

**STORAGE and SHIPPING of MIL ELECTRONICS GEAR**

---

Date: Fri, 23 Nov 2001 04:34:21 -0800  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: [R-390] Re: Shipping boatanchors safely

YOU MUST BE AWARE that UPS/Fed-EX and all of the small package companies have NO SPECIAL HANDLING in the tariff filings. This means that all labels, Tip-N-Tell and shock indicators mean ZIP. They are conveyor mass handling operations. The main point is the requirement of 2" of packing on all sides. Claims are based on proper packing not labels. The package must be capable of falling off of the conveyor 30" high and a 70 pound package to fall on it at any angle. Packages over 70 pounds are "SUPPOSED TO BE MAN HANDLED" do not hold your breath.

Shipments by common carriage (motor/air/sea freight) have the special handling in their tariffs and THEY require proper labels and marking. With such labeling they are more than likely to honor a claim. In most cases they use MTI for damage claim assessment.

They hate the Tip-N-Tell and Shock-Guard as they have handle them properly. YOU MUST ATTACH the self adhesive label on the Bill of Lading. We arm each as they are placed on the truck and we also staple them in a protected corner to prevent them from being inadvertently ripped off.

If the item can move inside the box/crate then it WILL BE DAMAGED.

Packaging peanuts (foam) should be outlawed for the packing of any item weighing more than 10 pounds. If all sides are prevented from moving, peanuts can be used as a void filler if the item is in a plastic bag or internal box. MBE is a firm believer in using peanuts and they have the highest damage claims in the industry.

I have been in the commercial packing and shipping business for over 20 years and speak with experience learned the hard way. I refuse to pack and ship an item unless it will survive the gorilla handling. Cost more YES arrive safely YES.

Double box all Boatanchors or crate properly and maintain 2" of foam or proper dunnage on all sides.

Wadded up newspaper is by far better than peanuts any day of the week and is cheaper and above all it does not get down in all of the nooks and crannies. If tubes are not secured by tube shields or other means, they should be wrapped in paper or bubble.

The use of bubble pack should be used for light items only. What do you have when you place the heavy item in the box and the bubble pops, then it drops and a few more bubbles pop. OH you have two thin pieces of plastic rubbing together. Cheap bubble will also pop in air transports in some cases.

The proper packing and shipping of boatanchors is not to be practiced by the cheap and frugal person. Just look at your packing job as if you are on the receiving end and would you be happy to receive it, would it survive being thrown into the pick up vans and all of the related handling. Think about dropping it 15 or 20 times and do not forget vibration. The UPS testing lab uses 100,000 CPS as a road test in their package approval process.

---

---

Date: Mon, 14 Jan 2002 23:33:56 -0500  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] R-388 knobs, etc

> OK, here is another horror story courtesy of UPS. The R-388 that I purchased was sent to me via UPS. The box was apparently dropped and the front panel was impacted. That's why the rigs should be braced at their corners or other strong points.

The result was that the two large knobs for  
> tuning and band switch were cracked and one of the  
> small knobs for selecting selectivity was also  
> cracked. Can anyone tell me where replacements may be  
> obtained? I get the impression that they are hard to  
> find. I hope not.

They should be the standard fluted knobs which are not hard to find. Does that small knob have a metal pointer at its base? (Like the filament voltage knob on a TV-7.)

The scary thing is that the PTO shaft may have also been bent.

That is scary -- though probably fixable. Was the PTO damaged? It's bad enough when knobs break or there's other front end cosmetic damage. But the shafts and the switches and pots were not built to take the weight of the radio driving them backward. Imagine what would happen to the typical Hallicrafters bandswitch that goes right straight through from front to back PTO's don't like to be jammed either.

The man who shipped the  
> R-388 to me told me that he would double box it.  
> However, he ended up putting it in a heavy cloth wrap  
> and surrounding it with peanuts in one box. Of course,  
> the receiver shifted in shipment and the panel was  
> apparently quite close to one side when it was dropped  
> or hit.

Why is this so blankety-blank familiar, along with "I've shipped many of these things, with no problems, yadda yadda." I've had a few misfires come my way. Try an SP-600 with the bottom corner square inch of panel broken off and a 2 inch crease in the rear apron for fun in the evening. Many, many near misses -- stuff arrived OK by the grace of the chief engineer in the sky -- not packed as advertised. Beanbag box syndrome -- UPS people can hardly pick the thing up because it has no corners or edges. Then, on top of being inadequately protected, it's more drop-prone.

So much for my dream of being able to open up  
> this box and behold a beautiful, ready to go Collins.  
> Also, has anyone had any dealings with UPS as to  
> filing for damages?

I've had no direct experience. Reason: The few times there was damage, it was the fault of the packing, or at least the packing was so clearly inadequate it wasn't presentable to the authorities. That SP-600 came in a U-Haul box made for light duty use -- not even a true shipping box and said so in six inch high letters so the UPS claims guy could see before he got out of his car. They will want to see what it was shipped in - y'know, the thing with the UPS

label, bar code and tracking number stuck right on it. If it's as bad as it sounds, you may not have a chance. I'm told the fact they accepted the parcel for shipment means nada.

The man who shipped it said he would call and make a claim. It was insured for \$400.

The knobs, when you find them, won't cost much. Check the usual sources. I'll check later on a couple and let you know. PTO is another matter. One of the problems though, in making these claims, is establishing cost to repair. You can't very well trot down to the nearest Collins authorized repair center for a quote - not unless you have a way-back machine. If the PTO is bad, that could be expensive and difficult to find. The R-388 units are not as plentiful as the Cosmos's for the '390A's. Once the total climbs past a certain point -- and the packing was OK -- they may offer to pay the full amount -- but they take the merchandise. It's like collision insurance with a car. At some level, it's "totalled" even if it still runs. Chances are, the claim will be refused outright, but that will establish officially that the fault was in the packing. (If UPS has any standard, from what I've heard, it's "original packing" (yeah, right) or in-place foam.) So you may be out of luck from the get-go. However, you then should seek compensation from the seller.

> I would appreciate any comments about those knobs and  
> UPS. I have no plans to turn it on now. I'm going to  
> test the tubes first and give it a close going over  
> before that.

Yup -- work around it for now, and look for other concealed damage. Hopefully there will be none, but it took a bad hit in the worst place. Incidentally, those old knobs are Bakelite and may be decently repairable. I've repaired the fluted knobs like those with epoxy. Don't use crazy glue. Mix up the epoxy well and apply quickly before it starts to set up so it will flow as you press the pieces firmly together. Don't worry about the excess right away. After it sets, take a razor or Xacto knife and trim away the excess glue flush with the surfaces. Don't try to take it all. Let them cure at least a day, maybe two. Then you can sand them smooth with very fine sandpaper or emery -- or those abrasive pads. What this approach does is to fill any voids from crumbling around the cracks or tiny missing pieces. Re-shine with Brasso, plastic polish or auto compound. You can stop at this point, or do some more detailing with hard shoe polish. There are a bunch of other ways to restore the finish. Some paint them gloss or satin black and bake to harden the finish. (Of course, then they'll eventually chip like '390 knobs.)

If it's just the knobs and no damage to the PTO or anything else, I suggest you "settle out of court". Ask the seller to repay you for the knobs.

---

Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002 07:24:51 -0500  
From: Michael Crestohl <mc@sover.net>  
Subject: [R-390] Boatanchor Storage - Some questions???

I've been lurking in the shadows for quite some time now and have enjoyed reading much of the traffic on here. I'd like to pose a question to the group that may become an interesting thread for all. My family and I recently moved into a house here in the Upper Valley region of Vermont/New Hampshire. We have a nice two-car garage which has new electric doors that lock and a cement floor, basement (with cement floor) and an attic. All three places are unheated.

My question is about equipment storage. I would like to know what is the best place to store my "Boatanchors" and manuals collection that are not being used at this time. I have kept them in

a temperature and humidity controlled storage facility for the past three and a half years (don't ask what it has cost me!) but now is the time to move them.

My concerns are the heat of the attic in the summer and the potential of high humidity and of flooding of the basement. I would also like to know the best way to test the basement for humidity and what is an acceptable level. If this is relevant the house is heated by forced air from an oil-burning furnace less than a year old. The house itself is about 85 years old and is located at the top of a 100 foot embankment. My manuals are boxed in USPS Priority Mail boxes (the older ones with the non-sticky flaps) which serve as a filing system as well as keeping them flat and on order.

So basically I'm asking about the best place to store vacuum tube-based electronic equipment and paper manuals in an 85 year-old house with an attic, basement and two-car garage in Central Vermont.

---

Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002 08:58:17 -0500  
From: Jim Brannigan <jbrannig@optonline.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Boatanchor Storage - Some questions???  
To: Michael Crestohl <mc@sover.net>, R-390@mailman.qth.net

I don't know what the environment is like in Vermont. Here on Long Island we have dry cold winters and damp hot summers. I store most of my radios in the basement, on open shelves, at least a foot off the floor. (if I get more than a foot of water in the basement, I have bigger problems than wet radios) The basement is heated, humidified in the winter and a dehumidifier or Air conditioning is used during the warmer months. The space is also used for radio station, home office and playroom.

Other radios, parts, etc. are stored in the attic of the garage. They are subject to drastic changes in temperature and humidity and don't fare as well. hope this helps. Jim

---

Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002 10:19:57 -0500  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Boatanchor Storage - Some questions???

I'm also on Long Island and the climate should be similar to Vermont, though probably gets a bit warmer and humid in summer here and our winters aren't as extreme. (We get a few inches of snow when you get a foot or more).

I'd think a lot would depend on how you use the garage and basement. My basement is finished, but the electric heating is never used or needed as the oil burner and hot water heater keep it warm during the winter. The fact that your oil burner is new is important -- there was always a thin layer of soot with the old one. But be sure to have it checked regularly -- if it "bangs" when it goes on, may need adjustment to avoid a blow-back, which you don't want to know about. I have a hot water/radiator system. Yours might benefit from the air ducting keeping air circulating down there. Is it air conditioned? Mine isn't, but the cold air from the wall units tends to fall downstairs and keeps the basement reasonably cool.

My garage is a single, but very deep. Have a snowblower, but not used so far this year, no lawnmower. It is unheated, but part of the house with two flights -- bedrooms and attic over it. It is not used for cars, has an old wooden rollup door with a good seal at the bottom but not the sides or top. I suppose it would be better with a modern insulated door. Things hold up well toward the middle and back, not as good at the front, near the door. A lot would depend on whether the garage is attached and how you use it. Cars generate gasses on startup, frequent

opening, etc.; stored lawnmowers with grass, etc. would not be good, or bringing in a wet snowblower, etc.

I have a big attic with high roof. The floor has been toughened up with a layer of 3/4" plywood screwed down, not nailed, to help support it. However, the floors of attics -- at least on this 50 year old house -- are done with 2 X 6's, not the 2 X 8's or better used for load bearing floors. OK to walk, but not run or jump and probably not OK to stack tons of boatanchors. If the floor of your attic is really more simply the ceiling of the rooms downstairs, there may not be sufficient load bearing in the wall setup. In mine, there are extreme temperature swings and periodic visits of birds and squirrels. I do have a couple of BA's up there -- a BC-312 and a Hallicrafters S-29 -- haven't checked up on 'em lately.

On a 100 ft. ridge, sounds like the basement is the best bet -- unlikely to flood.

---

From: "Bill Hawkins" <bill@iaxs.net>

Subject: RE: [R-390] Boatanchor Storage - Some questions???

Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002 09:20:50 -0600

As far as I'm concerned, the biggest problem is mold. This happens long before something gets rusty. When you are sensitive to mold, you get to learn about dewpoint. This is the temperature where moisture just begins to condense from the air, like the moisture on the outside of a cold drink in summertime. You can calculate dewpoint from %RH (relative humidity) and vice versa if you know the air temperature. Radio Shack and others sell \$20 digital meters for temperature and relative humidity. Weather stations, like Oregon Scientific, will calculate dew point for you.

The trick is to store paper and easily rusted gear in an area where the temperature never gets below the dewpoint. With no condensed water, there is no mildew and no rust. If you have other allergies, dust mites go dormant when the RH is below 50%. You need to know that dewpoint remains pretty much the same in an area with air circulation, but that RH increases in the vicinity of cold surfaces like concrete or glass that has cold temperatures on the other side of it. If water floods the floor, dewpoint will rise to at least the temperature of the water. I don't have anything expensive less than a foot off the floor.

Here in Minneapolis (dewpoint range -20 to 80) I finally got the basement under control by installing heating air intakes near floor level in the basement and blocking off the ones upstairs. The circulating air fan is on all of the time. Those with radiant heat would need to circulate air between basement main floors. I also installed an UltraAire dehumidifier developed for use in dairy barns. It cost \$3000, but it maintains 35% at 72 degrees spring and fall. Two \$300 standard dehumidifiers could not hold 60% some days. The basement never smells moldy, so it can be used all year around. I think it was worth it. All of my good stuff and >1000 books are in the basement. Nothing is in the vented attic. Paper stuff in the garage is in sealed plastic containers.

In summer, the basement will not be a high temperature problem. Forget the attic. The garage will also get hot, but military gear can handle it. Wax capacitors and liquid electrolyte era stuff is best kept in the basement (or living room :-).

With an older house, you should make an effort to seal major outdoor air leaks, especially through the attic. When we bought this house 20 years ago, the unfinished walkout basement had neither insulation nor vapor barrier on the outside wooden wall. The attic runs 50% RH when it is 10 degrees out, attic 23 deg. BTW, dewpoint is never higher than air temperature. When it tries to be, you get rain (or snow).

---

---

From: "Helmut Usbeck" <vze2gmp4@verizon.net>  
To: "r-390 list" <r-390@mailman.qth.net>  
Date: Mon, 25 Feb 2002 11:54:15 -0500  
Subject: [R-390] storage

Keep in cool, dry, dark place. I've never been able to find one those places in my house. The closest I've come is the refrigrator.(not the freezer). I keep film and some of my tubes in there, boxed and wrapped in aluminium foil. I store larger radios and stuff in my garage which is attached to the house so in the winter it never freezes. Do not place items on a cement floor! Place radio on a layer of plastic. Then use two pieces of wood to raise radio off the plastic. Cover with a cotton cloth completely. I use an old bed sheet. Do NOT cover with plastic.

---

From: "Jim Amos" <jimamos@cisco.com>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] storage  
Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002 13:22:10 -0500

What does the cement floor do to the radios? I know it will ruin a car battery as well, but would like to know what the failure mode is. Does it cause additoinal corrosion? Also, if the radio is setting on rubber feet, is it OK? My Drakes have rubber feet under them, but of course the 390's don't (and some of the parts sitting next to it).

---

From: "Biddle, Richard" <s-biddle@ti.com>  
To: "'R-390@mailman.qth.net'" <R-390@mailman.qth.net>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] Boatanchor Storage - Some questions???  
Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002 15:52:53 -0600

The military guys use something known as prime pack to keep things forever. I recently bought a set of 1960 vintage headphones that came in the prime pack bag. Thirty plus years old and the rubber cord was as flexible as the day it was made and the cloth headband cover was perfect. (From Antique Electronics)

When we prime pack military/JAN integrated circuits, we put the parts and a desiccant (to getter residual moisture) in a special aluminized plastic bag and evacuate as much air as possible with a vacuum pump, then heat seal the bag while holding vacuum.

I recently opened an R-390A RF deck that I had stored about five years ago. I used an industrial heavy duty trash bag, some desiccant I picked up from the gun store, and a vacuum cleaner. I made sure the bag was well sealed by rolling the end over and securely taped. It was then put in a cardboard box that was stored in a non-environmentally controlled storage unit we rented. Came out looking fine.

I have seen TV adds for some bags that are used to store clothes. These appear to have a check valve to make the vacuum cleaner part a little easier.

My large gun safe keeps things pretty dry and rust free. I use a BIG can of desiccant but you can get electric dryers. With the prices boatanchor stuff is fetching at auction, maybe that is the right place to keep them anyway :)

---

---

Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002 18:56:02 -0800  
From: Jerry Kincade <w5kp@swbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Boatanchor Storage - Some questions???  
To: "Biddle, Richard" <s-biddle@ti.com>, R-390@mailman.qth.net

Brownell's Gunsmithing supplies sells some specially treated vapor type paper for long term packing of guns called Gun Wrap that works like a champ. It's actually not a "wrap" per se, because you only need to enclose it with the item, not fully wrap it in the stuff. Info is at <http://www.brownells.com/Product/index.asp> I used this stuff to store several long guns for as long as 6 years in a non-controlled warehouse environment, and it worked perfectly. I'd not be afraid to use it on radios, but have no info on that application. Maybe Brownell's could provide more details.

---

Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002 19:01:40 -0800  
From: Jerry Kincade <w5kp@swbell.net>  
To: R-390@mailman.qth.net  
Subject: [R-390] Boatanchor Storage

A closer look at Gun Wrap revealed warnings about brass/aluminum, etc., I presume from tarnishing. This IS a chemical product, and not a dessicant. Maybe not such a good idea for old radios. I'd hate to see somebody's prize BA ruined. :-)

---

From: "Kenneth Crips" <w7itc@hotmail.com>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] Boatanchor Storage - Some questions???  
Date: Tue, 26 Feb 2002

hands down the best way of storing documents is by vacuum sealing them into storage bags. go to <http://www.foodsaverforless.com/> for an example of what I mean. Once a TM, Op Manual, or magazine is sealed into one of these vacuum sealed bag they are absolutely water proof. If I am not mistaken doesn't the Manual have a section on how to package and store such equipment.

---

From: "Helmut Usbeck" <vze2gmp4@verizon.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] storage  
Date: Mon, 25 Feb 2002 10:16:40 -0500

> What does the cement floor do to the radios?

Cement never really dries and mousture evaporating from the floor cause a corrosion problem. Which is why I place the equipment on a sheet or two of plastic

---

Date: Sat, 24 Aug 2002 11:40:52 -0700  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: [R-390] Re: HSN Packing article

Barry your article in the current issue of HSN on packing hits the nail square on the head. If the people that are shipping would adhere to your guide lines then we could use the BW for other subjects. I make up custom 500#DW Stapled boxes for shipping the R-39XX etc. using polyethylene foam. and I have one box that has made 4 round trips to Ft. Worth plus 3 local RT's and is still very serviceable. UPS says a 500#DW RSC is good for 150 pounds. Most guys cry like a wet baby with the price. The ones that have used them, love them. REF: UPS Claims. I have lost one claim to UPS in 22 years and that lady has been gone for over 20 years. Be firm with a REP. not a gum chewer on the 800 number. Follow all of their guidelines and they will pay promptly out of Ft. Worth. All claims are filed by FAX. THE SHIPPER IS THE ONLY

ONE THAT CAN FILE THE CLAIM "PERIOD" FYI UPS NOW CONTROLS THE CRUMMY MBE PACKING FRANCHISE COMPANY. DO NOT EXPECT ANY BETTER SERVICE OR PRICING THEY ARE STILL BEHIND THE EIGHT BALL.

---

From: "Michael Melland" <w9wis@charter.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] UPS is Garbage  
Date: Thu, 31 Oct 2002 10:36:06 -0500

>Always avoid UPS if possible. They have lousy customer  
>service and insolate themselves ...

My experience as well. I spent \$120 for a custom FastPak shipping box for the very few trips my R-390A will ever make. The FastPak is the only way to go.... about 4-6" of foam surrounds the whole radio and the inner box is about 1/2" thick and hard as plywood. The outer box is just a "covering" and it takes the dings, dents and labels. BTW the FastPak is designed for 50 uses. I learned about these boxes from Rick Mish who told me he got tired of dealing with shipping damage claims. He has them made up for himself and uses them to ship radios worldwide.

---

From: "Barry Hauser" <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] UPS is Garbage  
Date: Thu, 31 Oct 2002 11:07:24 -0500

A bit pricey, but cheaper than the alternative. Could you tell us where to get them? Also, Hank Arney makes a heck of a shipping container. I don't know if he's offering these to other than his commercial customers -- Hank -- time to chime in.

---

From: "Michael Melland" <w9wis@charter.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] UPS is Garbage  
Date: Thu, 31 Oct 2002 11:35:39 -0500

>A bit pricey, but cheaper than the alternative. Could you tell us where to get them?

Well... like everything else quantity brings lower pricing. I got my box via Rick at the time he was ordering more for himself. The Government (read: military) has contracts with the "Light House For The Blind" organizations that employ blind workers.... they apparently manufacture the boxes. There are "stock" NSN numbered fast packs that I'm sure are also available in a size to fit. These appear to be able to be ordered in all the usual mil sizes via the Light House in Fort Worth. I suspect that the prices of these more "standard" versions of the boxes would be much cheaper.(an example):

<http://www.lighthousefw.org/boxinfo.html>

There is a picture of one of the inner type boxes. These are quite similar to the one I have except mine has the egg crate foam facing each other so it's smooth side out and very tight to the radio, in fact I had to remove about 2" or one section of foam to enable the radio to fit properly (my measurements didn't take into account the handles <grin>). There is also foam in the lid so the radios are surrounded by foam. I also have an outer box that exactly fits that inner box to absorb all the labels etc. that is easily replaceable. These boxes ... like I mentioned are reusable many times.

---

---

Date: Thu, 31 Oct 2002 09:26:36 -0800  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] UPS is Garbage

Fast packs are mil-spec and they use soft ether foams that are convoluted in V3C type boxes and they are very durable if used for the correct size weight. The ILD is light for heavy items meaning the drop recovering of the foam memory is in some cases marginal. Mean foam needs to be thicker for a given weight. Price wise cheaper ??????????

---

From: Richard.McClung@Dielectric.spx.com  
Date: Thu, 31 Oct 2002 09:25:58 -0800  
Subject: [R-390] Packing and Packing Materials

You might want to look here:

<<http://www.supply.dla.mil/PDFs/wgte22e.pdf>>  
<<http://smpt.apg.army.mil/news/EXPENDABLE%20Packing%20Materials.doc>>  
<<http://www.adtdl.army.mil/cgi-bin/atdl.dll/fm/38-700/ch1.htm>>  
<<http://www.dlaps.hq.dla.mil/dlai/i4145.12.htm>>  
<<http://w4.pica.army.mil/paladin/news/3qfy02.pdf>>  
<[http://www.moea.state.mn.us/berc/tp\\_dir.pdf](http://www.moea.state.mn.us/berc/tp_dir.pdf)>  
<[http://docs.usapa.belvoir.army.mil/jw2/xmldemo/r700\\_15/main.asp](http://docs.usapa.belvoir.army.mil/jw2/xmldemo/r700_15/main.asp)>  
This should keep you busy for awhile.....

---

Date: Sun, 22 Dec 2002 05:42:16 -0800  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Packing ans shipping for the R-390A

I make a 500# DW stapled box with custom cut polyethylene to fit all of the radios shipped complete. The boxes ship as UPS oversize 1, meaning they are charged as 30 # empty, Weight is about 15#. The RSC is a 24x22x15 which gets it under oversize 2 charges. They are \$60.00 plus UPS. I have one box that has had 6 trips out and back with no damage to R-390, 391 and several 390-A's. I also make custom fit boxes for the S-line or whatever, just need the Dims. and weight. The big problem is most hams want a Rolls Royce on a Echo/beatle budget. But never want to pay the price. The ones on the reflectors that have paid the price have no complaints. NEVER USE PEANUT FOAM FOR BA'S. WADDED NEWSPAPER IS FAR SUPERIOR FOR FILLING AND AS DUNNAGE. Been there done it for 22 years in the packing shipping business.

---

Date: Sat, 21 Dec 2002 19:01:37 +0100  
From: Fabio Liberatori <liber.fab@iol.it>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Packing and shipping for the R-390A

Hello, just my "5 cents worth" message, hoping it can be useful... I have sent and received several 390s, 32V (heavy !!) rigs using "FastPack" boxes, they are not cheap but re-usable many times, no needs to remove power supplies, just packed and shipped, never had any damage. Our colleague Hank (hankarn@pacbell.net ) has them and will help anybody, he's a very kind person.

---

Date: Sun, 25 May 2003 20:12:16 -0700 (PDT)  
From: Rodney Bunt <rodney\_bunt@yahoo.com>  
Subject: [R-390] Re: [Collins] R390A FS (packing a R390 for mailing)

USPS wont ship anything weighing more than 40lbs.

---

---

Date: Sun, 25 May 2003 20:17:50 -0700 (PDT)  
From: kwylow zinjanthropus <catman351@yahoo.com>  
Subject: [R-390] Re: [Collins] R390A FS

It may behoove you to split the rx into separate modules for shipment. In that way, you'll reduce any possible inertial damage from a combined package. FWiW. Cal.

---

From: "GEORGE MORTON" <n7hr@teleport.com>  
Date: Mon, 26 May 2003 05:53:08 -0700  
Subject: [R-390] Re: [Collins] R390A FS

That is 140 lbs!!!

---

From: "k5jv" <k5jv@kingwoodcable.com>  
Date: Mon, 26 May 2003 07:58:10 -0500  
Subject: [R-390] Re: [Collins] R390A FS

This must be something because I have shipped many R-390/A's via UPS. Don't get me wrong, I am not recommending UPS, but we really do not have many other choices.

---

From: "Jim Miller" <jamesmiller20@worldnet.att.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: [Collins] R390A FS  
Date: Mon, 26 May 2003 11:57:11 -0400

If you pack it correctly, it will arrive OK. That means double boxing as a minimum. Recently shipped a 75A4 via UPS no problem. Wrap the radio in several layers of bubble wrap all around. Then wrap in a foam mattress pad (you can get them from WalMart for 9 bucks. Tape the "blob" good with duck tape. Then put that in a sturdy cardboard box that fits snug. Tape that up, then get another box about 5 inches larger all around and put first box in it surrounded with popcorn. Over stuff the popcorn so you have to apply a degree of pressure to close it. Tape it well on all seams and corners. Some people buy the blue foam wall board from Home Depot and use it in sheets to pack around all sides of the radio also. It will arrive OK. In the case of the 75A4 I removed the large spinner knob first and wrapped it separately, as well as any "loose" modules internally. The 390 was made to take a beating however. Bottom line if you spend less than 4-5 hours packing the radio, and anything less than double boxing, expect damage.. Never Never ever use a 3rd party Mom/Pop mailbox outlet.

---

From: "federico" <1.baldi@dottorbaldi.it>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: [Collins] R390A FS  
Date: Mon, 26 May 2003 17:20:28 +0100

I surely agree with Jim, I bought an R-390/URR from Rick Mish of MILTRONIX, he sent the R-390/URR in a MILITARY FASTPACK (re-usable) and I got it in ITALY without any problem. The MILITARY FASTPACK isn't cheap but worth every dime paid, it is a non-sense to save money on the box and having the risk of a shipment damage. That's my opinion. Federico IZ1FID

---

---

Date: Mon, 26 May 2003 09:52:32 -0700  
From: hankarn <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: [Collins] R390A FS

I furnish a custom 24x22x15 500#DW stapled box with custom cut polyethylene foam to fit for \$50.00 plus UPS charges for a 30# box. I have one that I have used 5 times for R-390, R-391 and R-390A and have provided close to 50 to other hams and have had no damage to any of the radios. DO NOT USE FOAM PEANUTS/POPCORN OR BUBBLE PACK FOR THESE HEAVY RADIOS..... The peanuts WILL shift with heavy loads. Wad up old newspaper in the corners to preevent shifting if you are going use them. What do you have when the bubble breaks on bubble pack? 2 pieces of plastic with a total thickness of .006 mils. The bubbles always break on the load bearing points first. It you want the radio damaged take it to MBS etc/UPS Store and get a dummy pack job. UPS limit is 150 pounds. FedEx heavy has no limit, just your wallet limit. I think USPS Domestic is 140 # not sure as I do not use them for heavy items for several reasons.

---

Date: Fri, 04 Jun 2004 18:55:41 -0400  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Shipper Packing

Tell me about it! Some people like to sell & ship whatever without a care about packing. Some use all new (but inadequate) materials and charge for it. Some use trash. Before a seller ships me something delicate, I send an email describing how it should be packed. If I get "bubble wrap and peanuts" back, I then go into my routine. Once in a while I get something like "don't worry -- I pack very well -- sent plenty of this stuff...." etc. Good packing is in the eye of the beholder, I guess.

There's another issue for many pieces of gear -- prepping the unit itself. Wobbly tubes, like 5U4's with only 5 pins of the octal? Right next to the transformer? Chassis loose in cases? Fine if it's kept rightside up and not moved. Other missing screws? Heavy transformers and chokes held down with small screws... into aluminum? (Gets dropped sideways or upside-down, heads shear off and then it's loose-cannonball-in-the-china-shop-time. Big dial glass -- loose? (Crackaroonies are in order.) Even if super packed with foam sheet, double boxed, etc. some radios are prone to damage from an "inside job". Here's an example of something otherwise innocuous:

Anyone familiar with tube type Zenith Transoceanics? A major feature affecting their value is that big clear plastic front panel. Many have developed a few stress cracks from vibration around the screws, or worse, from slamming the front door closed. The chassis are fastened to the wooden center shelf of the cabinet with just two screws. If they're missing or loose, the whole chassis can shift -- then it does a number on the panel -- through the control shaft holes or whatever. Those panels are all clear plastic -- painted in black, grey and gold on the reverse side -- (or brown, tan, gold for the leather models) -- so virtually impossible to detail out.

R-390's are more rugged, but there are plenty of opportunities. If a tube shield is not fully twisted down, a bounce will activate the spring and -- according to Mr. Murphy -- it will head straight for the ballast tube which will have no shield. If there are loose or missing screws all over the place, the H-frame can twist a bit.

Sounds like you got what I call a "beanbag" shipment there. That's when the carton is flimsy and the stuffing is inadequate. Got one of those a few years ago with an SP-600 in it. Bottom right corner of the front panel was broken right off -- and the roughly 1 inch square piece was still in the box -- so it wasn't that way before. Packed in an oblong U-Haul box with a

trick/quick setup (criss-cross bottom), clearly emblazoned "for lightweight items" -- stuffed with rags. Didn't bother going to UPS claims with that one. The seller did settle privately, though. More often, one gets stonewalled or told to send the thing back -- right -- lay out double shipping and keep your fingers crossed.

Oh, there's the other thing -- well-intentioned folk who fashion themselves as crate-builders. This was an SP-600-VLF (read @RARE@). The guy put a labor of love into top and bottom plywood, with furring strips and even used a router to groove out where the front panel set in. Then he wrapped really good foam all around it and then put four steel strapping bands (nevermind plastic) around the bundle. That whole assembly went into a sturdy, but too-tall box. Built a perfect SP-600 Destructo-Wrench. SP-600 panels aren't fastened to the chassis all that well -- eight self tapping screws into stamped "combs" at the edges of the side panels. These weren't regular screws, but threaded studs with acorn nuts on the panel -- some loose. The box must have twisted a bit and the plywoods were flush with the box, so ... ripped the upper right corner of the panel forward, wrecking the crystal osc. switch -- yanked the shaft forward, breaking the wafers and rotors. So, sometimes the road to Heck is also paved with good packing intentions.

Avoid crating, unless the guy knows what he's doing (hard to tell) and it's going truck freight -- palletized. Otherwise, the crate has to be built just so and then padded and put into an oversized box with more padding -- to protect the crate, so it doesn't break and wreck the radio. Someone can be a pretty good carpenter/cabinet maker, but not really know how to crate things. Otherwise, you're putting a stronger immovable object in close proximity to the delicate goods. It's like that game -- paper, rock, scissors or whatever -- plywood can break aluminum - and even steel on a bad day. If a good corrugated box package gets dropped a foot on its corner, it should dent and absorb the shock and compression. How about a wooden box? About a half-dozen ways to go wrong.

Finally, some parts should be braced at the strong points -- not padded over, like the front panel of a scope. I guess that one was missing it's front cover, which might have helped. Without that, it needed a block of styrofoam with indentations for the controls or similar -- like a modified foam insert from a computer case so that the front was supported by the edges. Even if heavily padded with bubblewrap or polyurethane foam, the controls can work their way through -- and sometimes, air ain't so soft, if you know what I mean.

Y'see, here I've been quiet and you got me started ... ;-) Well, keep up the ol' caveat emptor-ing. I think I've beat this dead horse enough, right?

----- Original Message -----

From: "B Riches" <bill.riches@verizon.net>

Sent: Friday, June 04, 2004 4:44 PM

Subject: [R-390] Shipper Packing

A heads up!! When you purchase a piece of equipment from someone make sure that the seller agrees to refund your money if it arrives damaged due to poor packing and the Post Office or other carrier refuses to honor a claim because of poor packing. I purchased a Tek 465 scope from a person that used shredded paper along with a very beat up carton. The scope took a hit on the face and bent a few controls and ruined the attenuator. The postal inspector laughed when I tried to file a damage claim. I now have an expensive parts unit. This person sells a bit of equipment - contact me off list if you wish more info. Buyer beware. 73, Bill Riches, WA2DVU Cape May, NJ

---

-

---

Date: Fri, 4 Jun 2004 19:38:58 -0400  
From: "David C. Hallam" <dhallam@rapidsys.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Shipper Packing

I agree that you have to be careful. It's tough to ship these heavy pieces of electronic gear. UPS says that if the packing can't withstand a fall from their conveyors, they don't want to take. I shipped a Johnson Invader once. UPS just about took the package apart to see how it was packed. I have bought and sold things on eBay for several years now. In the beginning I used a commercial packer, who said they specialized in electronic and heavy stuff, to prepare and ship some heavy items. He told me he used foamed in place and other methods to protect the items. His foamed in place turned out to be several layers of bubble wrap. I dropped him as soon as I found out what he was doing. Now I try to stay away from things that are difficult to pack. I bought a capacitor checker a couple of weeks ago on eBay. When I got the package from FedEx, it rattled, opened it up, and piece of broken tube fell out of the holes in the bottom of the case. The exterior was fine, but the chassis inside had broken loose. I will have to admit that the seller handled it very well. He refunded my money within a day or two and said he would file a claim with FedEx. Companies have packaging engineers on staff to design shipping packages. Even then some things get broken. Nothing is absolutely bullet proof. If you are buying an irreplaceable piece of equipment, you are better off to arrange for pick up.

---

Date: Sat, 05 Jun 2004 19:12:44 -0400  
From: Bob Camp <ham@cq.nu>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] FW: R-390 Digest, Vol 2, Issue 4

The biggest thing to watch out for are the "wings" on the radio. The edges of the front panel, the edges of the back panel and the edges of the top and bottom of the radio are all vulnerable to damage if the radio is not tight in the box. That does not mean that you need a fancy box or exotic packing. You do need something that is dense enough to support the radio and a box that is heavy enough to take the weight. More or less, loose wadded up news paper probably isn't good enough, rolled up news paper may be better or tightly pack wads. Normal packing peanuts won't do the trick, heavy bubble wrap works ok. Foam sheet from Home Depot usually is heavy enough to do the trick (the blue stuff not the light tan kind). The boxes U-Haul sells are to light, they shred during shipping. Plywood boxes work fine but they are overkill. Double wall military cardboard boxes are a good choice if you can get them.

UPS will tell you that you need a couple of inches of padding on all sides of a shipped item. They also have some maximum dimensions that they will ship. The USPS has a different set of dimensions and a different maximum weight. I seem to recall that UPS will go up to 150 pounds and USPS stops at 75 or 100 pounds. Not a bad thing to check on before you go to the trouble of figuring out a box.

If you want to go a little nuts then pull the power supply out and ship it in a separate box. I have never done it that way or seen it done that way. It is pretty heavy though and the idea makes some sense. The best way to look at it is you want a stiff heavy duty box and you want to wedge the radio in the middle of it with strong stuff. If you put it in peanuts or loose stuff the radio will just pound them to dust and then rattle around inside the box. Even with a decent box the radio banging around will create trouble pretty quick.

Fair Radio probably has the most experience of anybody in packing and shipping these radios. They pack them tight in newspaper in a heavy box.

---

---

Date: Sat, 05 Jun 2004 19:07:23 -0700  
From: "Kenneth G. Gordon" <kgordon@moscow.com>  
Subject: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

> Well, how does one properly pack an R-390A for shipment?

Blue (not tan) 2 1/2" thick hard foam insulation from Moscow Building Supply here in Moscow, Idaho, then a custom fitted crate built of 3/4" plywood. I use glue and deck screws for bottom and three sides, then, double the deck screws on the "front" and "top". Then cut hand-holds so that it is most likely going to be picked up only one way. Haven't lost one yet. I've shipped SRR-11s, SRR-13s, R-390s, RALs and RAKs this way. I charge the person to whom I am shipping it an extra \$35.00, refundable on the return of the crate. So far, I haven't lost any... Ya pays yer money and ya takes yer choice.

---

Date: Sat, 5 Jun 2004 22:25:33 EDT  
From: Commtekman@aol.com  
Subject: [R-390] Shipping R-390's

Comment on using boxes with "hand-holes". I recently received an R-388 that was shipped in a box with 'hand-holes', apparently since it was a heavy box, someone thought the handhole was a convenient location to pick it up with a forklift, of course it ruined the front of the R-388.

---

Date: Sat, 5 Jun 2004 22:53:19 EDT  
From: ToddRoberts2001@aol.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

I haven't had an R-390A damaged yet when it was properly double-boxed and using dense foam as packing material. I have had good luck with styrofoam sheet in the past but dense foam sheeting is even better as it has a little more "give" and will cushion better in the event of a hard knock. First surround the radio on all sides with about 2 or 3 inches thickness of dense foam packing inside an inner box. The radio should be firm inside the inner box. Then pack this inside an outer box with another 2 or 3 inches of dense foam between all sides. It is also good insurance to use double-wall cardboard boxes for the containers, not single-wall. Also recommended to remove the power supply and ship separately to reduce weight-stress on the radio during shipping. Only problem with that is most people don't know how to pack a heavy dense object like a transformer for shipping. Best way is to get a long sheet of stiff cardboard a few inches wider than the power supply and literally roll up the power supply inside the cardboard sheet and secure it with strong tape. There should be an inch or two of overlap of cardboard around the edges of the power supply module. Then surround this with about 3 inches thickness of dense foam or 4 inches of styrofoam sheet on all sides inside a double-wall cardboard box. Make double-sure the power supply is firm inside the box. If it can shift around then it could be headed for trouble, as the heavy weight can pound around and damage styrofoam sheeting. I have found that bubble wrap is almost worthless around edges and sharp corners of heavy items. It is okay around light items like tubes but for heavy items dense foam works the best that I have seen. Noodles can work for filler between the inner box and outer box but if the box is torn or a flap opens up during shipping then the noodles can leak out leaving the radio more vulnerable to damage. Plus you have to pack very tightly with noodles to avoid having them drift around or settle to one side during shipping. That is why it is best to use dense foam. Dense foam is available in sheets of varying thickness and is easy to cut with a knife. Also best to use fiberglass reinforced shipping tape, not the cheap clear plastic tape and be generous with the tape when sealing the cardboard boxes. 73 Todd Roberts WD4NGG.

---

---

Date: Sun, 6 Jun 2004 00:10:36 -0400  
From: "Barry Hauser" <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

Yes 'n no. There's filament tape and there's filament tape. The original kind which comes in 1 to 1.5 inch widths with the threads running lengthwise can cause problems. That type should be run at right angles to the seams only while the clear stuff should run along all the seams -- up the middle and the edges. The burst strength ratings of the cartons usually assume all seams are taped. One problem -- the lengthwise filament tape can come loose at the end, then it has a tendency to form a "tail" that can get caught in the conveyor equipment. UPS doesn't like it -- but in addition to causing them some inconvenience, that tail is strong enough to get the package flung off the conveyor if it catches on something. Yes, it's a long shot, but Murphy's Law postulates that -- if in the rare event that should happen -- it will be on a hair pin turn on the 30 ft. high conveyor. Solution -- first use some of that filament tape at 90 degrees to each seam -- two pieces on each flap and two or three pieces across the middle seam -- top and bottom. Then, do the usual with clear tape -- but get the heavier clear tape. In addition, cover the filament tape with clear, overlapping and extending well beyond it to prevent any "tails" from developing. The clear tape generally has better adhesion and doesn't tend to catch. There is a relatively new kind of plastic tape that is similar to the clear, 2 inches wide, but has filament running in both directions -- lengthwise and crosswise. This is a good alternative and can be used by itself. That gets applied along the seams. Another extra step that adds strength to the package -- glue the flaps down with a bit of hot melt glue -- not too much or there will be a heck of a time getting it opened. In addition to keeping the box closed it also forms a more solid top and bottom and the carton is more resistant to twisting. Some UPS centers will refuse a carton with exposed lengthwise-filament reinforced tape. In addition, it is not suitable for running along seams. As with plain plastic tape, once it splits up the middle at one point, that's it. My 2 cents. Barry

---

Date: Sun, 6 Jun 2004 08:47:13 -0400  
From: "Walter Wilson" <wewilson@knology.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

I've also had good luck with a single box (double corrugated material) if I cut two pieces of 1/4 to 3/8 inch plywood to just fit inside the box; insert the first piece into the bottom of the box, wrap the receiver in bubble wrap or whatever, cut the dense foam padding and insert all around for a tight fit, and lay the second piece of plywood on top before sealing. The plywood is great at preventing corner damage for those boxes that "fall off" the conveyor. BTW, FedEx Ground has not damaged anything since I switched to them a few years ago.

---

Date: Sun, 6 Jun 2004 10:55:43 -0400  
From: "Bill Marx" <bmarx@bellsouth.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

Me Too! FedEx is my shipping company for heavy items. The US Postal service is great for light items under 10 pounds but FedEx Ground works great for me. My packing style is similar to Barry's. Leave nothing to chance. Assume the shipper will throw your box several feet. If you do not feel confident about your radio surviving that toss, then revise your shipping techniques. Several inches of foam around your radio in a box and then inside another box with several inches of foam. I use foam insulation material purchased at Home Depot but there are several kinds.

---

---

Date: Sun, 6 Jun 2004 11:59:20 -0400  
From: "Barry Hauser" <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

Me three! Fedex is also significantly cheaper than UPS, particularly on heavier packages going longer distances. A heavy package going Coast to Coast can run \$20 cheaper. They sometimes beat their scheduled delivery by a day. UPS never does and is sometimes a day late ("rescheduled") Packages seem to arrive "crisper" with less signs of rough handling. But, you can still have damage if the thing isn't packed right. Something to know about Fedex "Ground" vs "Home Delivery". While rates are about the same, there are important differences. Home delivers Tuesday to Saturday and there's a limit of 70 lbs. If you indicate "residential" as the shipping address, their website (and shipping points) will reject anything over 70 lbs. and/or the dimensional weight equivalent which is 108 inches -- same as UPS (1 X length plus girth -- which is 2X the sum of width and height). However, if you DON'T indicate residential -- even when it is a home address, it will go Ground with a limit of 130 lbs and delivery Monday-Friday. I've had plenty of "Ground" shipments come to my home -- no problem -- including a mil power supply that was right at 130 lb. limit for that service.

While UPS will pick up (for a one stop fee), I don't think Fedex has started doing that for Ground yet. You have to go to a Fedex staffed depot. Some "retailers" handle Fedex Ground, but may mark up the rates. Their web site is pretty good in terms of finding the closest place that handles Ground/Home. There are lots of dropoff places that only handle small express packages. I've had as many as 4 different Fedex trucks show up in one day -- an Express letter delivery in the AM, a "Home Delivery" truck, then a "Fedex Ground" and way later in the evening, an unmarked cube van (probably subcontracted or a rental) batting cleanup.

Do get the sense that widespread experience is less incidence of damage -- even allowing for the fact that they're number two with less volume.

---

Date: Sun, 06 Jun 2004 09:23:51 -0700  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Shipper Packing

I have done this a few times and what has been suggested is/has fallen on deaf ears/blind minds. "IF IT CAN MOVE IN THE BOX IT WILL GET DAMAGED" PERIOD. I have been in the professional packing and shipping business since 1980 and have shipped 1,000s of pieces of FRAGILE equipment. My loss ratio is zilch compared to what I have shipped. What I designed is a box that meets UPS requirements for 150 pounds. This box is a 500 pound DW test stapled carton 24x22x15 lined with polyethylene foam cut to fit the particular radio. A few of these have been shipped 5 or 6 times and still serviceable. They have been 32V-3 down to 75A series in weight with no damage. The big problem is the cost \$55.00 for the box and shipping a 13 pound box OS1 for \$25.00 plus is most hams are to frugal to protect their goods and revert to peanuts or bubble pack. A question? what happens when a bubble breaks in bubble pack, you have 2 pieces of plastic rubbing together, etc. etc. Yeah I know you have all done it and lucked out. I pack paper, bubble or soft foam in tube areas to keep them in place. The 2" requirement is needed for the Parcel handling Union Phd's assigned to handling, as they cannot be held responsible for anything. We also only use 3 "Kraft reinforced paper tape for sealing. Plastic tape is OK for lighter boxes. Peanuts should be illegal, although I sell over 100 bags a month to some of my customers, and in all cases they are wrapping small items in bubble then filling with peanuts. We use UPS Worldship for processing and can process 10 to 12 shipments in the the time to do 4 or 5 using FEDEX system. In the long run I find UPS cheaper. We have had 2 inbound lost shipments on FEDEX recently and they are still not paying the shipper.

---

---

Date: Sun, 6 Jun 2004 17:34:33 EDT  
From: DCrespy@aol.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Shipper Packing

Maybe I missed it, but ... I am surprised no one has mentioned separating the power supply and audio modules for shipping. Mass is not your friend when a package gets dropped (and it will be dropped). The package stops and the radio tries to keep going. The more it weighs, the harder it tries to keep going! The easiest way to get the mass down is to send the radio in three different packages. Of course the other suggestions still apply (now to 3 packages). Also, if the radio comes with a rack cabinet, I always ask for the radio to be removed from it. The only thing holding up all that mass is the 8 #10 screws between the front panel and the cabinet. The cabinet (and likely the panel) WILL be damaged in shipment. It is almost guaranteed.

---

Date: Sun, 06 Jun 2004 21:48:25 -0700  
From: "Kenneth G. Gordon" <kgordon@moscow.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Shipping R-390's

That is why I build the crates a little bigger, put a "plate" about 3 " down from the top to hold the receiver in, and put the hand-holds ABOVE that plate so that if some idiot uses a fork lift there he can't hit anything.

---

Date: Mon, 7 Jun 2004 06:38:36 -0500  
From: mikea <mikea@mikea.ath.cx>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

Rich Mish (Miltronics) will sell you a shipping container for an R-390. He used one to ship the R-390 he sold me, and that machine got here in flawlessly-perfect condition. I seem to recall a price of about \$50, but I could be wrong. You'll still want to use cardboard tubes around the knobs on the front panel and the RF connectors on the back. Mine was shipped with all the tubes and shields in place.

---

Date: Mon, 7 Jun 2004 08:13:07 -0400  
From: "Barry Hauser" <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

One problem with buying a prefabbed shipping container -- and Hank Arney has them also -- Depending on the exact size of it, you'll pay "dimensional weight" rates of probably at least 43 lbs, and, if the length plus two times the sum of the width and height comes to 108 inches or more, you'll pay the 70 lb. rate, even though the empty container weighs a good deal less -- maybe 10-15 lbs. if the carton is really heavy-duty. That applies to UPS and Fedex Ground -- something similar applies to the USPS. It may be well worth it, but just bear that in mind -- it doesn't go like a 10 lb. package.

---

Date: Mon, 7 Jun 2004 09:03:41 -0400  
From: "Barry Hauser" <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

Ted asked where to buy good cartons, Todd supplied a list of some packaging sellers. However, suppliers like U-Line, etc. generally require you to buy a bale of 15 or usually 25 minimum and the bales of sizes needed for R-390's and other similar sized boatanchors have to go truck freight -- they're not UPS-able.

Here are some good choices:

-- Best is free. You cannot buy cartons of the quality that some merchandise comes in -- like large computer monitors, computer systems (not just the CPU), certain appliances. A lot of these have the hand-holes -- more about that below. The computer, appliance, office supply chains -- usually toss out the cartons for display/demo items and pay to have trash carted away, so, most are happy to give 'em to you, but you might have to stop by a few times to catch the good ones before they're tossed. You can ask for them to set some aside.

-- UPS customer centers sell good doublewall cartons for reasonable prices. I do not think these are available at UPS Stores. They probably still have the flimsy stuff they sold when they were Mailboxes Etc. Another advantage to the official UPS carton - it says "UPS" on it and that might help in the event of a claim. There are a few UPS centers that do full blown foam in place (not the little "baggies") for a reasonable price. Don't bother asking the 800 number reps -- they know nothing about them. You'd have to stop by and "reconnoiter".

-- U-Haul does have some good doublewall cartons, though the shape might not be ideal. Most of the cartons they sell are unsuitable. (Singly ply, lightweight, popout bottoms, intended for people packing and hand carrying their own stuff to the rented truck.) In addition, they advertise the purpose of the box on the outside -- so it should make sense - like "Appliance" or "TV-Electronics" or whatever -- not clothing, etc.

OK -- my 2 cents about hand-holes. These can help avoid "manual droppage", or can induce it, if the carton tears at the holes. Also, the center of gravity may be off -- if it was a big monitor carton which is front-heavy and the handle locations were offset from center. If you are going to preserve them -- best to reinforce with plenty of tape inside and out - -or glue some cardboard on the inside, and then, make an indented seal out of heavy poly so the box is sealed and it's more obvious that it's not intended for a fork lift fork. If in doubt, close up the handholes and seal up with tape inside and out.

---

Date: Tue, 8 Jun 2004 17:50:22 -0500  
From: "Cecil Acuff" <chacuff@cableone.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

My experience has been just the opposite....FedEx has trashed more of my stuff than UPS. I watched in horror as the FedEx man rolled a dolly down my walkway with parts falling out all the way through a hole they had torn in a very nice box. I've had excellent results with UPS. I can't say I have ever had a piece of equipment damaged as of yet. I've shipped R-1051's all over the country...received 390's, SP-600's...no damage. Maybe it's a regional thing.... I can tell you the key to all of it is the packing job.....if you get it packaged properly any of them can get it across the country! I can't say I am too fond of foam in place.....the foam is not dense enough for the weight of most of the large radio's. The blue foam sheeting is the best!

---

Date: Tue, 08 Jun 2004 20:04:26 -0400  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

> My experience has been just the opposite....FedEx .....

Yes, probably -- and even down to the route level. For a couple of years, I had the same UPS driver and he was pretty good. The new guy -- I dunno -- kind of clumsy, so at some point, he may create a regional difference all his own ;-( As for "going postal" -- some people swear by the USPS (and some people swear at it). Around here all they have are those tiny propane vans and the carriers are highly variable as to sheer strength. Some carriers are rather frail. Questionable as to how they can handle the heavy pieces.

> I can tell you the key to all of it is the packing job.....

I don't know if I'd go that far, but yes, defensive packaging is the key - and then pray it doesn't fall off the high conveyor or somebody's poorly packed anvil doesn't crash into it.

> I can't say I am too fond of foam in place.....

There are two kinds of foam-in-place. There are the individual "baggies" that expand chemically, but are usually too small to fully envelop the piece and the stuffing is made up of several bags worth. That has its limitations. Then there's the true in-place stuff that comes out of a hose into silvery bag things. That's also highly dependent on the practitioner. Sometimes it's quite dense, sometimes lacking.

>

> The blue foam sheeting is the best!

That and polyethelene foam which I see from time to time -- probably made of recycled soft drink bottles. Supports a lot of weight and has flex-rebound to it. I don't know where to find it, though. Anybody know? (probably Hank knows).

---

Date: Tue, 8 Jun 2004 21:32:08 -0500  
From: "Bill Hawkins" <bill@iaxs.net>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] Re: Shipping R-390s

Got a heavy piece once packed in soft drink bottles. Heavy box lined with soft drink bottles with their caps on tight. Worked fine. Never saw another one, though. Don't drink flavored water, so haven't tried it myself.

---

Date: Mon, 25 Jul 2005 18:44:34 +0000  
From: odyslim@comcast.net  
Subject: Re: [R-390] need fast pack

It is a shipping container that Rick Mish ( Miltronix ) designed to ship R390-XX radios. There is an outer box lined with special mil-type foam then an inner box lined again with more foam. The box passes the strict V3C shipping standard. My fast Pack has made over 20 trips through UPS and Fedex with no harm to the contents. It just so happens that Rick has sold out and I need another.

---

Date: Tue, 23 Aug 2005 12:48:24 EDT  
From: ToddRoberts2001@aol.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Hollow State News Web Site

Thanks for the swell job you have done with the new Hollow State News website - it looks great! I used to subscribe to HSN but let it run out sometime in the late 90's. I missed issue 53 - I highly recommend the shipping issue 53 as proper packing and shipping still remain a big problem especially for folks that buy things off eBay. Issue 53 should be required reading for anyone buying or selling an R-390A or similar boatanchor on the 'Bay

---

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 14:59:39 EDT  
From: ToddRoberts2001@aol.com  
Subject: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

I just learned this today - a man at FedEx said all packages must be packed to withstand a 4-foot fall. This is because the rail system they use to move packages in their warehouses is that high off the ground. I can also say I have seen the rail system in a UPS warehouse and it was also about 4 feet off the ground. Anyone planning to ship an R-390A or similar receiver please keep this in mind. Can the radio inside the box withstand a 4-foot drop without the front panel getting bent or a corner of the chassis getting crushed or bent? If you don't think it will then you need to rethink your packing methods. An inch of foam rubber around the radio or throwing it into a single-wall box with some noodles ain't gonna do it. At the bare minimum consider using a double-boxing method with double-wall premium cardboard boxes with room for padding in-between the boxes and plenty of stiff padding not foam rubber around the radio in the inner box.

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 15:12:31 EDT  
From: Llgpt@aol.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

Hank Arney has preached about this for years as have many others. It doesn't pay to use cheap thin boxes. I have successfully shipped many, many R-390, R-390A (see, that is how you do the Non A thing), SP-600's, etc. over the years with no damage. Buy one of Hank's boxes, they will make multiple trips with no damage. It doesn't make sense to spend a great deal of money on a vintage receiver and ship it in a mailboxes etc. box. I recently shipped an empty box to a person who sold me a RCA CR-88A, it cost \$20.67 to ship the empty box, but it paid off when it arrived back to me unscathed. You get exactly what you pay for, so be careful when shipping the big heavy receivers, etc. Les Locklear

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 15:22:58 -0400  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

Also -- see issue #53 on the Hollow State Newsletter site. Another thing - I noticed recently that what was about a 30-35% savings on Fedex vs. UPS ground doesn't exist any more. They are now within a dollar or two of each other. Maybe DHL is still cheaper. Fedex is running the commercial with the pirate at the employment office who can only say "AAAAARRRDDDD!" -- stressing how easy it is to ship. The commercials promoting the price haven't been running in a while -- If anyone remembers there was the nerdy guy trying to ship a package to "poe-hee-nix" - in Arizona, the guy who wanted to ship something anywhere to take advantage of the deal, and the guy behind the counter with the clear plastic raincoat or bag who got sprayed when the customer who was drinking something let go with it when he was shocked by the low price. I have read somewhere that UPS has some conveyor/package handling equipment that's 30 feet off the (concrete) floor. There may still be somewhat of an advantage to Fedex in terms of lower risk of damage. I suspect they have less in the way of mechanization of package handling than UPS, but not sure. Pack defensively ...

---

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 15:42:40 -0400  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

That was a pretty good shipping rate (\$20.67), but be aware that you will get charged "dimensional weight" rates for packages over a certain size. If one times the length, plus the "girth" ( 2 times the sum of the height and width) comes to more than 108 inches, you'll be charged the 70 lb. dimensional weight rate, even though the empty carton weighs much less. There is another trip-wire somewhat below that -- 43 lb. equivalent. You can fill in the empty weight, dimensions, from and to address on the UPS/Fedex web sites to see what it comes out to. The trick might be a telescoping shipper, but then you need some props that ship flat on the way out and vertical -- supporting the top -- with the payload in it. Otherwise the package won't protect the goods from the ton of stuff stacked on top. Of course, the rate depends on zone difference. Most of what I want is on the wrong coast. ;-)

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 15:42:43 -0400  
From: "David C. Hallam" <dhallam@rapidsys.com>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

One place where FedEx is a savings. Their minimum charge for an oversize 2 package is 50 pounds while UPS is 70 pounds. I don't know how good DHL is but I recently had a Johnson Invader shipped to me from Dallas to Tampa by DHL for about \$21. It arrived in excellent condition.

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 16:07:18 EDT  
From: Llgpt@aol.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

It wasn't shipped too far away and I have an account, so that helped. The main point is don't use cheap boxes, use lots of rigid foam to make the shipping box stronger. Those RCA's weigh more than a R-390 series or SP-600. Hank will say most of the cheapskates get what they deserve when they ship on the cheap and cut corners. I have to agree. Cecil Acuff and I have shared those Hank Arney Shipping boxes and they are highly recommended. Cost is \$45.00 plus shipping to your home/business. Hank will configure the inside to whatever radio you are shipping. Mine cost \$30.00 to ship, so I have \$75.00 invested in one container, but it has made eight trips with no damage yet.

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 16:46:52 -0400  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

I was just pointing out that shipping empty shippers can be pricey, just so people will be prepared. I also have a Dan Arney shipper. It's a piece of work -- not doublewall, not triplewall, but quadruplewall, with about 4 different kinds of foam in it. It arrived on the rebound with a radio in it that I bought -- I think from one of the listmembers. It didn't pay to ship back, so I bought it. That can be a solution to avoid return shipping of an empty box. Offer the buyer an option to return or buy the carton -- or charge up front and refund upon return. If he has room to store the box, it's good to have a good one on hand. To save space, you can store a radio in it that's valuable, but awaiting restoration, or whatever -- or maybe the family jewels. ;-) Yes -- it's worth some investment to avoid damage. You won't long remember the additional box, but you will wince every time you see that bend in a panel or worse -- if there has to be a claim or some unpleasant aftermath. Especially important if your seller wants to have the gear "professionally packed" by a UPS store -- head that off at the pass or you'll get

a big beanbag with a broken radio in it. You can follow the trail of bleeding peanuts all the way back to the depot.

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 17:16:49 -0400  
From: shoppa\_r390a@trailing-edge.com (Tim Shoppa)  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

A thought on shipping: My only experience with shipping R-390A's is the yellow striper I got from Fair Radio. It was packed in a nice heavy box, with a few inner partitions of cardboard/thick foam, but far and away the packing material used was wadded newspaper. I think that Fair ships the R-390A all in one box (rather than pulling the power supply and shipping it separately) because UPS treats all extra-heavy packages (>70 lbs) by not using the automated conveyer lines but by a more manual (and presumably more gentle) method. I can tell you that despite the weight (probably 90lbs in total) of the box from Fair Radio, the outside was pristine and unscarred. I contrast this with far smaller and lighter boxes I get through UPS that look like they were run over by trucks. Again, this is just a thought. By no means can I personally guarantee that UPS will handle any extra-heavy (> 70lbs) package with kid gloves. But it's my observation.

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 17:19:44 -0400  
From: shoppa\_r390a@trailing-edge.com (Tim Shoppa)  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

On the subject of FedEx Ground: I'm 99% sure that the bulk of the FedEx Ground network is what they got when they bought Roadway. Roadway was traditionally a business-to-business delivery service, dealing with large quantities/large boxes at a time. Since Fedex expanded the service to also cater to residential customers maybe this expertise with large packages is not applicable to home delivery, I don't know.

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 17:20:11 -0400  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

Frank wrote: A brief word about the dear folks at UPS. Several years ago I bought a R-390 from W3INK. He took to a "ups subsidiary store" where they packed it for him. I don't recall what they charged but it was a lot. When it arrived here in SW Missouri the driver who knew me well said "I think we have big trouble today." The box presented was the most worn out old large TV cardboard box you can imagine. The packing was phone books, old clothing, wood shavings, you name it. A mile of string held it together. Every corner was smashed in. He wasn't allowed to take it back since we had opened it. The right end of the front panel was bent completely into an "L" with the rack handle torn off and in the box. And that was just the beginning. Took weeks before their inspector from near KC made it down here and looked at it and was not going to honor the claim because of packing..... I showed him a photocopy of the so called UPS store where it originated from. He turned pale. Especially at the \$2000 value insurance. He took it to his van. W3INK battled with them for months. He sent my money back to me right away but we kept in touch via his BBS on the slow progress of getting that claim settled. He finally won. Oh for the days of Railway Express. My first KWS-1 was in two wooden crates, one had been dropped (the PS of course) and splintered the crate on two sides. The steel banding was broken. No sweat. Within 48 hours another one was enroute from Harrison Radio and we were all happy. As for HDL... only one thing came in so far from them. A box of new hard drives. I saw the deliver guy toss the box up onto the concrete porch from a distance of about fifteen feet and scurry back to his beatup old truck. All drives were DOA. That was a few months ago and I understand the dealer still is waiting for his money....he

shipped me another batch via Fedex in the meantime. The prefab shipping crate sounds good, very good in fact. 73, Frank Gilmore K0JPJ ex-W5PVX

That's not typical of a UPS Store, previously MBE - Mailboxes Etc. After the they take his money and the seller leaves, they pack it in a large flimsy box - usually \$8.00 or more, bubblewrap and often, used peanuts. The box is so soft, if marooned somewhere, you could probably eat it and not suffer indigestion. Easily torn or crushed. New bubblewrap, while inadequate, is expensive, so they try not to use too much of it. They don't even attempt to bag the peanuts or compress them and they don't put enough in, but what does it matter. The price for all this is usually high, what with the materials and labor charges. Not sure how they get these to the drivers. When you try to pick up one of these abominations - typically by the far corners -- the corners crush just under the weight of the package. The payload shifts around until it's right up against 2 or 3 sides of the carton. Out of balance, with corners that crumple when you try to lift them, they're also more prone to being dropped. Very difficult to hand-truck, unless part of the radio is sticking out with skid marks already on it and that would be the bottom and the place to jam the hand truck under. Finally, on this particular diatribe, UPS Stores are franchises and the shipper of record -- unless something has changed recently. Any claim has to go through the seller, then through the UPS store as the shipper and then through to UPS itself. (Unless they've streamlined something.) It's not the same thing as shipping something from a regular UPS staffed "customer counter". The only good thing -- under the franchise arrangements, they have to charge the regular retail UPS rate -- not the 10-100% markup of the MBE days. There are some UPS centers that do packing and have sturdy double-wall cartons that say UPS on them. They also do in-place foam with double boxing. But, if you call the 800 number, the reps know nothing about it. Not all of them do it, but it is an alternative and I think they do it while you wait. To find out, you have to visit or somehow get the phone number of the local depot. Two sellers have shipped me gear this way - one in the Orlando area. The UPS Stores have this commercial -- which I haven't seen in a while - where they're promoted as the packing experts .. I think it showed them crating a grandfather's clock. Yeah, right.

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 17:29:37 EDT

From: Llgpt@aol.com

Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

Several years ago, I bought one of the John R. Leary SP-600's from a Dr. in South Dakota, he had it foamed in place at his local ups center. I have checked periodically over the years to see if that service is being offered. No luck yet. You would think it would be a benefit to them to install the equipment and offer the service, as it would be a profit maker for them. Les

---

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 2005 17:13:54 -0500

From: "Cecil Acuff" <chacuff@cableone.net>

Subject: Re: [R-390] Info on Shipping R-390As via FedEx Ground

Nice radio....I still have it! My last experience with FedEx was on a radio purchase. The box which was quite heavy was nearly round and had the side ripped out and the delivery guy was hauling the thing to the front door on a cart and scattered parts all the way up the walk way to the front door. I was not impressed! I've had better luck with UPS but any of them can screw up a perfectly good vintage radio if it's not packaged properly! The flip side is any of them can get it to you in one piece if it's packaged properly! Hanks boxes rule.....I hear the Miltronix fast packs are great too!-

---

-

---

Date: Sat, 27 Aug 2005 09:00:02 EDT  
From: ToddRoberts2001@aol.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Fw: Shipping R-390As , Rick Mish Group Buy,

Hi Scott, sounds like a good idea. Do you know if the cartons have the inside padding specifically cut to fit the R-390A? A one-size-fits-all padding may not be the best solution. The R-390A has the rack-handles protruding from the front and unless the padding was tailor-made to fit the R-390A chassis exactly it may not afford maximum protection if the box was dropped several feet. The R-390A should be rock-solid inside an exact-fit cut-to-size padding, no room for slop or shifting inside the box

---

Date: Sat, 27 Aug 2005 08:57:28 -0700 (PDT)  
From: Michael Melland <w9wis@yahoo.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Fw: Shipping R-390As , Rick Mish Group Buy,

Like Scott I also bought one of these shipping boxes about 4 years ago from Rick. They are great. These boxes are made for the GSA on a Gov't contract by several organizations of the blind. The Fort Worth, TX Lighthouse for the Blind has made these "Fast Pack Cushioned Shipping Boxes" for the Gov't for 20 years. If you want to see what they are here is a link:  
<http://www.lighthousefw.org/boxinfo.html>

---

Date: Sat, 27 Aug 2005 14:13:24 -0400  
From: Bernice & Al <saglek@videotron.ca>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Fw: Shipping R-390As , Rick Mish Group Buy,

Scott purchased an R-390 from me this past spring. He sent me the shipping container and I can tell you that it is superbly designed and built. The R-390 and the R-390A will certainly fit without relative movement within the container. The R-390 and the R-390A both have the same dimensions or footprint. For those of you who routinely move these radios should seriously consider this container or one similar to it. What should be included in the total shipping cost is the cost to move the empty container. I also sold an R-390A at the same time. I can tell you that finding the proper size, double walled boxes that will fit inside each other including two or three inches of rigid foam is a real chore. Whatever type of container you use the main thing to keep in mind is there must not be relative movement within the containers, radio and box OR box to box. I took photos of Scott's empty box and the one I used for the R-390A. If Scott does not mind I will Email the photo to those that want them.

---

Date: Sat, 27 Aug 2005 14:50:06 -0400  
From: "Scott Bauer" <odyslim@comcast.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Fw: Shipping R-390As , Rick Mish Group Buy,

Please do share the pics with anybody that would like to see. I can't say enough good about Ricks "Fastpacs". BTW, Fedex charges me \$19.00 to ship the empty container from Baltimore to Toledo where Rick lives. If we do get 6 takers, I suggest that everybody send payment directly to Rick Mish along with postage. Rick can determine that price for you. At this time we have 2 interested. 4 more needed. The cost is \$125.00 plus shipping. Thanks again Al for the wonderful R390. It is being used every day and works perfectly. I love it.

---

---

Date: Sun, 28 Aug 2005 13:38:03 +0200  
From: "federico" <federico@dottorbaldi.it>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Fw: Shipping R-390As , Rick Mish Group Buy,

I got from Rick an R-390/URR and an R-389/URR shipped from the States to Italy in MILITARY FASTPACK (that is the box that you described before) in both cases they reached me without any damages and I still have the box that I employ to storage or ship heavy radios like R-274/FRR.

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jan 2006 18:40:42 -0600  
From: Gary Pewitt <n9zsv@cei.net>  
Subject: [R-390] R-390(x) receiver shipping boxes

Who is it that sells the shipping boxes for the R-390 series receivers? I have a couple to ship and want them to arrive undamaged.

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jan 2006 18:49:02 -0600  
From: "Gary H. Harmon Jr." <gharmon@idworld.net>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] R-390(x) receiver shipping boxes

Hank Arney has some, hankarn@pacbell.net

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jan 2006 19:10:20 -0600  
From: mikea <mikea@mikea.ath.cx>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] R-390(x) receiver shipping boxes

I got mine from Rick Mish; my R-390 made the trip from Ohio to Oklahoma absolutely without blemish in it.

---

Date: Thu, 19 Jan 2006 08:39:54 -0500  
From: "Norman J McSweyn" <normn3ykf@stny.rr.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] R-390(x) receiver shipping boxes

My solution was a similar. You can get a 24x24x24 box from most pack/box/mail places. I measured a receiver and figured out what I'd need in terms of cushioning foam.

1. checked yellow pages for local foam retailer.
2. had retailer cut foam to dimensions.
3. cut box down a little (19" I think)

Grand total \$72. Cost me 48 bucks to ship it from Binghamton, NY to Arkansas, tho..

---

Date: Thu, 19 Jan 2006 09:57:34 -0600  
From: "Gary H. Harmon Jr." <gharmon@idworld.net>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] R-390(x) receiver shipping boxes

I've done that myself over the years and even though it takes personal time to do it, the final product works fine and I've shipped many heavy radios using a heavy duty packing box and the hard foam available from home improvement stores (4 x 8 outside insulation sheets). Hank's boxes are custom made for the radios and come with the all the internal foam for safe travel. Yes, it does hurt to pay money to ship an empty box cross country.

---

---

Date: Thu, 19 Jan 2006 09:58:51 -0600  
From: "Barry" <n4buq@aol.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] R-390(x) receiver shipping boxes

The last R390A I bought came rolled in used carpet pad. That stuff works pretty good as a packing material, is dense enough to absorb a lot of shock (provided you include several layers), and is cheap. Of course, you have to account for several layers making the box the radio goes into quite a bit larger.

---

Date: Fri, 16 Dec 2005 14:33:16 -0700  
From: "Kenneth" <crips01@msn.com>  
Subject: [R-390] storage question

This does not concern my R390A but other vintage electronics I have, test gear and some non-operational receivers. I need to move them into my un-heated garage. I am not so worried so much about the Military gear but there is some non milspec test gear. The temperatures at this time of the year can go to 20 below zero F but normally will stay above zero F. Will storage at such low temperatures harm these old rig's.

---

Date: Fri, 16 Dec 2005 17:31:42 -0500  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] storage question

Chances are the low temperatures won't hurt anything, but the changes in temperature at certain times of the year with the combination of high humidity may result in condensation. With commercial gear (and some military) the moisture from condensation may contribute to surface corrosion.

I would suggest, if possible, sealing in plastic bags -- in dry conditions -- with some dessicant bags tossed in. Not sure where to buy new ones, but the old ones from mil packing can be rejuvenated by drying slowly in an oven. When sealed in with the equipment the dissicant will absorb out any residual moisture. On the other hand, maybe excessively low humidity will dry out your capacitors ;-)

---

Date: Fri, 16 Dec 2005 17:38:19 -0600  
From: "Cecil Acuff" <chacuff@cableone.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] storage question

I wouldn't do it.... Temps that low can cause the metals to shrink so much that I've seen paint damage. I think generally that 20 below would not be good for any of it.

---

Date: Fri, 16 Dec 2005 18:52:54 EST  
From: Flowertime01@wmconnect.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] storage question

have a restored Gurnow that wintered about 30 years in a Michigan barn. It has a wood case and steel chassis. The cold did not do it any more harm than the flood waters did. You have to do what you have to do to save it from the dumpster. Put it up off the ground on a block or two.

---

---

Date: Fri, 16 Dec 2005 18:29:26 -0600  
From: Tom Norris <r390radio@gmail.com>  
Subject: [R-390] Re: storage question

Plain brown clay cat litter is a good desiccant. That's what "old fashioned" non-silica desiccant is. Dry a small coffee can's worth of clay by spreading out on a baking sheet or two and cooking in a closed oven at low heat for a couple days or longer. Pour into muslin bags and place in and around gear when packing. The more the merrier as far as this goes. Unless the item is hermetically sealed, I'm not sure how long the desiccant will last so be sure to re-bake, renew and reseal on a regular basis. Not sure what the guidelines are on that.

---

Date: Sun, 1 Jan 2006 06:34:18 EST  
From: ToddRoberts2001@aol.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] What are the odds?

>What are the odds that 3 out of 4 would have a problem of some sort?  
>What are the odds that 3 out of 4 would have a problem in the \*same\* deck?  
>What are the odds of that problem being of the sort that would require the radio to be pretty much completely disassembled?

A lot depends on how the radios were stored. If they were wrapped up in blankets and stored in an indoor closet odds are good they will work right off the bat. If they were stored outside in a barn or semi-outside with no cover in a garage odds are they will have problems with intermittent switches and bandswitch contacts, noisy pots, dried-out grease and dirt in the RF Deck gears that will require disassembly and cleaning and there could be corrosion in the various chassis that could affect grounding points throughout the receiver. roper storage is extremely important to the proper working of these receivers. The Blue-Stripers are a good example of bad storage practices!

---

Date: Sun, 1 Jan 2006 10:09:06 -0600  
From: "Cecil Acuff" <chacuff@cableone.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] What are the odds?

Well first off the math didn't work out for me....3 working radio's stored and one non-functional parts unit. Twenty years later out come the 4 radio's and we are taking odds on how many of the 4 would have problems.

My guess is that the parts unit would still be a parts unit and out of the remaining three the best odds of a working radio will come from the R-390/URR units. Storage will have a lot to do with the odds on the all the radio's. Humidity saturation on carbon comp resistors is a problem as well as corrosion. I think given reasonable storage...say in a closet in the house...odds are all three previously working radios will still work fine.

Stored in the garage in the desert southwest probably the same. Stored in the garage in the deep south along the Gulf Coast or maybe any coastal region for that matter my money would be on the R-390/URR's....with the "A" being a close second as long as they were protected from the varmints but expect them not to be as pretty with some corrosion possible and poorer performance. Hey my Blue Stripe radio worked when I received it from Fair Radio (received WWV on 10 Mhz)....it was a complete but un-checked unit.

---

---

Date: Sun, 01 Jan 2006 10:27:14 -0600  
From: "Francesco Ledda" <frledda@verizon.net>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] What are the odds?

I had a working FRR-59B stored in my garage for about 15 years. When powered again, it worked like a champ!

---

Date: Sun, 1 Jan 2006 16:47:32 -0600  
From: Tom Norris <r390a@bellsouth.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] What are the odds?

That was more of a "lets make fun of Murphy" post. :-) All were stored in a dry area of a basement. Supposedly heated. From the amount of dust they were at least partially covered or in a cabinet. How did the radios turn out?

The two R-390s are full enough of intermittents and flakiness in the RF decks that I will need to pull them. (eventually) The intact R-390A I only recently got around to looking over. Before I got a chance to see if it was really working completely, as I was checking to see if the mechanics worked smoothly - and was randomly changing bands - the clamp an the small gear that engages the Geneva gear decided it wanted to loosen. It was fine before that. Since I have no idea just when it loosened, I need resynch the bandswitch. Eventually.....

The parts radio. Looked at it a few months ago with the '390s. It was without a PTO, IF amp, meters, some knobs, a few slugs, crystal oven, and, I think a gear clamp or two. Antenna relay was TU as well. I had just gone over the R-390s and was fairly annoyed and thought "what the heck" Without retelling the earlier B+ Troubleshooting Adventure Of All Time, all it needed after parts replacement and that troubleshooting was a realignment. It was tagged as not repairable. One of the problems I didn't catch but was later found was a shift of about 30 to 50 cps in the first osc when receiving very strong signals. It was only noticed when listening to CW. Just thought I'd share a story about Murphy.

---

Date: Mon, 23 Jan 2006 10:31:56 -0500 (EST)  
From: <w9ya@arrl.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] R-390(x) receiver shipping boxes

When I moved from Indiana to New Mexico over Xmas '04 I went to Target and bought some \$8 foam beds, queen size, and wrapped the radios in that. Then I slightly compressed the foam with a wrapped and taped overlay of heavy garbage bags. The foam is at least a couple of inches thick in places, with one side bumpy. The bumpy side faced in toward the radio and the foam itself was easy to cut where needed.

We found out that the moving truck had a bad rear axle and the truck had bounced much of the way to Albuquerque ! The truck trailer bounced up and down a foot or so just backing up ten feet or so in front of the new house upon delivery. There was much damage to the stuff the packers had packed including almost 8 thousand dollars worth of insurance settlement. (Most of which I have received to date, but that is another story for another time.) However there was almost \*no\* damage to speak of to the stuff, my shack and office, that I had packed. The SP-600 and both R-390As along with the tube and other old stuff arrived just fine. Even the delicate stuff like old Tek scopes and such arrived dusty but otherwise working. I guess along with a hard multiple layer or dual cardboard box system to mail the radios in -> these inexpensive foam beds covered in heavy plastic garbage bags should do the trick. They are VERY simple to work with.

---

---

Date: Sat, 21 Oct 2006 19:44:47 -0500  
From: Tom Norris <r390a@bellsouth.net>  
Subject: [R-390] Who has shipping boxes?

Ages ago someone was discussing a source of used "insta-pack" boxes about the right size for shipping '390's. Where were folks able to get these? Hank had some back when he was in California for quite a bit of money, but since I need about 4 of them, and mostly for moving and storage, I was hoping to find a source of used ones. Wasn't there a fellow near Baltimore or DC that used to have these boxes available? In fact, I bought a couple of R-1051's from him several years ago but am coming up blank-minded -- more so than usual -- on what his name is and how to contact him.

There isn't a source locally for for good sized double walled cardboard boxes, and by the time I built something, lined and foamed it, price-wise I might as well have just gone ahead and built a crate. For various reasons I'm not really able to do either at the moment, so if anyone knows where I can get used insta-paks for a good price lemme know.

---

Date: Sat, 21 Oct 2006 20:03:56 -0500  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Who has shipping boxes?

I just had some 500#DW Stitched 24x22x16 Kraft RSC boxes made up and have them here in TX sans foam. They are UPS rated for 150 pounds.

I will check tomorrow and see if they can be folded and taped or tied to come under 84" overall to go at actual weight of 15# Vs 30# as OS1. They are \$30.00 each plus shipping.

Will advise. Four can be folded tied and shipped as actual weight UPS. NO FOAM AT PRESENT TIME. Thanks, Hank KN6DI/5

---

Date: Sat, 21 Oct 2006 22:10:21 -0500  
From: mikea <mikea@mikea.ath.cx>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Who has shipping boxes?

Call Rick Mish; look on [www.miltronics](http://www.miltronics.com) (or miltronix) .com for his phone or just Google on the name and R-390. He had some.

---

Date: Sun, 22 Oct 2006 17:34:46 -0500  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Who has shipping boxes?

I checked the box as to folding to ship. No Joy, it tears on both sides of the stitched seam, when folding the minor flaps to the outside it is OK but the major flaps will not fold to the inside or outside without additional tearing or damage to the box,

They will have to be shipped set up to not damage the box by UPS or any of the small box carriers. Shipped as OS1. Could probably ship up to 4 or 5 folded flat at actual weight under OS2 70 pound. They would still have the tear above and below the stitched seam OK. Your choice. Thanks, Hank

---

---

Date: Sun, 28 Jan 2007 09:38:24 -0800 (PST)  
From: Perry Sandeen <sandeenpa@yahoo.com>  
Subject: [R-390] Re: Tube organizing help

I had similar problems with organization when using large cardboard boxes and plastic shelves that I bought at Home Depot. Each of the shelves were rated at 250 pounds each. Right! They sagged lower than Radio-Mart's reputation with just 40 pounds of weight. I didn't read the fine print that said that the weight rating was for 250 one pound notes of English paper money! I found a good solution with adjustable metal shelves from Sam's Club. They are 6 feet tall 18 inches deep and 4 feet wide and come with 6 reinforced shelves that are adjustable in one inch increments. They come with both fixed feet and wheels which can be locked and are \$80 a unit. I set mine up with the sixth shelf on the top notch, the first shelf on the bottom notch and equally spaced the remaining shelves. I put on the wheels so I move them about easily. This lets me put 15 BA's on the lower shelves.

For tubes and parts I found covered aluminum baking pans at my local Ace Hardware store for \$7 each. They are the "Mirro" brand and are 13 inches long, 9 inches wide, and 3.25 inches deep. They stack very nicely on the top shelf and are easy to label using Avery Laser Jet labels.

With the shallow depth I can put about 50 6BA6 size boxed tubes and they are easy to stack. For small parts I cut dividers out of cardboard boxes and use silicone rubber for glue so I can remove or re-organize as needed.

Some have mentioned having problems with condensation on their equipment in garages. If you used these shelves one could cover them with transparent builders plastic, place a 7 watt night light on the bottom and the temperature would be high enough to prevent condensation without being too hot for the equipment. Hope this might be helpful to someone,       Regards, Perrier

---

Date: Mon, 16 Jul 2007 22:43:19 -0500  
From: "Mac McCullough" <w5mc@austin.rr.com>  
Subject: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

All after a long absence, and being so far from the loop, I find myself needing to ship a 390A and am wondering what the present thinking and experience has been among you with good results.. thank you mac/mc w5mc Located 46 miles due North of the Alamo, AND HOME of the 2007 NBA World Champions, and 121 miles due South of the Western White House. see my website at [www.collinsandharrisradios.com](http://www.collinsandharrisradios.com)

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 03:04:36 -0700 (PDT)  
From: "Tom M." <courir26@yahoo.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

Use two boxes.

Get some insulation panels from Home Depot, cut pieces with a knife and break off pieces like a cracker (no offense), insert the pieces all 'round the radio nice and snug.

---

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 05:11:51 -0500  
From: "Phil M." <pmills7@houston.rr.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

I use the pink foam from HD and cut it with a box cutter. I line the top, bottom, and sides of the box to strengthen it. Then I build up insert blocks of 3 to 4 layers of the foam and use on bottom, front, back, sides, and top. I've just shipped two R-390's this way in the last month with no problems.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 06:58:49 -0500  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

I have custom made 500 PSI DW RSC kraft boxes with EPS that I use with great results.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 09:18:27 -0400  
From: "Tim Shoppa" <tshoppa@wmata.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

I have never shipped one outbound myself. But the yellow striper I got from Fair Radio came in:

A single big stiff cardboard box.  
And was padded with... NEWSPAPER.  
And was shipped as an extra-heavy package through UPS.

I think one tube rattled loose in shipment and was pulverized, and some other tube let its vacuum out (possibly being the target of the loose tube). But the radio came through fine. My UPS delivery guy saw the stickers that Fair Radio had put on and treated it with kid gloves all the way from the truck to my front porch. I can't guarantee that all UPS guys are as conscientious. Of course, this was a pretty ratty yellow striper to begin with.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 09:24:01 -0400  
From: Barry <n4buq@knology.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

Packing is one thing and you've gotten several options on that. Shipping method is another. I've received a couple of R390As using Greyhound Bus's service. It's pretty nice in that the package goes in a rather small area under the bus so not a lot of throwing it around is involved. Also, you might be fortunate to get point-to-point service (the package goes on the bus once and off the bus once). Of course that depends on where you are and where you're shipping to. As for packing, I've been hoarding the dense foam packing that comes in the computers we order here. It is very dense yet lightweight and will absorb an incredible amount of shock (much better than peanuts, etc.). Properly packed, I think even a radio as heavy as the R390-class can be safely shipped in these. Of course, it wouldn't protect against an intrusive object piercing the container (like Hank's boxes will), but I'd guess that's pretty rare. Good luck,

---

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 09:44:50 -0400  
From: Barry <n4buq@knology.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

I bought an RF deck from Fair. It was packed in a plain cardboard box with newspaper padding. The shafts had poked through the box when I received it. It wasn't damaged, but it certainly wasn't packed like I think it should have been.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 09:47:27 -0400  
From: "Bob Young" <youngbob53@msn.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

I shipped a 390A to Chuck Rippel, he told me to get the big bubbles bubble wrap and wrap it three times around in all directions and send it tightly packed in a good sturdy box. When he shipped it back he protected the face (especially) with styrofoam cutouts and the box was tight as a drum. I've used one of Hank's boxes to ship both an SP-600 and a SX-28A tightly packed and both arrived fine and the box is still in good shape. I think a big part of it is to make sure it's firmly padded and firmly packed, you don't want a flimsy box nor want it to be able to move around inside the box at all. I now use Fedex for all shipping when I can, they seem to be a little more gentle.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 13:03:04 -0500  
From: Tom Norris <r390a@bellsouth.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

I've bought all sorts of things from Fair over several decades - large, small, delicate, huge and heavy and not a one has suffered damage with their wadded newspaper method. It's not a \*bad\* way of packing, but there are better. With our radios becoming collectors items, I'd not pack one that way today, I'd use the other fellows methods. I used to have a source of reusable firm-foam boxes for shipping '390's back and forth back when I was doing such things, but that source dried up when I switched jobs. But.... when all else fails, double box. UPS will take packages up to 125 pounds or so, that's how I shipped mine, as that was usually what they weighed after I packed the heck out them.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 16:06:31 -0400  
From: Bob Camp <ham@cq.nu>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

I shipped a couple of R390A's to Argentina using the Home Depot foam technique. The radios came through fine as far as I know. The only thing I have ever added was a couple of pieces of 1/4" plywood sandwiched in between the foam layers.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 13:53:33 -0700  
From: "Ed Zeranski" <ezeran@ezeran.cnc.net>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

The Fair Radio crushed newspaper works as long as you make sure there is no movement of the victim/package item. I've used that method for BoatAnchors but always double box w/crushed paper etc. between the boxes. The discarded corner 'pucks' from Cisco and Marconi devices work too with scrounged up Bubbl Wrap and foam. Again, the key is no internal movement. As for shippers...If the package will meet the spec I use the US Postal Service. UPS, Universal Package Smashers, has killed several radios. FEDEX is OK too so far. I'm always on the look out for triple-wall cardboard boxes in 'BA' sizes.

---

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 17:30:39 -0400  
From: "James A. (Andy) Moorer" <jamminpower@earthlink.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

Anybody know how to ship boatanchors internationally? I used to use USPS surface - slow but not expensive. I sent several to New Zealand for about \$140 each (they had to be in two boxes to get past the 66 pound limit). After about 2 months, they arrived in good condition. Now the USPS in its wisdom has eliminated international surface, a.k.a. "slow boat to China". UPS, DHL, FedEx and those guys start at \$350. Plus, I am told there is some problem with customs at the other end when you use a private shipper - you have to use their customs agent handle it, whereas with government post, customs duties are handled directly (I guess) with the recipient. So - any thoughts? Or is that the end of international boatanchor traffic? Sigh. How will I get my next EK-07?

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 18:14:01 -0400  
From: Bob Camp <ham@cq.nu>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

With the price on off season air travel what it is, I suspect you fly over and bring back your EK-07 as luggage.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 19:55:27 -0300  
From: "Francisco E. Viegner" <fev@ciudad.com.ar>  
Subject: RE: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

HI, Bob sent to me more than one R390A to Argentina. They arrived in good condition in the way he is telling it now.

---

Date: Tue, 17 Jul 2007 20:18:05 -0400  
From: Barry Hauser <barry@hausernet.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

That might be a good idea, except there's no free lunch. Even if you travel very light, the airlines are now allowing only two checked bags per passenger with a limit of 50 lbs per bag. (it used to be 70 lbs.) Over that limit and they can either refuse it or charge something like \$2-3 per pound, but I think there's an upper limit. I came back from England on Virgin Atlantic a few years ago and we had bought a lot of stuff. As I recall, it cost me over \$100 way back then then for a couple of duffel bags full of moderate weight stuff. Of course they have to go over it with the chemical sniffer thing and there's a good chance something in the rig would set it off.

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jul 2007 09:10:40 -0400  
From: "Tim Shoppa" <tshoppa@wmata.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

Remove a couple of modules (especially power supply) and pack them separately, and I'm sure you can get a 390A into 3 cases each less than 50 lbs (even taking into account the weight of shipping cases). The airlines used to just look the other way if you were a little over the limit but they really really really are more attentive now at picking up the extra revenue.

> Of course they have to go over it with the chemical sniffer thing and  
> there's a good chance something in the rig would set it off.

I'd be much more wary of the airline baggage handlers banging it up. It has been my experience (but I make NO GUARANTEE) that the extra-heavy UPS parcels actually get treated far more kindly than ordinary shipments. It's not motor freight or LTL level of service but it's getting closer.

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jul 2007 09:58:17 -0400  
From: "James A. (Andy) Moorer" <jamminpower@earthlink.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

I made the mistake of checking my saxophone as luggage last May. Apparently, it was opened and inspected by TSA (all the stuff was moved around inside the case). It appears it was dropped as well. It broke off one key and pad, dented the bell, and more. Cost me \$450 to repair.

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jul 2007 10:33:46 -0400  
From: Roy Morgan <roy.morgan@nist.gov>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

Not long ago I was part recipient of a shipment from Germany. The sender did all the legwork at that end and UPS-SCS (UPS Supply Chain Services) helped on this end.

> Plus, I am told there is some problem with customs at the other end when  
> you use a private shipper -

I was told that I could personally manage the US Customs process here if I wanted to walk into the Customs office, do the paperwork, and then come back later that day to see if it had been "cleared" yet. I/we decided to let the UPS-SCS folks manage that. Trouble is that the time required cost local storage fees in addition to the fee charged by USPS-SCS to do it. In the end, it was not TOO bad considering the size of the shipment (about 1100 pounds in two containers).

>...How will I get my next EK-07?

Ah, the fabled EK-07! The more here the merrier. (Or should that be the moorer here the merrier.. How many do you have now?) Any unwanted Rhode and Schwartz dual channel ssb demodulators should be sent to the address below. heheh.

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jul 2007 14:43:05 +0000  
From: Sheldon Daitch <sdaitch@mor.ibb.gov>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] 390a shipping methods

On the other hand, an airline shipping success story. My vehicle was broken into, and rather than attempt to get an European or African standard window, I ordered a replacement window via a dealer in the Oklahoma City area.

I was back in the states for my son's high school graduation. My son and I fabricated a plywood and wood box for the door window, using white insulation from Home Depot for the packing.

I had contacted the TSA folks at OKC ahead of time, more for the purpose if they had to open the crate, which was one of my checked bags heading back to Tangier, Morocco. TSA folks worked with me to make sure it was safely squared away, and a week after I got back to Tangier, the glass was successfully installed.

---

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jul 2007 21:00:54 -0500  
From: "Thomas Frobase" <tfrobase@kitparts.com>  
Subject: [R-390] FW: Shipping methods - My Fedex Experience

Not to say this box was poorly packed, but this is how it was left on my doorstep! The driver ran for the truck and never rang the doorbell, as witnessed by my neighbor. The good news is that the case took the hit and saved the radio. This one was destined form own shack! The worst thing is there is no recourse on my end with the shipping company, only the shipper, but hopefully it will a lesson to all of you! I can say that the shipper made it right financially.  
73... tom, N3LLL <http://www.kitparts.com/ebay/damage>

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jul 2007 21:03:53 -0500  
From: Dan Arney <hankarn@pacbell.net>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] Fowler Industries R-390A on eBay Now

Cecil, I think he is RM the III I have seen and made new tags for Number 1 and mad a total of 5 tags, that matched the original and not like tis one. I also told the lister this plus I asked to see the pictures of the bottom of the IF deck for proof of 1984 type of Caps etc. I dared him to post my question to the listing.

---

Date: Wed, 18 Jul 2007 22:15:13 EDT  
From: ToddRoberts2001@aol.com  
Subject: Re: [R-390] FW: Shipping methods - My Fedex Experience

Interesting pictures Tom, I can see several things right away. It appears the radio was not double-boxed. The box used was not new. It looks like the box was single-wall cardboard, not double-wall? They did not reinforce the corners or edges with wide packing tape. The thin packing tape used was not adequate to hold the box closed. What kind of padding did they use - I can't tell from the pictures?

---

Date: Thu, 19 Jul 2007 00:08:36 -0400  
From: 2002tii <bmw2002tii@nerdshack.com>  
Subject: Re: [R-390] FW: Shipping methods - My Fedex Experience

>The worst thing is there is no recourse on my end .....

I'm actually sorry you let the shipper take the hit -- it was clearly not the shipper's fault. The seller's packing was criminally negligent, and he should have paid. If we keep letting sellers get away with inadequate packing, they'll continue doing it.

---