

# Using the GNU Privacy Guard

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## Short Contents

Introduction . . . . .	1
1 Invoking GPG . . . . .	3
2 Invoking GPGSM . . . . .	5
3 Invoking GPG-AGENT . . . . .	17
4 Invoking the SCDAEMON . . . . .	27
5 Helper Tools . . . . .	33
6 Notes pertaining to certain OSes. . . . .	43
7 How to solve problems . . . . .	45
A Description of the Assuan protocol. . . . .	47
B GNU GENERAL PUBLIC LICENSE . . . . .	51
Contributors to GnuPG . . . . .	57
Glossary . . . . .	59
Option Index . . . . .	61
Index . . . . .	63



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Invoking GPG</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2 Invoking GPGSM</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 Commands .....	5
2.1.1 Commands not specific to the function .....	5
2.1.2 Commands to select the type of operation .....	5
2.1.3 How to manage the certificate and keys .....	6
2.2 Option Summary .....	7
2.2.1 How to change the configuration .....	7
2.2.2 Certificate related options .....	8
2.2.3 Input and Output .....	8
2.2.4 How to change how the CMS is created .....	9
2.2.5 Doing things one usually don't want to do .....	9
2.3 Examples .....	11
2.4 Unattended Usage .....	11
2.5 Automated signature checking .....	11
2.6 The Protocol the Server Mode Uses .....	12
2.6.1 Encrypting a Message .....	12
2.6.2 Decrypting a message .....	13
2.6.3 Signing a Message .....	13
2.6.4 Verifying a Message .....	13
2.6.5 Generating a Key .....	14
2.6.6 List available keys .....	14
2.6.7 Export certificates .....	14
2.6.8 Import certificates .....	15
2.6.9 Delete certificates .....	15
<b>3 Invoking GPG-AGENT</b> .....	<b>17</b>
3.1 Commands .....	17
3.2 Option Summary .....	18
3.3 Use of some signals .....	20
3.4 Examples .....	21
3.5 Agent's Assuan Protocol .....	21
3.5.1 Decrypting a session key .....	21
3.5.2 Signing a Hash .....	22
3.5.3 Generating a Key .....	23
3.5.4 Importing a Secret Key .....	24
3.5.5 Export a Secret Key .....	24
3.5.6 Importing a Root Certificate .....	24
3.5.7 Ask for a passphrase .....	25

3.5.8	Ask for confirmation .....	26
3.5.9	Check whether a key is available .....	26
3.5.10	Register a smartcard .....	26
3.5.11	Change a Passphrase .....	26
<b>4</b>	<b>Invoking the SCDAEMON .....</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1	Commands .....	27
4.2	Option Summary .....	27
4.3	Description of card applications .....	29
4.3.1	The OpenPGP card application “openpgp” .....	29
4.3.2	The Telesec NetKey card “nks” .....	29
4.3.3	The DINSIG card application “dinsig” .....	29
4.3.4	The PKCS#15 card application “p15” .....	29
4.4	Examples .....	30
4.5	Scdaemon’s Assuan Protocol .....	30
4.5.1	Return the serial number .....	30
4.5.2	Read all useful information from the card .....	30
4.5.3	Return a certificate .....	31
4.5.4	Return a public key .....	31
4.5.5	Signing data with a Smartcard .....	31
4.5.6	Decrypting data with a Smartcard .....	31
4.5.7	Read an attribute’s value .....	31
4.5.8	Update an attribute’s value .....	31
4.5.9	Generate a new key on-card .....	31
4.5.10	Return random bytes generate on-card .....	31
4.5.11	Change PINs .....	32
4.5.12	Perform a VERIFY operation .....	32
<b>5</b>	<b>Helper Tools .....</b>	<b>33</b>
5.1	Read logs from a socket .....	33
5.2	Create .gnupg home directories .....	33
5.3	Modify .gnupg home directories .....	33
5.3.1	Invoking gpgconf .....	34
5.3.2	Format conventions .....	34
5.3.3	Listing components .....	36
5.3.4	Listing options .....	37
5.3.5	Changing options .....	39
5.4	Generate an X.509 certificate request .....	40
5.5	Put a passphrase into the cache .....	40
5.5.1	List of all commands and options .....	40
<b>6</b>	<b>Notes pertaining to certain OSes .....</b>	<b>43</b>
6.1	Microsoft Windows Notes .....	43

<b>7</b>	<b>How to solve problems .....</b>	<b>45</b>
7.1	Debugging Tools .....	45
7.1.1	Scrutinizing a keybox file .....	45
7.2	Commonly Seen Problems .....	45
<b>Appendix A Description of the Assuan protocol.</b>		
	.....	<b>47</b>
A.0.1	Goals .....	47
A.0.2	Design criteria .....	47
A.0.3	Implementation .....	47
A.0.4	Server responses .....	47
A.0.5	Client requests .....	48
A.0.6	Error Codes .....	49
<b>Appendix B GNU GENERAL PUBLIC</b>		
	<b>LICENSE .....</b>	<b>51</b>
B.0.1	Preamble .....	51
B.0.2	TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR COPYING, DISTRIBUTION AND MODIFICATION.....	51
	How to Apply These Terms to Your New Programs .....	56
<b>Contributors to GnuPG .....</b>		<b>57</b>
<b>Glossary .....</b>		<b>59</b>
<b>Option Index .....</b>		<b>61</b>
<b>Index .....</b>		<b>63</b>



## **Introduction**

This manual documents how to use the GNU Privacy Guard system as well as the administration and the architecture.



# 1 Invoking GPG

`gpg` is the OpenPGP part of GnuPG. The version included in this package is not as matured as the standard versions (1.2.x or 1.4.x) and thus we strongly suggest to keep on using the one of the standard versions. Both versions may be installed side by side and should coexist without problems. To help for that, the `gpg` from this package gets installed under the name `gpg2`. If you really want to use this `gpg2` command you should name the configuration file `'gpg.conf-1.9'` to keep it separate from the one used with the standard `gpg`.

Documentation for the old standard `gpg` is available in a man page and at See Info file `'gpg'`, node `'Top'`.



## 2 Invoking GPGSM

`gpgsm` is a tool similar to `gpg` to provide digital encryption and signing services based on X.509 certificates and the CMS protocol. It is mainly used as a backend for S/MIME mail processing. `gpgsm` includes a full features certificate management and complies with all rules defined for the German Sphinx project.

See [Option Index], page 61, for an index to GPGSM's commands and options.

### 2.1 Commands

Commands are not distinguished from options except for the fact that only one command is allowed.

#### 2.1.1 Commands not specific to the function

`--version`

Print the program version and licensing information. Note that you can abbreviate this command.

`--help, -h`

Print a usage message summarizing the most useful command-line options. Note that you can abbreviate this command.

`--dump-options`

Print a list of all available options and commands. Note that you can abbreviate this command.

#### 2.1.2 Commands to select the type of operation

`--encrypt`

Perform an encryption.

`--decrypt`

Perform a decryption; the type of input is automatically determined. It may either be in binary form or PEM encoded; automatic determination of base-64 encoding is not done.

`--sign`

Create a digital signature. The key used is either the first one found in the keybox or this set with the `-u` option

`--verify`

Check a signature file for validity. Depending on the arguments a detached signature may also be checked.

`--server`

Run in server mode and wait for commands on the `stdin`.

`--call-dirmngr command [args]`

Behave as a Dirmngr client issuing the request *command* with the optional list of *args*. The output of the Dirmngr is printed `stdout`. Please note that file names given as arguments should have an absolute file name (i.e. commencing with `/`

because they are passed verbatim to the Dirmngr and the working directory of the Dirmngr might not be the same as the one of this client. Currently it is not possible to pass data via stdin to the Dirmngr. *command* should not contain spaces.

This command is required for certain maintaining tasks of the dirmngr where a dirmngr must be able to call back to `gpgsm`. See the Dirmngr manual for details.

**--call-protect-tool *arguments***

Certain maintenance operations are done by an external program call `gpg-protect-tool`; this is usually not installed in a directory listed in the PATH variable. This command provides a simple wrapper to access this tool. *arguments* are passed verbatim to this command; use ‘`--help`’ to get a list of supported operations.

### 2.1.3 How to manage the certificate and keys

**--gen-key**

Generate a new key and a certificate request.

**--list-keys**

**-k** List all available certificates stored in the local key database. Note that the displayed data might be reformatted for better human readability and illegal characters are replaced by safe substitutes.

**--list-secret-keys**

**-K** List all available certificates for which a corresponding a secret key is available.

**--list-external-keys *pattern***

List certificates matching *pattern* using an external server. This utilizes the dirmngr service.

**--dump-keys**

List all available certificates stored in the local key database using a format useful mainly for debugging.

**--dump-secret-keys**

List all available certificates for which a corresponding a secret key is available using a format useful mainly for debugging.

**--dump-external-keys *pattern***

List certificates matching *pattern* using an external server. This utilizes the dirmngr service. It uses a format useful mainly for debugging.

**--keydb-clear-some-cert-flags**

This is a debugging aid to reset certain flags in the key database which are used to cache certain certificate stati. It is especially useful if a bad CRL or a weird running OSCP reponder did accidently revoke certificate. There is no security issue with this command because `gpgsm` always make sure that the validity of a certificate is checked right before it is used.

- delete-keys *pattern***  
Delete the keys matching *pattern*.
- export [*pattern*]**  
Export all certificates stored in the Keybox or those specified by the optional *pattern*. When using along with the **--armor** option a few informational lines are prepended before each block.
- export-secret-key-p12 *key-id***  
Export the private key and the certificate identified by *key-id* in a PKCS#12 format. When using along with the **--armor** option a few informational lines are prepended to the output. Note, that the PKCS#12 format is highly insecure and this command is only provided if there is no other way to exchange the private key.
- learn-card**  
Read information about the private keys from the smartcard and import the certificates from there. This command utilizes the GPG-AGENT and in turn the SCDAEMON.
- passwd *user\_id***  
Change the passphrase of the private key belonging to the certificate specified as *user\_id*. Note, that changing the passphrase/PIN of a smartcard is not yet supported.

## 2.2 Option Summary

GPGSM comes features a bunch of options to control the exact behaviour and to change the default configuration.

### 2.2.1 How to change the configuration

These options are used to change the configuraton and are usually found in the option file.

- options *file***  
Reads configuration from *file* instead of from the default per-user configuration file. The default configuration file is named 'gpgsm.conf' and expected in the '.gnupg' directory directly below the home directory of the user.
- homedir *dir***  
Set the name of the home directory to *dir*. If his option is not used, the home directory defaults to '~/.gnupg'. It is only recognized when given on the command line. It also overrides any home directory stated through the environment variable GNUPGHOME or (on W32 systems) by means on the Registry entry *HKCU\Software\GNU\GnuPG:HomeDir*.
- v**
- verbose**  
Outputs additional information while running. You can increase the verbosity by giving several verbose commands to gpgsm, such as '-vv'.

- `--policy-file filename`  
Change the default name of the policy file to *filename*.
- `--agent-program file`  
Specify an agent program to be used for secret key operations. The default value is the `‘/usr/local/bin/gpg-agent’`. This is only used as a fallback when the environment variable `GPG_AGENT_INFO` is not set or a running agent can't be connected.
- `--dirmngr-program file`  
Specify a dirmngr program to be used for CRL checks. The default value is `‘/usr/sbin/dirmngr’`. This is only used as a fallback when the environment variable `DIRMNGR_INFO` is not set or a running dirmngr can't be connected.
- `--prefer-system-dirmngr`  
If a system wide dirmngr is running in daemon mode, first try to connect to this one. Fallback to a pipe based server if this does not work.
- `--no-secmem-warning`  
Don't print a warning when the so called "secure memory" can't be used.
- `--log-file file`  
When running in server mode, append all logging output to *file*.

## 2.2.2 Certificate related options

- `--enable-policy-checks`
- `--disable-policy-checks`  
By default policy checks are enabled. These options may be used to change it.
- `--enable-crl-checks`
- `--disable-crl-checks`  
By default the CRL checks are enabled and the DirMngr is used to check for revoked certificates. The disable option is most useful with an off-line network connection to suppress this check.
- `--force-crl-refresh`  
Tell the dirmngr to reload the CRL for each request. For better performance, the dirmngr will actually optimize this by suppressing the loading for short time intervalls (e.g. 30 minutes). This option is useful to make sure that a fresh CRL is available for certificates hold in the keybox. The suggested way of doing this is by using it along with the option `‘--with-validation’` for a ke listing command. This option should not be used in a configuration file.
- `--enable-ocsp`
- `--disable-ocsp`  
By default OCSP checks are disabled. The enable option may be used to enable OCSP checks via Dirmngr. If CRL checks are also enabled, CRLs will be used as a fallback if for some reason an OCSP request won't succeed. Note, that you have to allow OCSP requests in Dirmngr's configuration too (option `‘--allow-ocsp’` and configure dirmngr properly. If you don't do so you will get the error code `‘Not supported’`.

### 2.2.3 Input and Output

- `--armor`
- `-a` Create PEM encoded output. Default is binary output.
- `--base64` Create Base-64 encoded output; i.e. PEM without the header lines.
- `--assume-armor`  
Assume the input data is PEM encoded. Default is to autodetect the encoding but this may fail.
- `--assume-base64`  
Assume the input data is plain base-64 encoded.
- `--assume-binary`  
Assume the input data is binary encoded.
- `--local-user user_id`
- `-u user_id`  
Set the user(s) to be used for signing. The default is the first secret key found in the database.
- `--with-key-data`  
Displays extra information with the `--list-keys` commands. Especially a line tagged `grp` is printed which tells you the keygrip of a key. This string is for example used as the file name of the secret key.
- `--with-validation`  
When doing a key listing, do a full validation check for each key and print the result. This is usually a slow operation because it requires a CRL lookup and other operations.  
When used along with `-import`, a validation of the certificate to import is done and only imported if it succeeds the test. Note that this does not affect an already available certificate in the DB. This option is therefore useful to simply verify a certificate.
- `--with-md5-fingerprint`  
For standard key listings, also print the MD5 fingerprint of the certificate.

### 2.2.4 How to change how the CMS is created.

- `--include-certs n`  
Using *n* of -2 includes all certificate except for the root cert, -1 includes all certs, 0 does not include any certs, 1 includes only the signers cert (this is the default) and all other positive values include up to *n* certificates starting with the signer cert.

### 2.2.5 Doing things one usually don't want to do.

- `--faked-system-time epoch`  
This option is only useful for testing; it sets the system time back or forth to *epoch* which is the number of seconds elapsed since the year 1970.

**--with-ephemeral-keys**

Include ephemeral flagged keys in the output of key listings.

**--debug-level *level***

Select the debug level for investigating problems. *level* may be one of:

<b>none</b>	no debugging at all.
<b>basic</b>	some basic debug messages
<b>advanced</b>	more verbose debug messages
<b>expert</b>	even more detailed messages
<b>guru</b>	all of the debug messages you can get

How these messages are mapped to the actual debugging flags is not specified and may change with newer releases of this program. They are however carefully selected to best aid in debugging.

**--debug *flags***

This option is only useful for debugging and the behaviour may change at any time without notice; using **--debug-levels** is the preferred method to select the debug verbosity. **FLAGS** are bit encoded and may be given in usual C-Syntax. The currently defined bits are:

0 (1)	X.509 or OpenPGP protocol related data
1 (2)	values of big number integers
2 (4)	low level crypto operations
5 (32)	memory allocation
6 (64)	caching
7 (128)	show memory statistics.
9 (512)	write hashed data to files named <b>dbgmd-000*</b>
10 (1024)	trace Assuan protocol

Note, that all flags set using this option may get overridden by **--debug-level**.

**--debug-all**

Same as **--debug=0xffffffff**

**--debug-allow-core-dump**

Usually **gpgsm** tries to avoid dumping core by well written code and by disabling core dumps for security reasons. However, bugs are pretty durable beasts and to squash them it is sometimes useful to have a core dump. This option enables core dumps unless the Bad Thing happened before the option parsing.

**--debug-no-chain-validation**

This is actually not a debugging option but only useful as such. It lets **gpgsm** bypass all certificate chain validation checks.

**--debug-ignore-expiration**

This is actually not a debugging option but only useful as such. It lets **gpgsm** ignore all notAfter dates, this is used by the regression tests.

**--fixed-passphrase *string***

Supply the passphrase *string* to the `gpg-protect-tool`. This option is only useful for the regression tests included with this package and may be revised or removed at any time without notice.

All the long options may also be given in the configuration file after stripping off the two leading dashes.

## 2.3 Examples

```
$ gpgsm -er goo@bar.net <plaintext >ciphertext
```

## 2.4 Unattended Usage

`gpgsm` is often used as a backend engine by other software. To help with this a machine interface has been defined to have an unambiguous way to do this. This is most likely used with the `--server` command but may also be used in the standard operation mode by using the `--status-fd` option.

## 2.5 Automated signature checking

It is very important to understand the semantics used with signature verification. Checking a signature is not as simple as it may sound and so the operation is a bit complicated. In most cases it is required to look at several status lines. Here is a table of all cases a signed message may have:

The signature is valid

This does mean that the signature has been successfully verified, the certificates are all sane. However there are two subcases with important information: One of the certificates may have expired or a signature of a message itself as expired. It is a sound practise to consider such a signature still as valid but additional information should be displayed. Depending on the subcase `gpgsm` will issue these status codes:

signature valid and nothing did expire

GOODSIG, VALIDSIG, TRUST\_FULLY

signature valid but at least one certificate has expired

EXPKEYSIG, VALIDSIG, TRUST\_FULLY

signature valid but expired

EXPSIG, VALIDSIG, TRUST\_FULLY Note, that this case is currently not implemented.

The signature is invalid

This means that the signature verification failed (this is an indication of a transfer error, a programm error or tampering with the message). `gpgsm` issues one of these status codes sequences:

```
BADSIG
GOODSIG, VALIDSIG TRUST_NEVER
```

Error verifying a signature

For some reason the signature could not be verified, i.e. it can't be decided whether the signature is valid or invalid. A common reason for this is a missing certificate.

## 2.6 The Protocol the Server Mode Uses.

Description of the protocol used to access GPGSM. GPGSM does implement the Assuan protocol and in addition provides a regular command line interface which exhibits a full client to this protocol (but uses internal linking). To start `gpgsm` as a server the command line the option `--server` must be used. Additional options are provided to select the communication method (i.e. the name of the socket).

We assume that the connection has already been established; see the Assuan manual for details.

### 2.6.1 Encrypting a Message

Before encryption can be done the recipient must be set using the command:

```
RECIPIENT userID
```

Set the recipient for the encryption. *userID* should be the internal representation of the key; the server may accept any other way of specification. If this is a valid and trusted recipient the server does respond with OK, otherwise the return is an ERR with the reason why the recipient can't be used, the encryption will then not be done for this recipient. If the policy is not to encrypt at all if not all recipients are valid, the client has to take care of this. All RECIPIENT commands are cumulative until a RESET or an successful ENCRYPT command.

```
INPUT FD=n [--armor|--base64|--binary]
```

Set the file descriptor for the message to be encrypted to *n*. Obviously the pipe must be open at that point, the server establishes its own end. If the server returns an error the client should consider this session failed.

The `--armor` option may be used to advice the server that the input data is in PEM format, `--base64` advices that a raw base-64 encoding is used, `--binary` advices of raw binary input (BER). If none of these options is used, the server tries to figure out the used encoding, but this may not always be correct.

```
OUTPUT FD=n [--armor|--base64]
```

Set the file descriptor to be used for the output (i.e. the encrypted message). Obviously the pipe must be open at that point, the server establishes its own end. If the server returns an error he client should consider this session failed.

The option `armor` encodes the output in PEM format, the `--base64` option applies just a base 64 encoding. No option creates binary output (BER).

The actual encryption is done using the command

**ENCRYPT**

It takes the plaintext from the **INPUT** command, writes to the ciphertext to the file descriptor set with the **OUTPUT** command, take the recipients from all the recipients set so far. If this command fails the clients should try to delete all output currently done or otherwise mark it as invalid. **GPGSM** does ensure that there won't be any security problem with leftover data on the output in this case.

This command should in general not fail, as all necessary checks have been done while setting the recipients. The input and output pipes are closed.

**2.6.2 Decrypting a message**

Input and output FDs are set the same way as in encryption, but **INPUT** refers to the ciphertext and output to the plaintext. There is no need to set recipients. **GPGSM** automatically strips any S/MIME headers from the input, so it is valid to pass an entire MIME part to the **INPUT** pipe.

The encryption is done by using the command

**DECRYPT**

It performs the decrypt operation after doing some check on the internal state. (e.g. that all needed data has been set). Because it utilizes the GPG-Agent for the session key decryption, there is no need to ask the client for a protecting passphrase - GpgAgent takes care of this by requesting this from the user.

**2.6.3 Signing a Message**

Signing is usually done with these commands:

```
INPUT FD=n [--armor|--base64|--binary]
```

This tells **GPGSM** to read the data to sign from file descriptor *n*.

```
OUTPUT FD=m [--armor|--base64]
```

Write the output to file descriptor *m*. If a detached signature is requested, only the signature is written.

```
SIGN [--detached]
```

Sign the data set with the **INPUT** command and write it to the sink set by **OUTPUT**. With **--detached**, a detached signature is created (surprise).

The key used for signing is the default one or the one specified in the configuration file. To get finer control over the keys, it is possible to use the command

```
SIGNER userID
```

to the signer's key. *userID* should be the internal representation of the key; the server may accept any other way of specification. If this is a valid and trusted recipient the server does respond with OK, otherwise the return is an ERR with the reason why the key can't be used, the signature will then not be created using this key. If the policy is not to sign at all if not all keys are valid, the client has to take care of this. All **SIGNER** commands are cumulative until a **RESET** is done. Note that a **SIGN** does not reset this list of signers which is in contrast to the **RECIPIENT** command.

## 2.6.4 Verifying a Message

To verify a message the command:

**VERIFY**

is used. It does a verify operation on the message send to the input FD. The result is written out using status lines. If an output FD was given, the signed text will be written to that. If the signature is a detached one, the server will inquire about the signed material and the client must provide it.

## 2.6.5 Generating a Key

This is used to generate a new keypair, store the secret part in the PSE and the public key in the key database. We will probably add optional commands to allow the client to select whether a hardware token is used to store the key. Configuration options to GPGSM can be used to restrict the use of this command.

**GENKEY**

GPGSM checks whether this command is allowed and then does an INQUIRE to get the key parameters, the client should then send the key parameters in the native format:

```
S: INQUIRE KEY_PARAM native
C: D foo:fgfgfg
C: D bar
C: END
```

Please note that the server may send Status info lines while reading the data lines from the client. After this the key generation takes place and the server eventually does send an ERR or OK response. Status lines may be issued as a progress indicator.

## 2.6.6 List available keys

To list the keys in the internal database or using an external key provider, the command:

**LISTKEYS *pattern***

is used. To allow multiple patterns (which are ORed during the search) quoting is required: Spaces are to be translated into "+" or into "%20"; in turn this requires that the usual escape quoting rules are done.

**LISTSECRETKEYS *pattern***

Lists only the keys where a secret key is available.

The list commands commands are affected by the option

**OPTION list-mode=*mode***

where mode may be:

- 0 Use default (which is usually the same as 1).
- 1 List only the internal keys.
- 2 List only the external keys.
- 3 List internal and external keys.

Note that options are valid for the entire session.

### 2.6.7 Export certificates

To export certificate from the internal key database the command:

```
EXPORT pattern
```

is used. To allow multiple patterns (which are ORed) quoting is required: Spaces are to be translated into "+" or into "%20"; in turn this requires that the usual escape quoting rules are done.

The format of the output depends on what was set with the OUTPUT command. When using PEM encoding a few informational lines are prepended.

### 2.6.8 Import certificates

To import certificates into the internal key database, the command

```
IMPORT
```

is used. The data is expected on the file descriptor set with the INPUT command. Certain checks are performed on the certificate. Note that the code will also handle PKCS\#12 files and import private keys; a helper program is used for that.

### 2.6.9 Delete certificates

To delete certificate the command

```
DELKEYS pattern
```

is used. To allow multiple patterns (which are ORed) quoting is required: Spaces are to be translated into "+" or into "%20"; in turn this requires that the usual escape quoting rules are done.

The certificates must be specified unambiguously otherwise an error is returned.



## 3 Invoking GPG-AGENT

`gpg-agent` is a daemon to manage secret (private) keys independently from any protocol. It is used as a backend for `gpg` and `gpgsm` as well as for a couple of other utilities.

The usual way to run the agent is from the `~/.xsession` file:

```
eval 'gpg-agent --daemon'
```

If you don't use an X server, you can also put this into your regular startup file `~/.profile` or `.bash_profile`. It is best not to run multiple instances of the `gpg-agent`, so you should make sure that only one is running: `gpg-agent` uses an environment variable to inform clients about the communication parameters. You can write the content of this environment variable to a file so that you can test for a running agent. This short script may do the job:

```
if test -f $HOME/.gpg-agent-info && \
  kill -0 'cut -d: -f 2 $HOME/.gpg-agent-info' 2>/dev/null; then
  GPG_AGENT_INFO='cat $HOME/.gpg-agent-info'
  export GPG_AGENT_INFO
else
  eval 'gpg-agent --daemon'
  echo $GPG_AGENT_INFO >$HOME/.gpg-agent-info
fi
```

You should always add the following lines to your `.bashrc` or whatever initialization file is used for all shell invocations:

```
GPG_TTY='tty'
export GPG_TTY
```

It is important that this environment variable always reflects the output of the `tty` command. For W32 systems this option is not required.

Please make sure that a proper pinentry program has been installed under the default filename (which is system dependant) or use the option `pinentry-pgm` to specify the full name of that program. It is often useful to install a symbolic link from the actual used pinentry (e.g. `/usr/bin/pinentry-gtk`) to the expected one (e.g. `/usr/bin/pinentry`). See [Option Index], page 61, for an index to GPG-AGENT's commands and options.

### 3.1 Commands

Commands are not distinguished from options except for the fact that only one command is allowed.

`--version`

Print the program version and licensing information. Note that you can abbreviate this command.

`--help, -h`

Print a usage message summarizing the most useful command-line options. Note that you can abbreviate this command.

`--dump-options`

Print a list of all available options and commands. Note that you can abbreviate this command.

- `--server` Run in server mode and wait for commands on the `stdin`. The default mode is to create a socket and listen for commands there.
- `--daemon` Run the program in the background. This option is required to prevent it from being accidentally running in the background. A common way to do this is:  

```
$ eval `gpg-agent --daemon`
```

## 3.2 Option Summary

- `--options file`  
 Reads configuration from *file* instead of from the default per-user configuration file. The default configuration file is named `'gpg-agent.conf'` and expected in the `'gnupg'` directory directly below the home directory of the user.
- `--homedir dir`  
 Set the name of the home directory to *dir*. If this option is not used, the home directory defaults to `'~/gnupg'`. It is only recognized when given on the command line. It also overrides any home directory stated through the environment variable `GNUPGHOME` or (on W32 systems) by means on the Registry entry `HKCU\Software\GNU\GnuPG:HomeDir`.
- `-v`
- `--verbose`  
 Outputs additional information while running. You can increase the verbosity by giving several verbose commands to `GPGSM`, such as `'-vv'`.
- `-q`
- `--quiet` Try to be as quiet as possible.
- `--batch` Don't invoke a pinentry or do any other thing requiring human interaction.
- `--faked-system-time epoch`  
 This option is only useful for testing; it sets the system time back or forth to *epoch* which is the number of seconds elapsed since the year 1970.
- `--debug-level level`  
 Select the debug level for investigating problems. *level* may be one of:
 

<code>none</code>	no debugging at all.
<code>basic</code>	some basic debug messages
<code>advanced</code>	more verbose debug messages
<code>expert</code>	even more detailed messages
<code>guru</code>	all of the debug messages you can get

 How these messages are mapped to the actual debugging flags is not specified and may change with newer releases of this program. They are however carefully selected to best aid in debugging.

**--debug *flags***

This option is only useful for debugging and the behaviour may change at any time without notice. **FLAGS** are bit encoded and may be given in usual C-Syntax. The currently defined bits are:

- 0 (1) X.509 or OpenPGP protocol related data
- 1 (2) values of big number integers
- 2 (4) low level crypto operations
- 5 (32) memory allocation
- 6 (64) caching
- 7 (128) show memory statistics.
- 9 (512) write hashed data to files named `dbgmd-000*`
- 10 (1024) trace Assuan protocol
- 12 (4096) bypass all certificate validation

**--debug-all**

Same as `--debug=0xffffffff`

**--debug-wait *n***

When running in server mode, wait *n* seconds before entering the actual processing loop and print the pid. This gives time to attach a debugger.

**--no-detach**

Don't detach the process from the console. This is mainly useful for debugging.

**-s**

**--sh**

**-c**

**--csh** Format the info output in daemon mode for use with the standard Bourne shell respective the C-shell. The default is to guess it based on the environment variable `SHELL` which is in almost all cases sufficient.

**--no-grab**

Tell the pinentry not to grab the keyboard and mouse. This option should in general not be used to avoid X-sniffing attacks.

**--log-file *file***

Append all logging output to *file*. This is very helpful in seeing what the agent actually does.

**--disable-ptb**

Don't allow multiple connections. This option is in general not very useful.

**--allow-mark-trusted**

Allow clients to mark keys as trusted, i.e. put them into the `trustlist.txt` file. This is by default not allowed to make it harder for users to inadvertently accept Root-CA keys.

- ignore-cache-for-signing**  
 This option will let `gpg-agent` bypass the passphrase cache for all signing operation. Note that there is also a per-session option to control this behaviour but this command line option takes precedence.
- default-cache-ttl *n***  
 Set the time a cache entry is valid to *n* seconds. The default are 600 seconds.
- max-cache-ttl *n***  
 Set the maximum time a cache entry is valid to *n* seconds. After this time a cache entry will get expired even if it has been accessed recently. The default are 2 hours (7200 seconds).
- pinentry-program *filename***  
 Use program *filename* as the PIN entry. The default is installation dependend and can be shown with the `--version` command.
- scdaemon-program *filename***  
 Use program *filename* as the Smartcard daemon. The default is installation dependend and can be shown with the `--version` command.
- use-standard-socket**  
**--no-use-standard-socket**  
 By enabling this option `gpg-agent` will listen on the socket named ‘S.gpg-agent’, located in the home directory, and not create a random socket below a temporary directory. Tools connecting to `gpg-agent` should first try to connect to the socket given in environment variable `GPG_AGENT_INFO` and the fall back to this socket. This option may not be used if the home directory is mounted as a remote file system.  
 Note, that as of now, W32 systems default to this option.
- display *string***  
**--ttyname *string***  
**--ttytype *string***  
**--lc-type *string***  
**--lc-messages *string***  
 These options are used with the server mode to pass localization information.
- keep-tty**  
**--keep-display**  
 Ignore requests to change change the current TTY respective the X window system’s `DISPLAY` variable. This is useful to lock the pinentry to pop up at the TTY or display you started the agent.

All the long options may also be given in the configuration file after stripping off the two leading dashes.

### 3.3 Use of some signals.

A running `gpg-agent` may be controlled by signals, i.e. using the `kill` command to send a signal to the process.

Here is a list of supported signals:

- SIGHUP** This signals flushes all cached passphrases and when the program was started with a configuration file, the configuration file is read again. Only certain options are honored: `quiet`, `verbose`, `debug`, `debug-all`, `no-grab`, `pinentry-program`, `default-cache-ttl` and `ignore-cache-for-signing`. `sddaemon-program` is also supported but due to the current implementation, which calls the `sddaemon` only once, it is not of much use.
- SIGTERM** Shuts down the process but waits until all current requests are fulfilled. If the process has received 3 of these signals and requests are still pending, a shutdown is forced.
- SIGINT** Shuts down the process immediately.
- SIGUSR1**
- SIGUSR2** These signals are used for internal purposes.

## 3.4 Examples

```
$ eval 'gpg-agent --daemon'
```

## 3.5 Agent's Assuan Protocol

The `gpg-agent` should be started by the login shell and set an environment variable to tell clients about the socket to be used. Clients should deny to access an agent with a socket name which does not match its own configuration. An application may choose to start an instance of the `gpgagent` if it does not figure that any has been started; it should not do this if a `gpgagent` is running but not usable. Because `gpg-agent` can only be used in background mode, no special command line option is required to activate the use of the protocol.

To identify a key we use a thing called `keygrip` which is the SHA-1 hash of an canonical encoded S-Expression of the the public key as used in Libgcrypt. For the purpose of this interface the `keygrip` is given as a hex string. The advantage of using this and not the hash of a certificate is that it will be possible to use the same keypair for different protocols, thereby saving space on the token used to keep the secret keys.

### 3.5.1 Decrypting a session key

The client asks the server to decrypt a session key. The encrypted session key should have all information needed to select the appropriate secret key or to delegate it to a smartcard.

```
SETKEY <keyGrip>
```

Tell the server about the key to be used for decryption. If this is not used, `gpg-agent` may try to figure out the key by trying to decrypt the message with each key available.

```
PKDECRYPT
```

The agent checks whether this command is allowed and then does an `INQUIRY` to get the ciphertext the client should then send the cipher text.

```
S: INQUIRE CIPHERTEXT
C: D (xxxxxxx
C: D xxxx)
C: END
```

Please note that the server may send status info lines while reading the data lines from the client. The data send is a SPKI like S-Exp with this structure:

```
(enc-val
  (<algo>
    (<param_name1> <mpi>)
    ...
    (<param_namen> <mpi>)))
```

Where algo is a string with the name of the algorithm; see the libgcrypt documentation for a list of valid algorithms. The number and names of the parameters depend on the algorithm. The agent does return an error if there is an inconsistency.

If the decryption was successful the decrypted data is returned by means of "D" lines.

Here is an example session:

```
C: PKDECRYPT
S: INQUIRE CIPHERTEXT
C: D (enc-val elg (a 349324324)
C: D (b 3F444677CA)))
C: END
S: # session key follows
S: D 1234567890ABCDEF0
S: OK decryption successful
```

### 3.5.2 Signing a Hash

The client ask the agent to sign a given hash value. A default key will be chosen if no key has been set. To set a key a client first uses:

```
SIGKEY <keyGrip>
```

This can be used multiple times to create multiple signature, the list of keys is reset with the next PKSIGN command or a RESET. The server test whether the key is a valid key to sign something and responds with okay.

```
SETHASH <hexstring>
```

The client can use this command to tell the server about the data (which usually is a hash) to be signed.

The actual signing is done using

```
PKSIGN <options>
```

Options are not yet defined, but my later be used to choosen among different algorithms (e.g. pkcs 1.5)

The agent does then some checks, asks for the passphrase and if SETHASH has not been used asks the client for the data to sign:

```
S: INQUIRE HASHVAL
C: D ABCDEF012345678901234
C: END
```

As a result the server returns the signature as an SPKI like S-Exp in "D" lines:

```
(sig-val
  (<algo>
    (<param_name1> <mpi>)
    ...
    (<param_namen> <mpi>)))
```

The operation is affected by the option

```
OPTION use-cache-for-signing=0|1
```

The default of 1 uses the cache. Setting this option to 0 will lead `gpg-agent` to ignore the passphrase cache. Note, that there is also a global command line option for `gpg-agent` to globally disable the caching.

Here is an example session:

```
C: SIGKEY <keyGrip>
S: OK key available
C: SIGKEY <keyGrip>
S: OK key available
C: PKSIGN
S: # I did ask the user whether he really wants to sign
S: # I did ask the user for the passphrase
S: INQUIRE HASHVAL
C: D ABCDEF012345678901234
C: END
S: # signature follows
S: D (sig-val rsa (s 45435453654612121212))
S: OK
```

### 3.5.3 Generating a Key

This is used to create a new keypair and store the secret key inside the active PSE -w which is in most cases a Soft-PSE. An not yet defined option allows to choose the storage location. To get the secret key out of the PSE, a special export tool has to be used.

```
GENKEY
```

Invokes the key generation process and the server will then inquire on the generation parameters, like:

```
S: INQUIRE KEYPARM
C: D (genkey (rsa (nbits 1024)))
C: END
```

The format of the key parameters which depends on the algorithm is of the form:

```
(genkey
  (algo
    (parameter_name_1 ....))
```

```

    ....
    (parameter_name_n ....))

```

If everything succeeds, the server returns the \*public key\* in a SPKI like S-Expression like this:

```

(public-key
 (rsa
 (n <mpi>)
 (e <mpi>)))

```

Here is an example session:

```

C: GENKEY
S: INQUIRE KEYPARM
C: D (genkey (rsa (nbits 1024)))
C: END
S: D (public-key
S: D (rsa (n 326487324683264) (e 10001)))
S OK key created

```

### 3.5.4 Importing a Secret Key

This operation is not yet supported by GpgAgent. Specialized tools are to be used for this.

There is no actual need because we can expect that secret keys created by a 3rd party are stored on a smartcard. If we have generated the key ourself, we do not need to import it.

### 3.5.5 Export a Secret Key

Not implemented.

Should be done by an extra tool.

### 3.5.6 Importing a Root Certificate

Actually we do not import a Root Cert but provide a way to validate any piece of data by storing its Hash along with a description and an identifier in the PSE. Here is the interface description:

```
ISTRUSTED <fingerprint>
```

Check whether the OpenPGP primary key or the X.509 certificate with the given fingerprint is an ultimately trusted key or a trusted Root CA certificate. The fingerprint should be given as a hexstring (without any blanks or colons or whatever in between) and may be left padded with 00 in case of an MD5 fingerprint. GPGAgent will answer with:

```
OK
```

The key is in the table of trusted keys.

```
ERR 304 (Not Trusted)
```

The key is not in this table.

Gpg needs the entire list of trusted keys to maintain the web of trust; the following command is therefore quite helpful:

```
LISTTRUSTED
```

GpgAgent returns a list of trusted keys line by line:

```
S: D 000000001234454556565656677878AF2F1ECCFF P
S: D 340387563485634856435645634856438576457A P
S: D FEDC6532453745367FD83474357495743757435D S
S: OK
```

The first item on a line is the hexified fingerprint where MD5 fingerprints are 00 padded to the left and the second item is a flag to indicate the type of key (so that gpg is able to only take care of PGP keys). P = OpenPGP, S = S/MIME. A client should ignore the rest of the line, so that we can extend the format in the future.

Finally a client should be able to mark a key as trusted:

```
MARKTRUSTED fingerprint "P"|"S"
```

The server will then pop up a window to ask the user whether she really trusts this key. For this it will probably ask for a text to be displayed like this:

```
S: INQUIRE TRUSTDESC
C: D Do you trust the key with the fingerprint @FPR@
C: D bla faasel blurb.
C: END
S: OK
```

Known sequences with the pattern @foo@ are replaced according to this table:

@FPR16@	Format the fingerprint according to gpg rules for a v3 keys.
@FPR20@	Format the fingerprint according to gpg rules for a v4 keys.
@FPR@	Choose an appropriate format to format the fingerprint.
@@	Replaced by a single @

### 3.5.7 Ask for a passphrase

This function is usually used to ask for a passphrase to be used for conventional encryption, but may also be used by programs which need special handling of passphrases. This command uses a syntax which helps clients to use the agent with minimum effort.

```
GET_PASSPHRASE cache_id [error_message prompt description]
```

*cache\_id* is expected to be a hex string used for caching a passphrase. Use a X to bypass the cache. With no other arguments the agent returns a cached passphrase or an error.

*error\_message* is either a single X for no error message or a string to be shown as an error message like (e.g. "invalid passphrase"). Blanks must be percent escaped or replaced by +.

*prompt* is either a single X for a default prompt or the text to be shown as the prompt. Blanks must be percent escaped or replaced by +.

*description* is a text shown above the entry field. Blanks must be percent escaped or replaced by +.

The agent either returns with an error or with a OK followed by the hex encoded passphrase. Note that the length of the strings is implicitly limited by the maximum length of a command.

`CLEAR_PASSPHRASE cache_id`

may be used to invalidate the cache entry for a passphrase. The function returns with OK even when there is no cached passphrase.

### 3.5.8 Ask for confirmation

This command may be used to ask for a simple confirmation by presenting a text and 2 buttons: Okay and Cancel.

`GET_CONFIRMATION description`

*description* is displayed along with a Okay and Cancel button. Blanks must be percent escaped or replaced by +. A X may be used to display confirmation dialog with a default text.

The agent either returns with an error or with a OK. Note, that the length of *description* is implicitly limited by the maximum length of a command.

### 3.5.9 Check whether a key is available

This can be used to see whether a secret key is available. It does not return any information on whether the key is somehow protected.

`HAVEKEY keygrip`

The Agent answers either with OK or No\_Secret\_Key (208). The caller may want to check for other error codes as well.

### 3.5.10 Register a smartcard

`LEARN [--send]`

This command is used to register a smartcard. With the `--send` option given the certificates are send back.

### 3.5.11 Change a Passphrase

`PASSWD keygrip`

This command is used to interactively change the passphrase of the key identified by the hex string *keygrip*.

## 4 Invoking the SCDAEMON

The `sddaemon` is a daemon to manage smartcards. It is usually invoked by `gpg-agent` and in general not used directly.

See [Option Index], page 61, for an index to GPG-AGENTS's commands and options.

### 4.1 Commands

Commands are not distinguished from options except for the fact that only one one command is allowed.

- `--version`  
Print the program version and licensing information. Not that you can abbreviate this command.
- `--help, -h`  
Print a usage message summarizing the most usefule command-line options. Not that you can abbreviate this command.
- `--dump-options`  
Print a list of all available options and commands. Not that you can abbreviate this command.
- `--server` Run in server mode and wait for commands on the `stdin`. This is default mode is to create a socket and listen for commands there.
- `--daemon` Run the program in the background. This option is required to prevent it from being accidently running in the background.
- `--print-atr`  
This is mainly a debugging command, used to print the ATR (Answer-To-Reset) of a card and exit immediately.

### 4.2 Option Summary

- `--options file`  
Reads configuration from *file* instead of from the default per-user configuration file. The default configuration file is named '`sddaemon.conf`' and expected in the '`.gnupg`' directory directly below the home directory of the user.
- `--homedir dir`  
Set the name of the home directory to *dir*. If his option is not used, the home directory defaults to '`~/gnupg`'. It is only recognized when given on the command line. It also overrides any home directory stated through the environment variable `GNUPGHOME` or (on W32 systems) by means on the Registry entry `HKCU\Software\GNU\GnuPG:HomeDir`.

`-v`

- verbose**  
Outputs additional information while running. You can increase the verbosity by giving several verbose commands to `gpgsm`, such as `'-vv'`.
- debug-level *level***  
Select the debug level for investigating problems. *level* may be one of:
- |                       |                                       |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <code>none</code>     | no debugging at all.                  |
| <code>basic</code>    | some basic debug messages             |
| <code>advanced</code> | more verbose debug messages           |
| <code>expert</code>   | even more detailed messages           |
| <code>guru</code>     | all of the debug messages you can get |
- How these messages are mapped to the actual debugging flags is not specified and may change with newer releases of this program. They are however carefully selected to best aid in debugging.
- debug *flags***  
This option is only useful for debugging and the behaviour may change at any time without notice. `FLAGS` are bit encoded and may be given in usual C-Syntax. The currently defined bits are:
- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 0 (1)     | X.509 or OpenPGP protocol related data                   |
| 1 (2)     | values of big number integers                            |
| 2 (4)     | low level crypto operations                              |
| 5 (32)    | memory allocation  |
| 6 (64)    | caching  |
| 7 (128)   | show memory statistics.                                  |
| 9 (512)   | write hashed data to files named <code>dbgmd-000*</code> |
| 10 (1024) | trace Assuan protocol                                    |
| 12 (4096) | bypass all certificate validation                        |
- debug-all**  
Same as `--debug=0xffffffff`
- debug-wait *n***  
When running in server mode, wait *n* seconds before entering the actual processing loop and print the pid. This gives time to attach a debugger.
- debug-sc *n***  
Set the debug level of the OpenSC library to *n*.
- no-detach**  
Don't detach the process from the console. This is mainly useful for debugging.
- log-file *file***  
Append all logging output to *file*. This is very helpful in seeing what the agent actually does.

**--reader-port *number***

When the program has been build without OpenSC support, this option must be used to specify the port of the card terminal. A value of 0 refers to the first serial device; add 32768 to access USB devices. The default is 32768 (first USB device).

**--ctapi-driver *library***

Use *library* to access the smartcard reader. The current default is `libtowitoko.so`. Note that the use of this interface is deprecated; it may be removed in future releases.

**--allow-admin****--deny-admin**

This enables the use of Admin class commands for card applications where this is supported. Currently we support it for the OpenPGP card. Deny is the default. This commands is useful to inhibit accidental access to admin class command which could ultimately lock the card through wrong PIN numbers.

**--disable-application *name***

This option disables the use of the card application named *name*. This is mainly useful for debugging or if a application with lower priority should be used by default.

All the long options may also be given in the configuration file after stripping off the two leading dashes.

## 4.3 Description of card applications

`sddaemon` supports the card applications as described below.

### 4.3.1 The OpenPGP card application “openpgp”

This application is currently only used by `gpg` but may in future also be useful with `gpgsm`.

The specification for such a card is available at <http://g10code.com/docs/openpgp-card-1.0.pdf>. ■

### 4.3.2 The Telesec NetKey card “nks”

This is the main application of the Telesec cards as available in Germany. It is a superset of the German DINSIG card. The card is used by `gpgsm`.

### 4.3.3 The DINSIG card application “dinsig”

This is an application as described in the German draft standard *DIN V 66291-1*. It is intended to be used by cards supporting the German signature law and its bylaws (SigG and SigV).

### 4.3.4 The PKCS#15 card application “p15”

This is common framework for smart card applications; support is only available if compiled with support for the OpenSC library. It is used by `gpgsm`.

## 4.4 Examples

```
$ sddaemon --server -v
```

## 4.5 Sddaemon’s Assuan Protocol

The SC-Daemon should be started by the system to provide access to external tokens. Using Smartcards on a multi-user system does not make much sense except for system services, but in this case no regular user accounts are hosted on the machine.

A client connects to the SC-Daemon by connecting to the socket named `‘/var/run/sddaemon/socket’`, configuration information is read from `/etc/sddaemon.conf`

Each connection acts as one session, SC-Daemon takes care of synchronizing access to a token between sessions.

### 4.5.1 Return the serial number

This command should be used to check for the presence of a card. It is special in that it can be used to reset the card. Most other commands will return an error when a card change has been detected and the use of this function is therefore required.

Background: We want to keep the client clear of handling card changes between operations; i.e. the client can assume that all operations are done on the same card unless he call this function.

```
SERIALNO
```

Return the serial number of the card using a status reponse like:

```
S SERIALNO D2760000000000000000000000000000 0
```

The trailing 0 should be ignored for now, it is reserved for a future extension. The serial number is the hex encoded value identified by the `0x5A` tag in the GDO file (`FIX=0x2F02`).

### 4.5.2 Read all useful information from the card

```
LEARN [--force]
```

Learn all useful information of the currently inserted card. When used without the force options, the command might do an INQUIRE like this:

```
INQUIRE KNOWNCARDP <hexstring_with_serialNumber> <timestamp>
```

The client should just send an `END` if the processing should go on or a `CANCEL` to force the function to terminate with a cancel error message. The response of this command is a list of status lines formatted as this:

S KEYPAIRINFO *hexstring\_with\_keygrip hexstring\_with\_id*

If there is no certificate yet stored on the card a single "X" is returned in *hexstring\_with\_keygrip*.

### 4.5.3 Return a certificate

READCERT *hexified\_certid*

This function is used to read a certificate identified by *hexified\_certid* from the card.

### 4.5.4 Return a public key

READKEY *hexified\_certid*

Return the public key for the given cert or key ID as an standard S-Expression.

### 4.5.5 Signing data with a Smartcard

To sign some data the caller should use the command

SETDATA *hexstring*

to tell `scdaemon` about the data to be signed. The data must be given in hex notation. The actual signing is done using the command

PKSIGN *keyid*

where *keyid* is the hexified ID of the key to be used. The key id may have been retrieved using the command LEARN.

### 4.5.6 Decrypting data with a Smartcard

To decrypt some data the caller should use the command

SETDATA *hexstring*

to tell `scdaemon` about the data to be decrypted. The data must be given in hex notation. The actual decryption is then done using the command

PKDECRYPT *keyid*

where *keyid* is the hexified ID of the key to be used.

### 4.5.7 Read an attribute's value.

TO BE WRITTEN.

### 4.5.8 Update an attribute's value.

TO BE WRITTEN.

### 4.5.9 Generate a new key on-card.

TO BE WRITTEN.

**4.5.10 Return random bytes generate on-card.**

TO BE WRITTEN.

**4.5.11 Change PINs.**

TO BE WRITTEN.

**4.5.12 Perform a VERIFY operation.**

TO BE WRITTEN.

## 5 Helper Tools

GnuPG comes with a couple of smaller tools:

### 5.1 Read logs from a socket

Most of the main utilities are able to write their log files to a Unix Domain socket if configured that way. `watchgnupg` is a simple listener for such a socket. It ameliorates the output with a time stamp and makes sure that long lines are not interspersed with log output from other utilities.

`watchgnupg` is commonly invoked as

```
'watchgnupg --force ~/.gnupg/S.log'
```

This starts it on the current terminal for listening on the socket `'~/.gnupg/S.log'`.

`watchgnupg` understands these options:

```
--force    Delete an already existing socket file.
--verbose
            Enable extra informational output.
--version
            print version of the program and exit
--help     Display a brief help page and exit
```

### 5.2 Create .gnupg home directories.

If GnuPG is installed on a system with existing user accounts, it is sometimes required to populate the GnuPG home directory with existing files. Especially a `'trustlist.txt'` and a keybox with some initial certificates are often desired. This scripts help to do this by copying all files from `'/etc/skel/.gnupg'` to the home directories of the accounts given on the command line. It takes care not to overwrite existing GnuPG home directories.

`addgnupghome` is invoked by root as:

```
'addgnupghome account1 account2 ... accountn'
```

### 5.3 Modify .gnupg home directories.

The `gpgconf` is a utility to automatically and reasonable safely query and modify configuration files in the `'gnupg'` home directory. It is designed not to be invoked manually by the user, but automatically by graphical user interfaces (GUI).<sup>1</sup>

`gpgconf` provides access to the configuration of one or more components of the GnuPG system. These components correspond more or less to the programs that exist in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Please note that currently no locking is done, so concurrent access should be avoided. There are some precautions to avoid corruption with concurrent usage, but results may be inconsistent and some changes may get lost. The stateless design makes it difficult to provide more guarantees.

GnuPG framework, like GnuPG, GPGSM, DirMngr, etc. But this is not a strict one-to-one relationship. Not all configuration options are available through `gpgconf`. `gpgconf` provides a generic and abstract method to access the most important configuration options that can feasibly be controlled via such a mechanism.

`gpgconf` can be used to gather and change the options available in each component, and can also provide their default values. `gpgconf` will give detailed type information that can be used to restrict the user's input without making an attempt to commit the changes.

`gpgconf` provides the backend of a configuration editor. The configuration editor would usually be a graphical user interface program, that allows to display the current options, their default values, and allows the user to make changes to the options. These changes can then be made active with `gpgconf` again. Such a program that uses `gpgconf` in this way will be called GUI throughout this section.

### 5.3.1 Invoking `gpgconf`

One of the following commands must be given:

`--list-components`

List all components. This is the default command used if none is specified.

`--list-options component`

List all options of the component *component*.

`--change-options component`

Change the options of the component *component*.

The following options may be used:

`-v`

`--verbose`

Outputs additional information while running. Specifically, this extends numerical field values by human-readable descriptions.

`-r`

`--runtime`

Only used together with `--change-options`. If one of the modified options can be changed in a running daemon process, signal the running daemon to ask it to reparse its configuration file after changing.

This means that the changes will take effect at run-time, as far as this is possible. Otherwise, they will take effect at the next start of the respective backend programs.

### 5.3.2 Format conventions

Some lines in the output of `gpgconf` contain a list of colon-separated fields. The following conventions apply:

- The GUI program is required to strip off trailing newline and/or carriage return characters from the output.

- `gpgconf` will never leave out fields. If a certain version provides a certain field, this field will always be present in all `gpgconf` versions from that time on.
- Future versions of `gpgconf` might append fields to the list. New fields will always be separated from the previously last field by a colon separator. The GUI should be prepared to parse the last field it knows about up until a colon or end of line.
- Not all fields are defined under all conditions. You are required to ignore the content of undefined fields.

There are several standard types for the content of a field:

**verbatim** Some fields contain strings that are not escaped in any way. Such fields are described to be used *verbatim*. These fields will never contain a colon character (for obvious reasons). No de-escaping or other formatting is required to use the field content. This is for easy parsing of the output, when it is known that the content can never contain any special characters.

**percent-escaped**

Some fields contain strings that are described to be *percent-escaped*. Such strings need to be de-escaped before their content can be presented to the user. A percent-escaped string is de-escaped by replacing all occurrences of `%XY` by the byte that has the hexadecimal value `XY`. `X` and `Y` are from the set `0-9a-f`.

**localised**

Some fields contain strings that are described to be *localised*. Such strings are translated to the active language and formatted in the active character set.

**unsigned number**

Some fields contain an *unsigned number*. This number will always fit into a 32-bit unsigned integer variable. The number may be followed by a space, followed by a human readable description of that value (if the verbose option is used). You should ignore everything in the field that follows the number.

**signed number**

Some fields contain a *signed number*. This number will always fit into a 32-bit signed integer variable. The number may be followed by a space, followed by a human readable description of that value (if the verbose option is used). You should ignore everything in the field that follows the number.

**option**

Some fields contain an *option* argument. The format of an option argument depends on the type of the option and on some flags:

**no argument**

The simplest case is that the option does not take an argument at all (*type* 0). Then the option argument is an unsigned number that specifies how often the option occurs. If the `list` flag is not set, then the only valid number is 1. Options that do not take an argument never have the `default` or `optional arg` flag set.

**number**

If the option takes a number argument (*alt-type* is 2 or 3), and it can only occur once (`list` flag is not set), then the option argument is either empty (only allowed if the argument is optional), or it is a number. A number is a string that begins with an optional minus

character, followed by one or more digits. The number must fit into an integer variable (unsigned or signed, depending on *alt-type*).

number list

If the option takes a number argument and it can occur more than once, then the option argument is either empty, or it is a comma-separated list of numbers as described above.

string

If the option takes a string argument (*alt-type* is 1), and it can only occur once (`list` flag is not set) then the option argument is either empty (only allowed if the argument is optional), or it starts with a double quote character (") followed by a percent-escaped string that is the argument value. Note that there is only a leading double quote character, no trailing one. The double quote character is only needed to be able to differentiate between no value and the empty string as value.

string list

If the option takes a number argument and it can occur more than once, then the option argument is either empty, or it is a comma-separated list of string arguments as described above.

The active language and character set are currently determined from the locale environment of the `gpgconf` program.

### 5.3.3 Listing components

The command `--list-components` will list all components that can be configured with `gpgconf`. Usually, one component will correspond to one GnuPG-related program and contain the options of that programs configuration file that can be modified using `gpgconf`. However, this is not necessarily the case. A component might also be a group of selected options from several programs, or contain entirely virtual options that have a special effect rather than changing exactly one option in one configuration file.

A component is a set of configuration options that semantically belong together. Furthermore, several changes to a component can be made in an atomic way with a single operation. The GUI could for example provide a menu with one entry for each component, or a window with one tabulator sheet per component.

The command argument `--list-components` lists all available components, one per line. The format of each line is:

*name*:*description*

*name* This field contains a name tag of the component. The name tag is used to specify the component in all communication with `gpgconf`. The name tag is to be used *verbatim*. It is thus not in any escaped format.

*description*

The *string* in this field contains a human-readable description of the component. It can be displayed to the user of the GUI for informational purposes. It is *percent-escaped* and *localized*.

Example:

```
$ gpgconf --list-components
gpg:GPG for OpenPGP
gpg-agent:GPG Agent
scdaemon:Smartcard Daemon
gpgsm:GPG for S/MIME
dirmngr:Directory Manager
```

### 5.3.4 Listing options

Every component contains one or more options. Options may be gathered into option groups to allow the GUI to give visual hints to the user about which options are related.

The command argument `--list-options component` lists all options (and the groups they belong to) in the component *component*, one per line. *component* must be the string in the field *name* in the output of the `--list-components` command.

There is one line for each option and each group. First come all options that are not in any group. Then comes a line describing a group. Then come all options that belong into each group. Then comes the next group and so on. There does not need to be any group (and in this case the output will stop after the last non-grouped option).

The format of each line is:

```
name:flags:level:description:type:alt-type:argname:default:argdef:value ■
```

*name* This field contains a name tag for the group or option. The name tag is used to specify the group or option in all communication with `gpgconf`. The name tag is to be used *verbatim*. It is thus not in any escaped format.

*flags* The flags field contains an *unsigned number*. Its value is the OR-wise combination of the following flag values:

**group** (1) If this flag is set, this is a line describing a group and not an option.

The following flag values are only defined for options (that is, if the **group** flag is not used).

**optional arg** (2)

If this flag is set, the argument is optional. This is never set for *type* 0 (none) options.

**list** (4) If this flag is set, the option can be given multiple times.

**runtime** (8)

If this flag is set, the option can be changed at runtime.

**default** (16)

If this flag is set, a default value is available.

**default desc** (32)

If this flag is set, a (runtime) default is available. This and the **default** flag are mutually exclusive.

**no arg desc** (64)

If this flag is set, and the **optional arg** flag is set, then the option has a special meaning if no argument is given.

*level* This field is defined for options and for groups. It contains an *unsigned number* that specifies the expert level under which this group or option should be displayed. The following expert levels are defined for options (they have analogous meaning for groups):

**basic** (0) This option should always be offered to the user.

**advanced** (1)  
This option may be offered to advanced users.

**expert** (2)  
This option should only be offered to expert users.

**invisible** (3)  
This option should normally never be displayed, not even to expert users.

**internal** (4)  
This option is for internal use only. Ignore it.

The level of a group will always be the lowest level of all options it contains.

*description*

This field is defined for options and groups. The *string* in this field contains a human-readable description of the option or group. It can be displayed to the user of the GUI for informational purposes. It is *percent-escaped* and *localized*.

*type* This field is only defined for options. It contains an *unsigned number* that specifies the type of the option's argument, if any. The following types are defined:

Basic types:

**none** (0) No argument allowed.

**string** (1)  
An *unformatted string*.

**int32** (2) A *signed number*.

**uint32** (3)  
An *unsigned number*.

Complex types:

**pathname** (32)  
A *string* that describes the pathname of a file. The file does not necessarily need to exist.

**ldap server** (33)  
A *string* that describes an LDAP server in the format:  
*hostname : port : username : password : base\_dn*

More types will be added in the future. Please see the *alt-type* field for information on how to cope with unknown types.

<i>alt-type</i>	This field is identical to <i>type</i> , except that only the types 0 to 31 are allowed. The GUI is expected to present the user the option in the format specified by <i>type</i> . But if the argument type <i>type</i> is not supported by the GUI, it can still display the option in the more generic basic type <i>alt-type</i> . The GUI must support all the defined basic types to be able to display all options. More basic types may be added in future versions. If the GUI encounters a basic type it doesn't support, it should report an error and abort the operation.
<i>argname</i>	This field is only defined for options with an argument type <i>type</i> that is not 0. In this case it may contain a <i>percent-escaped</i> and <i>localised string</i> that gives a short name for the argument. The field may also be empty, though, in which case a short name is not known.
<i>default</i>	This field is defined only for options. Its format is that of an <i>option argument</i> (See Section 5.3.2 [Format conventions], page 34, for details). If the default value is empty, then no default is known. Otherwise, the value specifies the default value for this option. Note that this field is also meaningful if the option itself does not take a real argument.
<i>argdef</i>	This field is defined only for options for which the <code>optional arg</code> flag is set. If the <code>no arg desc</code> flag is not set, its format is that of an <i>option argument</i> (See Section 5.3.2 [Format conventions], page 34, for details). If the default value is empty, then no default is known. Otherwise, the value specifies the default value for this option. If the <code>no arg desc</code> flag is set, the field is either empty or contains a description of the effect of this option if no argument is given. Note that this field is also meaningful if the option itself does not take a real argument.
<i>value</i>	This field is defined only for options. Its format is that of an <i>option argument</i> . If it is empty, then the option is not explicitly set in the current configuration, and the default applies (if any). Otherwise, it contains the current value of the option. Note that this field is also meaningful if the option itself does not take a real argument.

### 5.3.5 Changing options

The command `--change-options component` will attempt to change the options of the component *component* to the specified values. *component* must be the string in the field *name* in the output of the `--list-components` command. You have to provide the options that shall be changed in the following format on standard input:

```
name:flags:new-value
```

*name* This is the name of the option to change. *name* must be the string in the field *name* in the output of the `--list-options` command.

*flags* The flags field contains an *unsigned number*. Its value is the OR-wise combination of the following flag values:

`default` (16)

If this flag is set, the option is deleted and the default value is used instead (if applicable).

*new-value* The new value for the option. This field is only defined if the `default` flag is not set. The format is that of an *option argument*. If it is empty (or the field is omitted), the default argument is used (only allowed if the argument is optional for this option). Otherwise, the option will be set to the specified value.

Examples:

To set the force option, which is of basic type `none` (0):

```
$ echo 'force:0:1' | gpgconf --change-options dirmngr
```

To delete the force option:

```
$ echo 'force:16:'' | gpgconf --change-options dirmngr
```

The `--runtime` option can influence when the changes take effect.

## 5.4 Generate an X.509 certificate request

This is a simple tool to interactively generate a certificate request which will be printed to stdout.

`gpgsm-gencert.sh` is invoked as:

```
'gpgsm-cencert.sh'
```

## 5.5 Put a passphrase into the cache.

The `gpg-preset-passphrase` is a utility to seed the internal cache of a running `gpg-agent` with passphrases. It is mainly useful for unattended machines, where the usual `pinentry` tool may not be used and the passphrases for the to be used keys are given at machine startup.

Passphrases set with this utility don't expire unless the `--forget` option is used to explicitly clear them from the cache — or `gpg-agent` is either restarted or reloaded (by sending a `SIGHUP` to it). It is necessary to allow this passphrase presetting by starting `gpg-agent` with the `--allow-preset-passphrase`.

### 5.5.1 List of all commands and options.

`gpg-preset-passphrase` is invoked this way:

```
gpg-preset-passphrase [options] [command] keygrip
```

*keygrip* is a 40 character string of hexadecimal characters identifying the key for which the passphrase should be set or cleared. This *keygrip* is listed along with the key when running the command: `gpgsm --dump-secret-keys`. One of the following command options must be given:

`--preset` Preset a passphrase. This is what you usually will use. `gpg-preset-passphrase` will then read the passphrase from `stdin`.

`--forget` Flush the passphrase for the given *keygrip* from the cache.

The following additional options may be used:

`-v`

`--verbose`

Output additional information while running.

`-P string`

`--passphrase string`

Instead of reading the passphrase from `stdin`, use the supplied *string* as passphrase. Note that this makes the passphrase visible for other users.



## 6 Notes pertaining to certain OSes.

GnuPG has been developed on GNU/Linux systems and is known to work on almost all Free OSes. All modern POSIX systems should be supported right now, however there are probably a lot of smaller glitches we need to fix first. The major problem areas are:

- For logging to sockets and other internal operations the `fopencookie` function (`funopen` under \*BSD) is used. This is a very convenient function which makes it possible to create outputs in a structured and easy maintainable way. The drawback however is that most proprietary OSes don't support this function. At g10 Code we have looked into several ways on how to overcome this limitation but no sufficiently easy and maintainable way has been found. Porting *glibc* to a general POSIX system is of course an option and would make writing portable software much easier; this it has not yet been done and the system administrator would need to cope with the GNU specific admin things in addition to the generic ones of his system.

We have now settled to use explicit stdio wrappers with a functionality similar to `funopen`. Although the code for this has already been written (*libestream*), we have not yet changed GnuPG to use it.

This means that on systems not supporting either `funopen` or `fopencookie`, logging to a socket won't work, prompts are not formatted as pretty as they should be and `gpgsm`'s `LISTKEYS` Assuan command does not work.

- We are planning to use file descriptor passing for interprocess communication. This will allow us save a lot of resources and improve performance of certain operations a lot. Systems not supporting this won't gain these benefits but we try to keep them working the standard way as it is done today.
- We require more or less full POSIX compatibility. This has been around for 15 years now and thus we don't believe it makes sense to support non POSIX systems anymore. Well, we of course the usual workarounds for near POSIX systems will be applied.

There is one exception of this rule: Systems based the Microsoft Windows API (called here *W32*) will be supported to some extent.

### 6.1 Microsoft Windows Notes

The port to Microsoft Windows based OSes is pretty new and has some limitations we might remove over time. Note, that we have not yet done any security audit and you should not use any valuable private key. In particular, **using it on a box with more than one user, might lead to a key compromise.**

Current limitations are:

- The `LISTKEYS` Assuan command of `gpgsm` is not supported. Using the command line options `--list-keys` or `--list-secret-keys` does however work.
- No support for CRL checks. By default the option `--disable-crl-checks` has been turned on and the log will show an appropriate warning message. The reason for this is that the separate CRL checking daemon (`dirmgr`) has not been ported to W32.
- `gpgconf` does not create backup files, so in case of trouble your configuration file might get lost.

- `watchgnupg` is not available. Logging to sockets is not possible.
- The periodical smartcard status checking done by `sddaemon` is not yet supported.
- Detached running of the `gpg-agent` is not directly supported. It needs to be started in a console and left alone then.

## 7 How to solve problems

Everyone knows that software often does not do what it should do and thus there is a need to track down problems. We call this debugging in a reminiscent to the moth jamming a relay in a Mark II box back in 1947.

Most of the problems are merely configuration and user problems but nevertheless there are the most annoying ones and responsible for many gray hairs. We try to give some guidelines here on how to identify and solve the problem at hand.

### 7.1 Debugging Tools

The GnuPG distribution comes with a couple of tools, useful to help find and solving problems.

#### 7.1.1 Scrutinizing a keybox file

A keybox is a file format used to store public keys along with meta information and indices. The commonly used one is the file `'pubring.kbx'` in the `'gnupg'` directory. It contains all X.509 certificates as well as OpenPGP keys<sup>1</sup>.

When called the standard way, e.g.:

```
'kbxutil ~/.gnupg/pubring.kbx'
```

it lists all records (called BLOBS) with their meta-information in a human readable format.

To see statistics on the keybox in question, run it using

```
'kbxutil --stats ~/.gnupg/pubring.kbx'
```

and you get an output like:

```

Total number of blobs:      99
      header:                1
      empty:                 0
      openpgp:              0
      x509:                 98
      non flagged:         81
      secret flagged:      0
      ephemeral flagged:   17

```

In this example you see that the keybox does not have any OpenPGP keys but contains 98 X.509 certificates and a total of 17 keys or certificates are flagged as ephemeral, meaning that they are only temporarily stored (cached) in the keybox and won't get listed using the usual commands provided by `gpgsm` or `gpg`. 81 certificates are stored in a standard way and directly available from `gpgsm`.

---

<sup>1</sup> Well, OpenPGP keys are not implemented, `gpg` still used the keyring file `'pubring.gpg'`

## 7.2 Commonly Seen Problems

- Error code ‘Not supported’ from Dirmngr  
Most likely the option ‘enable-ocsp’ is active for gpgsm but Dirmngr’s OCSP feature has not been enabled using ‘allow-ocsp’ in ‘dirmngr.conf’.
- The Curses based Pinentry does not work  
The far most common reason for this is that the environment variable `GPG_TTY` has not been set correctly. Make sure that it has been set to a real tty device and not just to ‘/dev/tty’; i.e. ‘`GPG_TTY=tty`’ is plainly wrong; what you want is ‘`GPG_TTY=‘tty‘`’ — note the back ticks. Also make sure that this environment variable gets exported, that is you should follow up the setting with an ‘`export GPG_TTY`’ (assuming a Bourne style shell). Even for GUI based Pinentries; you should have set `GPG_TTY`. See the section on installing the `gpg-agent` on how to do it.

## Appendix A Description of the Assuan protocol.

The architecture of the modular GnuPG system is based on a couple of highly specialized modules which make up a network of client server communication. A common framework for intermodule communication is therefore needed and should be implemented in a library.

### A.0.1 Goals

- Common framework for module communication
- Easy debugging
- Easy module testing
- Extendible
- Optional authentication and encryption facility
- Usable to access external hardware

### A.0.2 Design criteria

- Client Server with back channel
- Use a mainly text based protocol
- Escape certain control characters
- Allow indefinite data length
- Request confidentiality for parts of the communication
- Dummy module should allow direct linking of client and server.
- Inline data or descriptor passing for bulk data
- No protection against DoS needed
- Subliminal channels are not an issue

### A.0.3 Implementation

The implementation is line based with a maximum line size of 1000 octets. The default IPC mechanism are Unix Domain Sockets.

On a connect request the server responds either with an okay or an error status. For authentication check the server may send an Inquiry Response prior to the first Okay, it may also issue Status messages. The server must check that the client is allowed to connect, this is done by requesting the credentials for the peer and comparing them to those of the server. This avoids attacks based on wrong socket permissions.

It may choose to delay the first response in case of an error. The server never closes the connection - however the lower protocol may do so after some time of inactivity or when the connection is in an error state.

All textual messages are assumed to be in UTF-8 unless otherwise noted.

### A.0.4 Server responses

OK [*<arbitrary debugging information>*]

Request was successful.

ERR *errorcode* [*<human readable error description>*]

Request could not be fulfilled. The error codes are mostly application specific except for a few common ones.

S *keyword* *<status information depending on keyword>*

Informational output by the server, still processing the request.

# *<string>*

Comment line issued only for debugging purposes. Totally ignored.

D *<raw data>*

Raw data returned to client. There must be exactly one space after the 'D'. The values for '%', CR and LF must be percent escaped; this is encoded as %25, %0D and %0A. Only uppercase letters should be used in the hexadecimal representation. Other characters may be percent escaped for easier debugging. All these Data lines are considered one data stream up to the OK or ERR response. Status and Inquiry Responses may be mixed with the Data lines.

INQUIRE *keyword* *<parameters>*

Server needs further information from the client. The client should answer with a command which is allowed after an inquiry. Note that the server does not confirm that client command but either continues processing or ends processing with an error status. Not all commands are allowed.

A client should only check the first letter of each line and then skip over to the next token (except for data lines where the raw data starts exactly after 2 bytes). Lines larger than 1000 bytes should be treated as a communication error. (The rationale for having a line length limit is to allow for easier multiplexing of multiple channels).

### A.0.5 Client requests

The server waits for client requests after he sent an Okay or Error. The client should not issue a request in other cases with the exception of the CANCEL command.

*command* *<parameters>*

*command* is a one word string without preceding white space. Parameters are command specific, CR, LF and the percent signs should be percent escaped as described above. To send a backslash as the last character it should also be percent escaped. Percent escaping is allowed anywhere in the parameters but not in the command. The line ends with a CR, LF or just a LF.

Not yet implemented feature: If there is a need for a parameter list longer than the line length limit (1000 characters including command and CR, LF), the last character of the line (right before the CR/LF or LF) must be a non-escape encoded backslash. The following line is then expected to be a continuation of the line with the backslash replaced by a blank and the line ending removed.

**D <raw data>**

Raw data to the server. There must be exactly one space after the 'D'. The values for '%', CR and LF must be percent escaped; this is encoded as %25, %0D and %0A. Only uppercase letters should be used in the hexadecimal representation. Other characters may be percent escaped for easier debugging. All these Data lines are considered one data stream up to the OKAY or ERROR response. Status and Inquiry Responses may be mixed with the Data lines.

**END**

Lines beginning with a # or empty lines are ignored. This is useful to comment test scripts.

Although the commands are application specific, some of them are used by all protocols and partly directly supported by the Assuan library:

- CANCEL**      This is the one special command which aborts the current request. It can be sent at any time and the server will stop its operation right before it would send the next response line (of any type).
- BYE**          Close the connect, the server will reply with an OK.
- AUTH**        Not yet specified as we don't implement it in the first phase. See my mail to gpa-dev on 2001-10-25 about the rationale for measurements against local attacks.
- RESET**      Reset the connection but not any existing authentication. The server should release all resources associated with the connection.
- END**         Used by a client to mark the end of raw data. The server may send END to indicate a partial end of data.

**A.0.6 Error Codes**

Here we keep a list of error codes used in any Assuan based protocol. The format is the string ERR, white space, the error number, white space, a textual description of the error.

100 Unknown Command

101 Not Implemented

301 certificate has been revoked [DirMngr]

302 no CRL known for this certificate [DirMngr]

303 CRL is too old and a new one could not be retrieved [DirMngr]



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Version 2, June 1991

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The GnuPG project would like to thank its many contributors. Without them the project would not have been nearly as successful as it has been. Any omissions in this list are accidental. Feel free to contact the maintainer if you have been left out or some of your contributions are not listed.

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## Glossary

- ‘ARL’        The *Authority Revocation List* is technical identical to a CRL but used for CAS and not for end user certificates.
- ‘CRL’        The *Certificate Revocation List* is a list containing certificates revoked by the issuer.
- ‘Keygrip’    This term is used by GnuPG to describe a 20 byte hash value used to identify a certain key without referencing to a concrete protocol. It is used internally to access a private key. Usually it is shown and entered as a 40 character hexadecimal formatted string.
- ‘OCSP’       The *Online Certificate Status Protocol* is used as an alternative to a CRL. It is described in RFC 2560.



# Option Index

## -

-a ..... 9  
-u ..... 9

## A

agent-program ..... 8  
allow-admin ..... 29  
allow-mark-trusted ..... 19  
armor ..... 9  
assume-armor ..... 9  
assume-base64 ..... 9  
assume-binary ..... 9

## B

base64 ..... 9  
batch ..... 18

## C

c ..... 19  
call-dirmngr ..... 5  
call-protect-tool ..... 6  
csh ..... 19

## D

daemon ..... 18, 27  
debug ..... 10, 19, 28  
debug-all ..... 10, 19, 28  
debug-allow-core-dump ..... 10  
debug-ignore-expiration ..... 10  
debug-level ..... 10, 18, 28  
debug-no-chain-validation ..... 10  
debug-sc ..... 28  
debug-wait ..... 19, 28  
decrypt ..... 5  
default-cache-ttl ..... 20  
delete-keys ..... 7  
deny-admin ..... 29  
dirmnr-program ..... 8  
disable-application ..... 29  
disable-crl-checks ..... 8  
disable-ocsp ..... 8  
disable-policy-checks ..... 8  
disable-pth ..... 19  
display ..... 20  
dump-external-keys ..... 6  
dump-keys ..... 6  
dump-options ..... 5, 17, 27  
dump-secret-keys ..... 6

## E

enable-crl-checks ..... 8  
enable-ocsp ..... 8  
enable-policy-checks ..... 8  
encrypt ..... 5  
export ..... 7

## F

faked-system-time ..... 9, 18  
fixed-passphrase ..... 11  
force ..... 33  
force-crl-refresh ..... 8

## G

gen-key ..... 6

## H

help ..... 5, 17, 27, 33  
homedir ..... 7, 18, 27

## I

ignore-cache-for-signing ..... 20

## K

keep-display ..... 20  
keep-tty ..... 20  
keydb-clear-some-cert-flags ..... 6

## L

lc-messages ..... 20  
lc-type ..... 20  
learn-card ..... 7  
list-keys ..... 6  
list-secret-keys ..... 6  
local-user ..... 9  
log-file ..... 8, 19, 28

## M

max-cache-ttl ..... 20

## N

no-detach ..... 19, 28  
no-grab ..... 19  
no-secmem-warning ..... 8  
no-use-standard-socket ..... 20

**O**

options ..... 7, 18, 27

**P**

passphrase ..... 41  
 passwd ..... 7  
 pinentry-program ..... 20  
 policy-file ..... 8  
 prefer-system-dirmgr ..... 8  
 print-atr ..... 27

**Q**

q ..... 18  
 quiet ..... 18

**S**

s ..... 19  
 sddaemon-program ..... 20  
 server ..... 5, 18, 27  
 sh ..... 19

sign ..... 5

**T**

ttyname ..... 20  
 ttytype ..... 20

**U**

use-standard-socket ..... 20

**V**

v ..... 7, 18, 28  
 verbose ..... 7, 18, 28, 33, 41  
 verify ..... 5  
 version ..... 5, 17, 27, 33

**W**

with-ephemeral-keys ..... 10  
 with-key-data ..... 9  
 with-validation ..... 9

# Index

## A

Assuan, IPC ..... 47

## C

command options ..... 3, 5, 17, 27  
contributors ..... 57

## G

GPG command options ..... 3  
GPG-AGENT command options ..... 17  
GPGSM command options ..... 5  
GPL, GNU General Public License ..... 51

## I

introduction ..... 1

## O

options, GPG command ..... 3  
options, GPG-AGENT command ..... 17  
options, GPGSM command ..... 5  
options, SCDAEMON command ..... 27

## S

SCDAEMON command options ..... 27  
SIGHUP ..... 21  
SIGINT ..... 21  
SIGTERM ..... 21  
SIGUSR1 ..... 21  
SIGUSR2 ..... 21

