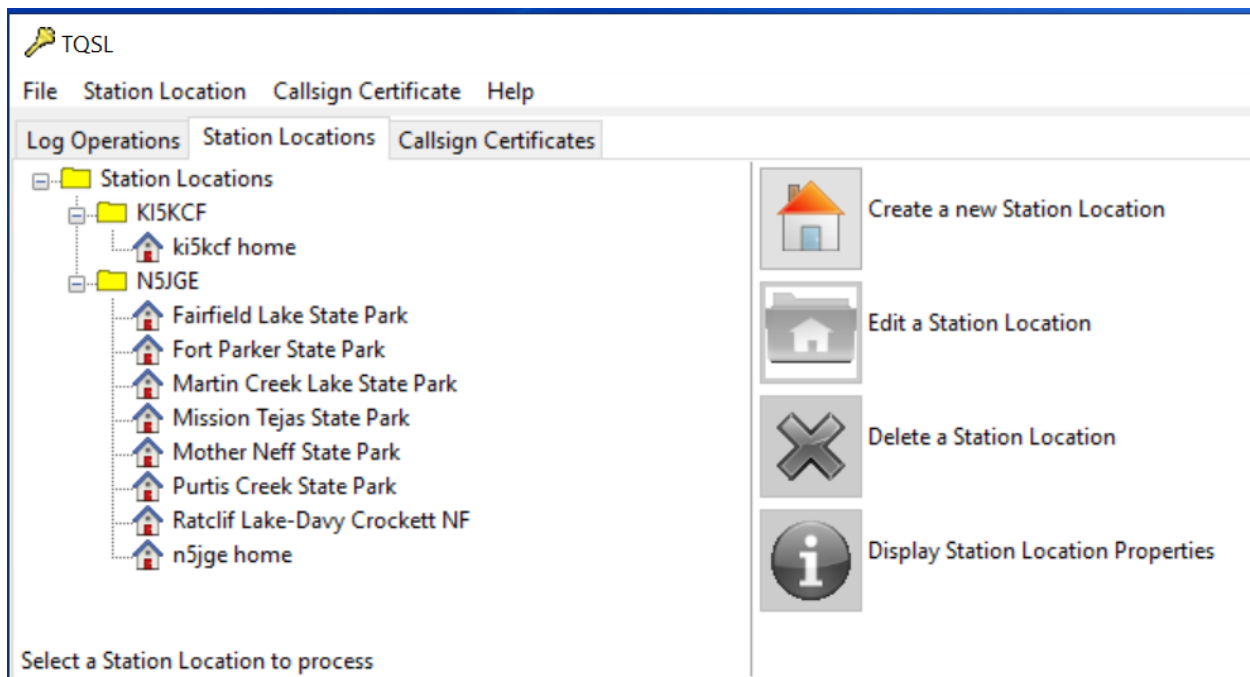


Tips for Logging POTA & Other Portable QSOs

Jim Edmondson, N5JGE

This month we take a look at some tips for correctly logging QSOs made during portable operations. I had done about 15 POTA activations from 6 different parks before learning about creating station locations. Using station locations provides more accurate QSO data to LoTW. In talking about this with fellow hams, I found that it was new information to other new (and some older) hams. As more hams participate in POTA and other portable operations, this becomes more important. While confirmation data in LoTW is very accurate, I am pretty sure that there is a lot of bad location data in the LoTW database.

ARRL recommends that you create a station location for everywhere that you operate that is not your home station. Creating a new station location is quite easy, but using them is a little tricky. The figure below is a screenshot from my TQSL software that shows my current station locations. To the right are action buttons to create, edit, delete or display locations. Clicking on the “Create a new Station Location” button opens the form shown in the second figure below.



Note: TQSL Application Showing Station Locations Tab

When you select one of your call signs from the dropdown of the upper text box, you can only select the DXCC entity for that call sign in the second box. In my case, that is “United States of America”. The other text boxes (grid, CQ, ITU, state, county, etc.) are populated with information from your license record. All of those boxes except CQ and ITU can be edited as needed for your portable location. CQ and ITU are filled in for the state selected, however, some states cover more than one of those zones. For those states, the zone box will include a dropdown with appropriate selections pre-populated for you to choose. Setting your location allows your QSO partner to receive correct credit in LoTW for CQ and ITU

zones, grids, counties, state, IOTA (Islands on the Air) and NPOTA (ARRL's National Parks on the Air program).

The screenshot shows a window titled "Add Station Location" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The main content area is titled "Confirming QSOs with Station" and features the call sign "N5JGE" in a large, bold font. Below this, there are several form fields:

- Call Sign: N5JGE (dropdown menu)
- DXCC Entity: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (dropdown menu)
- Grid Square: EM21hd (text input)
- ITU Zone: 7 (dropdown menu)
- State: Texas (dropdown menu)
- CQ Zone: 4 (dropdown menu)
- County: Houston (dropdown menu)
- IOTA ID: (empty text input)
- Park: [None] (dropdown menu)

At the bottom right of the window, there are four buttons: "Help", "< Back", "Next >" (highlighted with a blue border), and "Cancel".

Note: TQSL Application Showing “Add Station Location” Entry Form

When operating portable, after your call sign; say “portable”, use the /P or call CQ POTA to let contacts know that you are not at your home station. You should provide them with correct location information as entered into you TQSL location record. It is especially important to set your grid correctly in logging and digital software. In ALog, edit your “setup” information to use the new grid. This will populate the “Grid Sent” data in each QSO record. Also, in digital software (wsjt-x, JTDX, MSHV, etc.) be sure to change your grid square as well so that the correct grid is sent.

When you are ready to upload your QSOs to LoTW, select the proper location in the logging software. If you upload directly using TQSL, it will prompt you to select the correct location. For ALog, the figure below shows part of the LoTW Manager form. In LoTW Manager, at the far left, the third text box from the top includes a dropdown list of all of your TQSL locations. It is only necessary to select a location upon upload, so that the correct information is sent to LoTW. Downloading only confirms successful upload and checks to see if the QSO has been confirmed. Those operations do not depend on location information; only callsign worked, date / time, band, mode and frequency are confirmed.

Finally, the final figure below shows one of my QSL records from LoTW. Note that my county and grid are not those of my home station (Houston County, EM21hd). They are for my recent POTA activation of Fairfield Lake State Park. I hope that you will use these tips to improve the accuracy of your and your contacts’ QSL records in LoTW.

LoTW Manager 1.9

LoTW User Name: N5JGE

LoTW Login Password: *****
 Display Password

LoTW Station Location: n5jge home

- Fairfield Lake State Park
- Fort Parker State Park
- ki5kcf home
- Martin Creek Lake State Park
- Mission Tejas State Park
- Mother Neff State Park
- n5jge home
- Purtis Creek State Park
- Ratclif Lake-Davy Crockett NF

Sign and Upload

All Contacts Not Uploaded

Selected Contacts from Main Form

Entire Log

Add Station_Call N5JGE

Show Date Range

From Reastrv

Browse

Enable Real Time Upload

Rec Call Band Mode

Note: ALog Form for LoTW Upload Showing Station Location Text Box

Station

Call Sign N5JGE

DXCC UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (291)

CQ Zone 04

ITU Zone 07

Grid EM11XS

State Texas (TX)

County Freestone

Worked Station

Worked W6DPM

DXCC UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (291)

CQ Zone 03

ITU Zone 06

Grid DM04QF

State California (CA)

County Los Angeles

Date/Time 2023-02-22 20:35:00

Mode FT8 (DATA)

Band 10M

Frequency 28.07400

QSL [2023-02-23 02:11:23](#)

Record ID 1662637212 Received: 2023-02-23 01:08:17

Note: LoTW QSL Record From Fairfield Lake State Park (K-3007) Activation