of the cursor. Thus, the SLC\_ECR will erase the character that is under the current cursor position.

## [2.5](#) New control characters

### IAC ABORT

Abort. Similar to "IAC IP", but means only to abort or terminate the process to which the NVT is connected. (The Telnet spec says IP may "suspend, interrupt, abort or terminate" the process.) If a system does not have two methods of interrupting a process, then ABORT and IP should have the same effect.



#### IAC SUSP

Suspend the execution of the current process attached to the NVT in such a way that another process will take over control of the NVT, and the suspended process can be resumed at a later time. If the receiving system does not support this functionality, it should be ignored.

#### IAC EOF

End Of File. The recipient should notify the process connected to the NVT that an end of file has been reached. This is intended for systems that support the ability for the user to type in an EOF character at the keyboard.

### 3. Default Specification

The default specification for this option is

```
WONT LINEMODE
```

```
DONT LINEMODE
```

meaning there will not be any subnegotiation of the mode of the connection.

If WILL LINEMODE is negotiated, the defaults are:

```
IAC SB LINEMODE MODE 0 IAC SE  
IAC SB LINEMODE WONT FORWARDMASK IAC SE
```

If DO LINEMODE is negotiated, the defaults are:

```
IAC SB LINEMODE MODE 0 IAC SE  
IAC SB LINEMODE DONT FORWARDMASK IAC SE
```

Character values for SLC default to SLC\_NOSUPPORT.

### 4. Motivation

With increasing Telnet usage, it has become apparent that the ability

to do command line processing on the local machine and send completed

lines to the remote machine is a feature necessary in several environments. First, in the case of a connection over long delay equipment, it is very frustrating to the user to have the echoing of his data take several seconds. Second, some supercomputers, due to their nature, are not good at handling and processing single character input. For these machines, it is better to have the front



end computer do the character processing, and leave the supercomputer's cycles available for doing vectorized number crunching.

There have been attempts to make local line editing work within the existing Telnet specs. Indeed, the 4.3 BSD tape includes a version of Telnet that attempts to do this through recognition of the state of the ECHO and SUPPRESS-GO-AHEAD options; other implementations do this recognition purely through the ECHO option.

There are problems with both of these methods. Using just the ECHO provides no mechanism to have ECHO to the user turned off, and leave local character processing on, for example, when a user is typing a password.

The usage of the SUPPRESS-GO-AHEAD comes from reading into [RFC 858](#), where it states:

"In many TELNET implementations it will be desirable to couple the SUPPRESS-GO-AHEAD option to the echo option so that when the echo option is in effect, the SUPPRESS-GO-AHEAD option is in effect simultaneously: both of these options will normally have to be in effect simultaneously to effect what it commonly understood to be character at a time echoing by the remote computer."

The reverse reading of this is that without the ECHO option or the SUPPRESS-GO-AHEAD option, you are in line at a time mode, implying local line editing. This has the obvious problem that that is not what the SUPPRESS-GO-AHEAD option is supposed to mean.

Other shortcomings are that the Telnet specification is not rich enough to handle all of the special characters that some of the current operating systems support. For example, the ECHO/SGA implementation supports two ways of interrupting a process, by borrowing the BRK option for the second interrupt. Some implementations have taken the EOR option to send an End-Of-File. Obviously, this is using things for which they were not intended, and the correct solution would be to define new options.

Another problem is that some implementations of line mode buffer up the input until the end of the line, and then send the whole line across, editing characters and all. No local editing of the line has been done.

After examining several implementations, it has become clear that the correct thing to do is to implement new options to enhance the current Telnet specification so that it can support local line editing in a reasonable, reliable, and consistent manner.



There are three states that are of interest.

- 1) Local line editing and local signal trapping
- 2) Remote line editing, local signal trapping
- 3) Remote line editing, remote signal trapping

The case of local line editing and remote signal trapping is not a very interesting case, because you don't recognize the signals, and cannot send them to the remote side for it to recognize until the line has been completed. Also, special signals usually will have an effect on the line editing function, and if they are not being trapped locally the desired action will not happen.

Local line editing means that all normal command line character processing, like "Erase Character" and "Erase Line", happen on the local system, and only when "CR LF" (or some other special character) is encountered is the edited data sent to the remote system.

Signal trapping means, for example, that if the user types the character associated with the IP function, then the "IAC IP" function is sent to the remote side instead of the character typed. Remote signal trapping means, for example, that if the user types the character associated with the IP function, then the "IAC IP" function is not sent to the remote side, but rather the actual character typed is sent to the remote side.

## **5. Implementation Rules**

It is expected that any implementation that supports the Telnet LINEMODE option will support all of this specification.

### **5.1 User Interface**

Normally, the entire user interface is left up to the implementor. However, there is functionality that the user should be able to specify on the client side of the connection. During a Telnet session, the client side should allow some mechanism for the user to give commands to the local Telnet process. These commands should at least allow the user to:

- 1) Change the mode of the connection. The user should be able to attempt to turn EDIT, FLOW, TRAPSIG, and ECHO on and off. The server may refuse to change the state of the EDIT and TRAPSIG bits.

2) Import or export SLC. The user should be able to tell the

local Telnet process whether he wants to use the local or the current or default remote definitions of the special characters.

- 3) Manual sending of options. The user should be able to tell the local Telnet process to explicitly send any of the Telnet options (like IP, ABORT, AYT, etc).

## **5.2 End of line terminators.**

When LINEMODE is turned on, and when in EDIT mode, when any normal line terminator on the client side operating system is typed, the line should be transmitted with "CR LF" as the line terminator.

When

EDIT mode is turned off, a carriage return should be sent as "CR NUL", a line feed should be sent as LF, and any other key that cannot

be mapped into an ASCII character, but means the line is complete (like a DOIT or ENTER key), should be sent as "CR LF".

## **5.3 Output processing**

Regardless of what mode has been negotiated, the server side is responsible for doing all output processing. Specifically, it should send "CR LF" when it wants the "newline" function, "CR NUL" when it wants just a carriage return, and "LF" when it wants just a linefeed.

## **5.4 A terminal driver in Telnet?**

Conforming implementations need not do all the line editing themselves. There is nothing wrong with letting the system terminal driver handle the line editing, and have it hand to the Telnet application the completed and edited line, which is then sent to the remote system.

## **5.5 Setting of Local Characters**

When this RFC was being developed, the original thought was that both

sides of the connection would use their own defaults for the special characters, even if they were not the same on both sides of the connection. If this scheme is used, though, the view that the user has is that the local special characters are being used, and the remote character settings don't matter. It was decided that the client side of the connection should be in control of the character settings.

When LINEMODE is negotiated, the client must either export the local character settings to the server, or send a request (SLC 0 SLC\_DEFAULT 0) to import the servers special characters. The usual action would be that a client running on a full fledged computer



would export the special characters, and a client running where there are no local defaults (like on some terminal servers) would import the special characters.

When an SLC command is received, the action taken should be:

- 1) Ignore it if it is the same as the current settings.
- 2) If the SLC\_LEVELBITS are the same as the current level bits, but the value is different and the SLC\_ACK bit is set, no reply is generated. On the server side, the command is ignored, and on the client side, a switch is made to the new value. This is so that if a request to change the same character is generated by both the server and the client, they will both settle on the clients requested value.
- 3) If we agree with the new setting, we switch to it and reply with the same value, but also set the SLC\_ACK bit.
- 4) If we don't agree, we send a response with what we think the value should be. The SLC\_ACK bit is NOT set in this case. You may only disagree with a value by sending a different value at a lower level.

If the remote system doesn't support some of the line editing characters, but the front end does, then the front end may use the local definitions for those characters when in line mode. In this case, the server should send "SLC xxx SLC\_DEFAULT 0" in response to

a "SLC 0 SLC\_DEFAULT 0" request, and just ack whatever value the client requests to set the function to.

The SLC\_FORW2 character should only be used if SLC\_FORW1 is already in use.

## **5.6 FORWARDMASK and SLC\_FORW1 and SLC\_FORW2**

To help ease the amount of work needed to implement the client side, two methods of setting forwarding characters are provided. The SLC\_FORW1 and SLC\_FORW2 allow for the setting of two additional characters on which to forward buffered input data. Since many terminal drivers have the ability to set one or more line delimiters,

it is fairly easy to support these without having to implement through the local terminal driver, rather than putting a terminal driver into Telnet. If the local terminal driver has functionality that maps easily into the FORWARDMASK, then it can also be easily supported. If the local terminal driver does not support that, then it would require more work to support FORWARDMASK.



Also note that the client side is required to forward data when it sees one of SLC\_FORW1, SLC\_FORW2, or FORWARDMASK characters, or when any normal line termination or special signal is encountered. The client side is also free to forward on other characters that it chooses. For example, if the server side sent a FORWARDMASK that asked for data to be forwarded on the first 20 control characters (ASCII codes 1 through 024), and the client side cannot have its local terminal driver forward on just the first 20 control characters, but it can have the local terminal driver forward on any control character (ASCII codes 1 through 039), then the client side could validly accept the FORWARDMASK, and forward on any control character. When in EDIT mode, care should be taken to not forward at

random times, since once that data is forwarded, no more editing on the forwarded part of the line can be done. The only time (other than the normal times) that data should be forwarded when in EDIT mode would be if a single input line is too long to handle locally.

### **5.7 Valid and invalid modes and values**

At no time should "DO LINEMODE" be negotiated in both directions of the Telnet connection. The side that is the "DO LINEMODE" is considered to be the server side, and the side that is "WILL LINEMODE" is the client side.

At no time should "SB LINEMODE DO/DONT FORWARDMASK", be sent unless "DO LINEMODE" has been previously negotiated. At no time should "SB LINEMODE WILL/WONT FORWARDMASK", be sent unless "WILL LINEMODE" has been previously negotiated.

If an ABORT, EOF or SUSP, is received and the system does not support that functionality, it may just be ignored.

### **5.8 Flushing input and output**

When an IP, BRK or ABORT is sent, it is usually desirable to be able to flush the input stream, and to flush output to the user until the IP, BRK, or ABORT is processed. The SLC\_FLUSHIN and SLC\_FLUSHOUT bits are used to indicate what action should be done. These bits are

advisory only, but should be honored if possible. The standard method for processing the SLC\_FLUSHIN is to use the Telnet "Synch" signal, and the SLC\_FLUSHOUT is processed using the TIMING-MARK option. If both are to be sent, the IAC DM is sent before the DO TIMING-MARK. Thus, the sender would send "IAC XXX IAC DM IAC DO TIMING-MARK", where XXX may be IP, BRK or ABORT, or any other special character. The IAC DM is sent as TCP urgent data with the DM as the last (or only) data octet; this is used to flush the input stream. The "IAC DO TIMING-MARK" is used to tell when to stop flushing output; once it is sent, all data is discarded until an "IAC WILL



TIMING-MARK" or an "IAC WONT TIMING-MARK" is received.

Since the SLC\_FLUSHIN and SLC\_FLUSHOUT bit are only advisory, the user interface should provide a method so that the user can override the sending (or not sending) of the "Synch" and TIMING-MARK, but the default action should be to send them according to the SLC\_FLUSHIN and SLC\_FLUSHOUT bits.

Whenever an IAC AO is received, a Synch must be returned. When ever a Synch is being processed, (by the TCP connection going into Urgent mode), all data must be discarded (but not Telnet commands!) until

an

IAC DM is found, and the connection goes out of Urgent mode. See

[RFC](#)

[854](#), "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", for a complete description of the Synch signal.















```

LINEMODE MODE
EDIT|TRAPSIG|MODE_ACK
[ The user changes his erase character to ^H. ]
                                LINEMODE SLC EC VALUE 8
LINEMODE SLC EC VALUE|ACK 8
[ The user decides to revert to all the original client side
  special characters. ]
LINEMODE SLC SYNCH DEFAULT 0 IP
VALUE|FLUSHIN|FLUSHOUT 3 A0
VALUE 15 AYT DEFAULT 0 ABORT
VALUE|FLUSHIN|FLUSHOUT 28 EOF
VALUE 4 SUSP VALUE|FLUSHIN 26 EC
VALUE 127 EL VALUE 21 EW VALUE
23 RP VALUE 18 LNEXT VALUE 22
XON VALUE 17 XOFF VALUE 19
                                LINEMODE SLC SYNCH NOSUPPORT 0
                                A0 NOSUPPORT 15 AYT NOSUPPORT 0
                                SUSP NOSUPPORT|FLUSHIN 26 EC
                                VALUE|ACK 127 EW VALUE|ACK 23
RP
                                VALUE|ACK 18 LNEXT VALUE|ACK 22
                                XON VALUE|ACK 17 XOFF VALUE|ACK
                                19
LINEMODE SLC SYNCH NOSUPPORT|ACK
0 A0 NOSUPPORT|ACK 15 AYT
NOSUPPORT|ACK 0 SUSP
NOSUPPORT|ACK|FLUSHIN 26
[ The user decides to import the remote sides default special
  characters. ]
LINEMODE SLC 0 DEFAULT 0
                                LINEMODE SLC IP
                                VALUE|FLUSHIN|FLUSHOUT 3 ABORT
                                VALUE|FLUSHIN|FLUSHOUT 28 EOF
                                VALUE 4 EC VALUE 127 EL VALUE
21
[ Since these are the same as the current local settings, no
  response is generated. ]
[ This next example is what would happen if an editor was fired
  up, that wanted to let the client side do the echoing and
  buffering of characters, but did not want it to do any line
  editing, and only forward the data when got a control
  character. Note that we have preceded all the the 0377s
  in the forward mask with an IAC. ]
                                LINEMODE MODE 0
                                LINEMODE DO FORWARDMASK IAC
0377
                                IAC 0377 IAC 0377 IAC 0377 0 0
0
                                0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1
LINEMODE MODE 0
LINEMODE WILL FORWARDMASK
[ Application runs to completion, and then things are to be set

```



```
back to what they were before. ]
                                LINEMODE MODE EDIT|TRAPSIG
                                LINEMODE DONT FORWARDMASK
LINEMODE MODE EDIT|TRAPSIG
LINEMODE WONT FORWARDMASK
```

## 6. Other Telnet options and RFCs

The following is a list of RFCs for various Telnet options that should be supported along with LINEMODE.

1. Postel, J. and Reynolds, J., "TELNET PROTOCOL SPECIFICATION", [RFC 854](#), ISI, May 1983.
2. Postel, J. and Reynolds, J., "TELNET OPTION SPECIFICATIONS", [RFC 855](#), ISI, May 1983.
3. Postel, J. and Reynolds, J., "TELNET BINARY TRANSMISSION", [RFC 856](#), ISI, May 1983.
4. Postel, J. and Reynolds, J., "TELNET ECHO OPTION", [RFC 857](#), ISI, May 1983.
5. Postel, J. and Reynolds, J., "TELNET SUPPRESS GO AHEAD OPTION", [RFC 858](#), ISI, May 1983.
6. Postel, J. and Reynolds, J., "TELNET TIMING MARK OPTION", [RFC 860](#), ISI, May 1983.
7. VanBokkeln, J., "Telnet Terminal-Type Option", [RFC 1091](#), FTP Software, Inc., February 1989.
8. Waitzman, D., "Telnet Window Size Option", [RFC 1073](#), BBN STC, October 1988.
9. Hedrick, C., "Telnet Remote Flow Control Option", [RFC 1080](#), Rutgers University, November, 1988.
10. Hedrick, C., "Telnet Terminal Speed Option", [RFC 1079](#), Rutgers University, December, 1988.

The following is a list of RFCs that need not be supported for LINEMODE, but which would enhance any TELNET implementation.

11. Postel, J. and Reynolds, J., "TELNET STATUS OPTION", [RFC 859](#), ISI, May 1983.
12. Postel, J. and Reynolds, J., "TELNET END OF RECORD OPTION",



[RFC 885](#), ISI, December 1983.

13. Silverman, S., "OUTPUT MARKING TELNET OPTION", [RFC 933](#), MITRE-Washington, January 1985.
14. Marcy, G., "Telnet X Display Location Option", [RFC 1096](#), Carnegie Mellon University, March 1989.

#### Security Consideratiions

Security issues are not discussed in this memo.

#### Author's Address

David A. Borman  
Cray Research Inc.  
655F Lone Oak Drive  
Eagan, MN 55123

Phone: (612) 452-6650  
EMail: dab@CRAY.COM

IETF Telnet WG Mailing List: [telnet-ietf@CRAY.COM](mailto:telnet-ietf@CRAY.COM)

