

September 13, 2013

**Situation:**

Recently we processed a few Returned Material Authorizations (a total of 14 units) related to the EZ Communicator Navigator Push Button Stations (EPBS) exhibiting a “hard push” for activation, or “no call placed”. Of the many thousands of EPBS’s shipped we have only 14 EPBS units thus far that have been returned with this defect. Upon detailed failure analysis, we discovered the surface mount connector, on the Housing Printed Circuit Board Assembly (PCBA) had become an open circuit due to the failure of the solder connections between the surface mount connector and the Housing PCBA.

**Solution:**

The failure mechanism resulting in the failed solder connections is mechanical stress. Depending upon several factors in the assembly process, more or less stress may be on any one unit. Thus, it is impossible to predict with any accuracy, if or when, a unit may fail. There have been very few failures, and our internal stress testing does not indicate wide spread potential failures. However to ensure this issue is adequately covered, we are extending our warranty to five years for this failure mode for any units in the date code range. Potentially effected units have date codes of 1310 through 1332. Units built prior to 1310 used a different style connector with mounting pins passing through the PCBA (“Through Hole”). There have been no failures related to Through Hole connector solder joints failing.

We have asked our Distributors to return un-installed product back to us for rework. Rework involves replacing the Housing PCBA (which has the surface mount connector) with a new PCBA using our tried and proven Through Hole connector. Based on the data collected to date, and testing to date, we are not recommending at this time that any action be taken regarding installed units.

Each Distributor will have a supply of EZ Communicator Navigators so that they may advance replace quickly any units failed in the field. We will also make readily available any special voice messages recorded so that the units can be pre-programmed with a special voice message to make the swap out easier for all involved.

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