Frequently Asked Questions

EZSPEC

Batch reporting

Question

I get the message "UNABLE TO OPEN REMOTE FILE STATION" when I try to execute a batch report. What should I do?

Resolution

You need to edit the batch template. EZSPEC uses the batch template to specify parameters for a batch run. The batch template is a job file that is usually called **DARGAL/BATCHTEMPLATE** on the same usercode and pack as the other EZSPEC/DARGAL files.

Get the batch template in CANDE. (You will need to be logged on to the usercode where the file exists or be a privileged user.)

Look for the line that contains the words **TASK T1;.** Change it to the following:

TASK T1; T1(STATION=MYJOB(SOURCESTATION));

Save the batch template. Your batch reports should work now.

Question

Can I specify a start time for a batch report in EZSPEC?

Resolution

If you select the Batch report option on the EZSPEC main screen, EZSPEC will start the batch report right away.

You can, however, use the BATCH command in the action line to execute a report. STarttime is one of the BAtch command's menu options. The following command, for example, executes the specification called **SAMPLE/SPEC** with the start time **18:00**.

.BATCH SAMPLE SPEC: STARTTIME=18:00

Question

I want to send output from an EZSPEC batch report to a microcomputer disk file. Can I do this?

Resolution

As long as you are using the Micro Filter for TCP/IP, you can send a batch report to a microcomputer disk file. Make sure that the access rights on the PC are properly set and that no user intervention is required. A **Notify** check box is available in the **Access Rights** dialog box in the **Micro Filter** window. When you use the Micro Filter for TCP/IP, you can send output to a micro host. When you send the output, the **Micro Filter for TCP/IP** dialog box appears asking if it is okay to use the PC as the host. To prevent this message from appearing, you can remove the check beside **Notify**.

Specifically, take the following steps on the micro host to prevent the dialog box from appearing:

- Bring up the Micro Filter for TCP/IP.

- Choose the **Access Rights** command (Options menu) in the **Micro Filter for TCP/IP** window.

- Remove the check beside **Notify** in the **Access Rights** dialog box and choose **OK**.

    (Access is allowed or denied based on the settings you made for Write and/or Print.)

Microfilter-related

Question

I'm having problems sending EZSPEC reports to Excel via DDE. I specified a micro disk file with the XLS extension. Is there anything else I need to do?

Resolution

First of all, make sure that DDE (Dynamic Data Exchange) is properly set up and configured on your PC. Also, make certain that you have associated the XLS extension with Excel. See the *Micro Filter for Windows Installation Guide* if you need more specific information about setting up DDE on your PC.

To use EZSPEC with DDE, follow these steps in EZSPEC:

1. Create either a Micro Simple Column Report or a Micro Summary Report.

2. Mark **TAB** as the micro format on either the Report Contents Screen (Micro Simple Column Report) or the Report Contents Screen (Micro Summary Report), depending on the type of report you are creating.

3. Then mark **MICRODISK** as your output device on the Output Devices Screen.

   Specify a file name extension that is recognized as a DDE extension by the micro filter. The extension XLS is the default extension for Excel.

4. Execute your report.

Question

Can I send an EZSPEC micro report with both detail and summary information to Excel? I want detail data as well as totals and averages included in my report. I don't want to do any DARGAL programming.

Resolution

The two available micro report types in EZSPEC are Micro Simple Column Report and Micro Summary Report. In this case, it is best to create a Micro Simple Column Report that includes all the detail data you want. Then, once you import the detail data into Excel, do your totaling and averaging in that product.

Question

I'm trying to bring micro output into Word 2000. There seems to be a conflict. Is there a special option I need to set?

Resolution

If you are using Microsoft Word 2000, you need to change the security setting for macros to **Medium** in Word. The default setting is **High**, which does not allow you to enable DDE macros automatically. In Word 2000, choose **Tools** menu > **Macro** command > **Security** option > **Security Level** tab > **Medium** setting to reset the security level so you can use DDE.

Question

In EZSPEC, can I send a listing of all report specs to a micro file?

Resolution

The best way to get a listing of specs is to use the DARGAL **DIR** command. Use the **Kind** option of this command to limit the listing to report specs. To enter a DARGAL command from within EZSPEC, place a dot (period) before the command on the EZSPEC Action line. To list all report specs on the usercode to a micro file named **SPECLIST.TXT** in the **TEMP** folder on the D drive, enter the following command on the EZSPEC Action line:

.DIR :KIND=DARGALREPORTSPEC;MF=D:\TEMP\SPECLIST.TXT

Question

How do I send output to microdisk and automatically overwrite the file if it already exists?

Resolution

The default output device in EZSPEC is the terminal. To change to another device, choose **OUTput to TERMINAL**. Place an **X** beside **MICRODISK** and specify a name beside **FILE NAME**. To overwrite the file automatically, place an exclamation point (!) after the file name. For example, to send output to a file named **DEPT11.TXT** in the **TEMP** folder on your **D** drive and automatically overwrite the file if it already exists, enter the following beside **FILE NAME**:

D:\TEMP\DEPT11.TXT!

Question

I have created a Micro Simple Column Report that contains numerous fields. When I send the output to the microprinter, the data is truncated. Rather than printing in landscape mode, is there a way to make the data wrap?

Resolution

To wrap data generated from the Micro Simple Column Report, you need to specify a foldpoint. **Foldpoint** is a menu option of the DARGAL **LAyout** command. In EZSPEC, choose **GENerate a dargal program from current spec** on the Main Screen after you select a file and specify report contents. The program you generate will contain the DARGAL code that generates the report. You can then edit the program in DARGAL to specify a foldpoint. To specify a foldpoint of 80 and suppress column headings, for example, add the following to the line of the program that contains the LAyout command:

FOLDPOINT=80 HEADINGS=F

The line now looks similar to the following:

1030 LAYOUT 1 :STYLE=DELIM SPACES=0 FOLDPOINT=80 HEADINGS=F

Question

When I send an EZSPEC report to browse, I get the message "WARNING: READLIMIT WILL NOT BE USED." Why is this happening and will it affect my report?

Resolution

Readlimit determines the number of records EZSPEC reads before it interrupts a report. The default readlimit is 500, which means EZSPEC interrupts a report after it reads every 500 records. The waiting prompt (. . . >) appears. You can read another 500 records by transmitting a blank or you can terminate the report by transmitting a forward slash (/). When you send output to browse, EZSPEC ignores the readlimit. The message indicates that the report will not be interrupted after 500 (the default number) records have been read. By default, the browse filter sends two pages of a report or listing to memory. You can set this option to another value if you like. The message in no way indicates a problem with the report.

Question

When I try to send my report to a microdisk file, I get the message "DISK FULL." I know that it isn't full, so why is this message appearing?

Resolution

Carefully recheck the name that you specified beside **FILE NAME**. The "DISK FULL" message sometimes appears if you specify an incorrect drive or folder.

Data access, reading files

Question

Can I read a dataset without going through a set?

Resolution

EZSPEC allows you to read datasets directly — that is, without using a set. Although reading through keys provides some advantages in terms of sequencing or finding a range of records,

it also invokes some overhead. EZSPEC reads datasets directly three to six times faster than reading them through sets. If, for a given report, you need to read all or nearly all the records in a dataset, you should use the dataset even if your logic involves key fields.

After you specify report contents, follow these steps to read a dataset directly:

1. Choose **record SELection is ALL RECORDS** on the EZSPEC Main Screen.
2. Enter **Done** on the Select Fields Screen.
3. Choose **CURRENT SET IS . . .** on the Record Selection Screen.

   The Selection Set Screen appears.

4. Choose the dataset itself (usually listed first) on the Selection Set Screen.
5. Execute your report using one of the reporting options on the Main Screen.

Question

I can't find the option that allows me to read a dataset backwards. Where is it and how do I use it?

Resolution

After you specify report contents, follow these steps to read a dataset backwards:

1. Choose **record SELection is ALL RECORDS** on the EZSPEC Main Screen.
2. Mark fields and enter **Done** (or just enter **Done** if not choosing fields) on the Select Fields Screen.
3. Choose **CURRENT SET IS . . .** on the Record Selection Screen.

   The Selection Set Screen appears.

4. Enter **B** beside **REPORT DIRECTION IS** on the Selection Set Screen.
5. Execute a report using one of the reporting options on the Main Screen.

Question

I'm trying to run a spec and I'm getting a message that the (data) file is not found. What does this mean?

Resolution

There are a few possibilities for that message. The message is referring to the data file that is named in the file description used by the spec. It's possible that the data file no longer exists. Or, either the data may be secured PRIVATE or it might have a guard file on it.

Question

I have several EZSPEC report specs that report from a file whose nickname has changed. How do I update the specs so that they reference the correct name?

Resolution

When you try to open each of these specs in EZSPEC, a File Open Error Screen displays. It allows you to enter a substitute nickname. After you supply a different nickname, save the report spec.

Calculations, defines, expressions

Question

I get the message "WARNING: UNINITIALIZED NEW VARIABLE IN DEFINE." What does this mean?

Resolution

When you create a define in EZSPEC, make sure that you place a # (pound sign) before each field name you use in the text of the define. EZSPEC treats names without pound signs as variables, so the warning message appears. Correct the problem by adding the pound sign.

Question

Can I use more than one IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE statement in an EZSPEC define?

Resolution

You can use multiple IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE statements in a define. You can enter text until you run out of room on the screen. An example that uses more than one IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE statement follows:

IF (IF #EMP-DEPT WITHIN (11,12,15) THEN #EMP-ANNUAL-SALARY * .04 ELSE #EMP- ANNUAL-SALARY * .025) >= 1000 THEN "BONUS CATEGORY 1" ELSE "BONUS

CATEGORY 2"

If you need more room, you can generate a DARGAL program for the spec and then add more text in DARGAL. You can also try to use a CASE statement rather than IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE statements if possible.

Defines can reference other defines. This is called nesting. You can have 15 levels of nesting, and there cannot be any circular references. You will rarely exceed this nesting limit. If you do, you should determine if you can combine the text of some of your defines. Although combining expressions results in longer text for defines, the expression is evaluated more efficiently.

Question

How do I extract just the city from a field that contains both the city and the state? The names of the cities are of varied length (of course), a comma follows each city name, and the state is represented as a two-character string.

Resolution

Create a string define in EZSPEC and enter text similar to the following as the text of the define:

1#CITY-STATE.(1 THRU (LEN(TRIM(1#CITY-STATE, RIGHT))) - 3)

The define retains just the city portion of the data. The last three characters (the comma and the state) are discarded.

Question

Is there a way to easily select all records that have any character other than the one I specify in a field from file 2? In other words, I want to select all records that do not have a "T" in the field 2#STATUS.

Resolution

You can make this type of selection as you would any other basic selection in EZSPEC by using EZSPEC's Assist Mode. Follow these steps:

1. Choose **record SELection is ALL RECORDS** on the Main Screen.
2. Mark the field **#STATUS** (from file 2) on the Select Fields Screen and transmit.
3. Enter a **T** in the first form on the Field Comparison Screen, choose **EXCLUDE THE VALUE(S) LISTED ABOVE** and transmit.

When the Record Selection Screen (Assist Mode) appears, the following selection text appears:

(2#STATUS NE "T")

Run your report to see that no records with the character you specified appear in the listing.

Question

Can I create a report that contains a random sample of data?

Resolution

You can get a random sample of data by using the RANDOM function. To enter this type of selection expression, you need to use EZSPEC's Expert Mode. Choose the option **record SELection is ALL RECORDS** on the EZSPEC Main Screen. Enter **Done** on the Select Fields Screen (without selecting any fields) to switch from Assist Mode to Expert Mode.

The RANDOM function generates a random number with a value between 0 and 1. A different number is generated each time the function is invoked and the number is distributed evenly between 0 and 1. Therefore, you can randomize any selection conditions using the RANDOM function.

Because the numbers are distributed between 0 and 1, enter either one of the following selection conditions to receive an approximate 10 percent random sample:

RANDOM >= .9
RANDOM <= .1

The ranges between 0 and .1 and between .9 and 1 are 10 percent of the range between 0 and 1. The more records in your file, the closer the sample size will be to the percentage you want.

For an approximate 20 percent sample, enter one of the following selection conditions:

RANDOM >= .8
RANDOM <= .2

If you use a RANDOM expression without any other selection conditions, you receive a sample drawn from all the records used for the report. You can add a RANDOM expression (with the logical operator AND) to any other selection expressions. For example, the following condition produces a report containing an approximate 10 percent sample of females with salaries over $20,000:

1#EMP-SEX = "F" AND 1#EMP-ANNUAL-SALARY > 20000 AND RANDOM >= .9

Question

Can I combine both string and numeric fields in a string define?

Resolution

You can combine string and numeric fields in a string define, but you need to convert the numeric fields to string items by using the $ function. For example, the following string define combines city, state, and ZIP code into one field:

DEFINE NAME: CITY-LINE
FORMAT: 28
TEXT OF DEFINE:
TRIM (1#EMP-CITY) & ", " & 1#EMP-STATE & " " & $(1#EMP-ZIP- CODE,Z5)

For more information about the $ function, see Appendix B in the *EZSPEC User's Guide*.

Question

I need to remove all commas from a string expression. Is there a feature that allows me to do this?

Resolution

The TRIM function allows you to strip blanks from a string expression or delete all occurrences of a specified character from a string expression. To specify the character you want to remove, enclose it in double quotation marks. Since embedded commas can conflict with some microcomputer software products, this application of the TRIM function is especially useful if you need to remove commas from data you are sending to a microcomputer disk file.

Create a define and include text similar to the following as the text of the define. This define removes all embedded commas from a field named **ADDRESS**:

TRIM (1#ADDRESS,",")

Question

Rather than rounding up the values in a numeric field, I need to "round down" the figures. I then need to select records based on this value. How do I do this?

Resolution

The TRUNCATE function allows you to return the truncated value of a numeric expression. You can specify the number of decimal positions to which you want to truncate the number. If you do not specify a number of decimals, the truncated integer portion is returned.

The following selection expression returns all records where the truncated value of the field WEIGHT is less than 300. To enter this type of selection condition, switch to Expert Mode.

TRUNCATE(1#WEIGHT) < 300

Question

I have building number and street name stored together in an address field. I need to separate them into two different fields. The building number needs to be a numeric field and the street name should be a string field. How can I do this?

Resolution

To separate these items into two different fields, you need to create three defines. The first define searches for a space in the field to determine the position at which the building number ends and the street address begins. The second define extracts the building number by using the **VAL** function with the **FREE** option. The **FREE** option allows you to pull numeric data out of a field that contains both string and numeric characters. The third define extracts the street name. It uses the first define to determine where the information begins. For more information about any of the functions used here, see Appendix B in the *EZSPEC User's Guide* or Chapter 6 in the *DARGAL Reference Manual*.

1. Enter **DE** (for define) on the Action line on the display Fields Screen.
2. Choose **ADD NUMERIC DEFINE**.
3. Enter a define name (**POS**, for example).
4. Enter the following for **TEXT OF DEFINE** and then transmit:

   " " IN 1#ADDRESS

5. Choose **ADD NUMERIC DEFINE** on the Defines Screen.
6. Enter a define name (**BUILDNUM**, for example).

7. Enter the following for **TEXT OF DEFINE** and then transmit:

   VAL(1#EMP-ADDRESS, FREE 1)

8. Choose **ADD STRING DEFINE** on the Defines Screen.
9. Enter a define name (**STREETNAME**, for example).
10. Enter the following for **TEXT OF DEFINE** and then transmit:

    1#EMP-ADDRESS.((POS +1) THRU END)

    You can now run a report that displays the two address items separately.

Question

How do I specify an implied decimal in numeric output?

Resolution

You can create a define that multiplies the data in your field by 100. Then display the define rather than the actual field in the report.

Formatting, headlines, output

Question

*I've specified a format of PIC 999999999 for a numeric field and I have also entered 0 (zero) for **SKIP COLUMNS BEFORE**. Why does EZSPEC still leave one space before the column in output?*

Resolution

Picture formats that start with the word PIC are treated as old-style picture formats, and they can only contain formats that were valid in Version 56 and earlier. When you use this style of format, EZSPEC/DARGAL leaves a leading space for the sign. To suppress the leading space, use the U (unsigned) picture format, for example PIC U999999999. A better solution is to use the new-style formats, for example, use "999999999" (without the word PIC).

Question

I have to create an output file that includes a ten-digit field. I have to display all ten digits or fill the field with zeros. What format should I enter?

Resolution

Enter the format "9999999999" in the **FORMAT** column beside your field on the Formats and Headings Screen. Ten digits will appear in the output for your field. If there is no value, ten zeros display.

Question

I just created an extract file using EZSPEC. There are spaces between the output columns. Why are they there and how do I remove them?

Resolution

By default, EZSPEC/DARGAL inserts one space between output columns. To remove the space between each output column, set **NUMBER OF SPACES TO SKIP BETWEEN COLUMNS** to 0 on the EZSPEC Report Format Options Screen.

Question

I'd like a blank line between my output records. How do I specify that?

Resolution

After you specify report contents, choose **FORMATS AND HEADINGS** on the Report Contents Screen. Enter a **1** in the **SKIP LINES AFTER** column beside your last detail item. When you run your report, you'll see a blank line between each row of data.

Question

I have a datetyped field stored in YYYYMMDD form. How do I display it in YYMMDD format? What if I need to actually extract the YYMMDD portion?

Resolution

As long as your field is datetyped, you can specify a DATE format for the field. On the Formats and Headings Screen, enter **DATE YYMMDD** in the **FORMAT** column beside the field. When you run your report, the output appears in YYMMDD format.

If you need to extract the portion of the date, create a numeric define and enter the following as the text of the define:

1#ADMIT-DATE MOD 1000000

The define divides the field by 1000000 and keeps only the remainder (the last six digits).

Question

I'm sending EZSPEC report output to a system disk file. Can I specify a limit for the record size?

Resolution

You can specify the **MAXRecsize** file attribute after the system disk file name on the Output Devices Screen. **MAXRecsize** specifies the maximum record size allowed. For example, if you are sending an EZSPEC report to a system file named **(TEST)DIV2000/SCORES** and want to specify a maximum record size of 60, enter the following beside **SYSTEM DISK : FILE NAME**:

(TEST)DIV2000/SCORES(MAXR=60)

Question

How do I apply file attributes to a system disk file in EZSPEC?

Resolution

You can send report output to a system disk file by specifying a file name with the **SYSTEM DISK** option on the Output Devices Screen. When you generate the report, a mainframe file is created on your usercode and pack (by default). You can specify file attributes (such as **REMove**, **Pagesize** (for column headings), **APPend**, and **EXTRact**) for output to system disk files. Place the attributes in parentheses after the file name. If the file name includes a pack name, specify the attributes after the pack name, for example:

(PROD)REPORTS/Q2/FIGURES/WEST ON DISK2 (REMOVE=T, PAGESIZE=60)

Question

When I send my report to the system printer, I see many question marks in field output. They do not appear in output on any other output device. What's wrong?

Resolution

It's possible that you are using a printer translate table that is translating the characters to question marks. Also, check for system printer settings. Enter **Utility** on the Action line on the EZSPEC Main Screen. Then choose **CHANGE SYSTEM PRINTER OPTIONS** on the Utility Main Screen. The System Printer Options Screen appears. It has two pages of options. In this case, another user who had access to the spec had set some options on the second page that were affecting output.

Question

I want to send my EZSPEC report to an alternate printer, but the option is not available on the Output Devices Screen. Why?

Resolution

ALTERNATE is not available on the EZSPEC Output Devices Screen unless it is specified in a setupfile or has been named using the DARGAL Name command. This device is typically a local addressable printer or station connected to your system. Certain printers cannot be named as alternate devices. (See chapter 7 and the Setup command in chapter 10 of the *DARGAL Reference Manual* for more information about alternate devices.)

Note: The alternate device will be deimplemented in Version 61.

Question

How do I specify that I do not want repeating values for my break fields to display in a report?

Resolution

You can prevent the printing of duplicate break fields for the Standard Column Report or the Summary Report. Set **SUPPRESS DUPLICATE BREAK FIELDS** to a Y on the Report Format Options Screen. (You cannot prevent the printing of duplicate break fields if you are sending the report to multiple output devices.)

Question

Can you change the default settings on the EZSPEC Report Headings Screen?

Resolution

The settings that are on the Report Headings Screen are saved with each spec. You can change the values as needed on a spec-by-spec basis. You cannot change the values that appear automatically by default.

Configuration, setup, general info

Question

How do I set the readlimit to 0 (zero) for all EZSPEC users all the time?

Resolution

You can set readlimit to 0 (zero) in the global setupfile. In the file
(DARGAL)DARGAL/GLOBALSETUPFILE, add the following lines:

COMMANDS
SETUP READLIMIT=0

However, a user can have more than one setupfile. There may be a global setupfile as well as one or more local setupfiles. DARGAL processes entries in the local setupfile last. This means that the local entries override entries in the global setupfile. If security is by user profiles, the global setupfile is *not* read. You may need to set the readlimit to 0 (zero) in the local setupfile, depending on how security is implemented at your site.

Question

When I run my EZSPEC report spec from a WFL, the Setup and PSetup options I specify in the WFL are ignored. Why?

Resolution

When you save an EZSPEC report spec, you can decide whether Setup and PSetup options are saved with the spec. The default setting for both of these options is Y (yes). Therefore, if you specify Setup and PSetup options in your WFL and then run the spec from the WFL, the settings specified with the spec are executed second. This means that the settings saved with the spec are overwriting the settings specified in the WFL.

Retrieve the report spec in EZSPEC without loading the Setup and PSetup options from the spec. Then resave the spec without the options. Now, when you run the WFL, the options in the WFL will be applied.

Question

Before I run my EZSPEC report specs, I always set a cutoff year and readlimit in DARGAL first. This time, it seems like EZSPEC is disregarding my settings. What's wrong?

Resolution

The settings that you are specifying in DARGAL are probably being overwritten by settings specified in the spec itself. After you set your options in DARGAL, retrieve the spec in EZSPEC and enter an **N** beside **LOAD SETUP OPTIONS FROM SPEC**. Then resave the spec without the options. If you always set cutoff year and readlimit, consider placing these options in a setupfile, so they are executed every time you run EZSPEC.