

Enhancements to the External File Handler

The Mainframe Express FixPacks released in July 2003 introduced enhancements to the File Handler for mainframe compatibility. This enhancement process will be finalized in the FixPacks released in October 2003. This document describes those enhancements.

On the mainframe, the dataset catalog entry is read to determine LRECL and BLKSIZE and this is validated against the file record size. A failure gives a File Status of 3/9. This checking has now been implemented in Mainframe Express. If you don't have File Status checking, this error is displayed as "RTS: 139 - A discrepancy exists between the length of a record, or the keys which you have specified, in your current program and its definition in the program in which it was first opened".

Specifically, the new validation is:

- Explicit BLKSIZE of 0 is always OK. No checks against LRECL.
- RECFM=F ~ BLKSIZE, if specified, must be equal to LRECL
- RECFM=FB ~ BLKSIZE must be a multiple of LRECL
- RECFM=V ~ BLKSIZE, if specified, must be equal to LRECL. LRECL must allow for the 4=byte RDW for the record.
- RECFM=VB ~ BLKSIZE, if specified, must be greater than or equal to LRECL+4 (The additional 4 bytes are the RDW for the block). LRECL must allow for the 4=byte RDW for the record.

An entry in the File Handler Configuration File (EXTFH.cfg) can be used by the user to disable this additional validation.

```
[xfh-default]
ignoreLRECLchecks=ON
```

The default value is OFF.

By default, the file handler looks for the configuration file in the current directory. You can also use the EXTFH environment variable to specify its path and/or name explicitly. For example:

```
set EXTFH=c:\mydir\test.cfg - sets the path and filename to c:\mydir\test.cfg
```

In a Mainframe Express environment, it is advisable to have this extra validation in place (eg default behavior), otherwise you run the risk of your application not running correctly when ported back to the mainframe.