

EAC means "Electronic Assistance Corp." Over the years, I have read that EAC advertised their R-390A for sale in CQ magazine. And, I have seen the ad a couple of times, also. I found it again and it's a little fuzzy and not very good overall quality, so I started looking for a better copy. Google found a post in the Antique Radio Forum by Geoff Fors that said they also placed the ad in 73 magazine. Not being able to find any CQ magazines online, I looked for the ad in the 73 magazine and found it. This ad is from 12/1968 on page 70. I had to clean it up a little, but it's fairly good. It's the identical ad that's in CQ.

Unique opportunity to own one of the world's finest all-band receivers. 500 kc to 32 mc!



**R-390A/URR
Radio Receiver**

Limited quantity of famous R-390A/URR radio receivers . . . brand new. Original manufacture, 1968 production . . . fully tested to meet U.S. Government specifications. Range 500 kc to 32 mc, 30 1-mc bands, digital readouts. Original pack, includes two instruction books, complete set running spares. New low price \$1,700* . . . fully guaranteed.

*A few new, but shelf-worn, units available at lower prices.

WRITE OR CALL FOR DETAILS

EAC Industries, Inc., 20 Bridge Avenue, Red Bank, N.J./201/747-5100, Ext. 51.

I also went through the 'History' file in the 'Pearls' and found the following interesting information about EAC:

Date: Sun, 9 Nov 1997 22:14:55 EST
From: paul.courson@... (An Unsigned Note)
Subject: [R-390] More on Electronic Assistance Corp./Hammarlund

James & Tom have revived interest in this curious bit of shared heritage. Actually, according to some research by Steve, WB3HUZ, EAC purchased what was left of Hammarlund in the 1960s. He said production of the remaining Hammarlund lines was never merged with existing EAC manufacture, so the link at the factory is tenuous.

I personally had hoped to be able to instead refer to my 1967 EAC as a "Hammarlund" R-390A, to showcase the far more popular name. But Steve is pretty certain that the connection was mostly corporate (overseeing independent subsidiaries), and that EAC assembly did not directly benefit from anything Hammarlund imparted to their radios.

As for EAC's own history, it is checkered.

EAC's 1960 contract to produce the R-390A is the one involving ceramic, rather than mechanical filters. This discovery -- after the units had already started delivery and government monies had already begun to flow -- reportedly created quite a stir among military procurement officials. They were left to explain this unsanctioned bit of cost cutting, at a time the R-390A was indeed proffered as a less expensive version of its older sister, the R-390 (made by Collins and Motorola).

EAC, as best as I can determine, successfully interpreted that general costcutting mentality to retroactively justify the change. The argument apparently worked, since EAC would later win more production. A maintenance order went out, however, instructing depots finding ceramic filters to replace them with the specified mechanical types. (I have the document for anyone needing)

We have recently had a correspondent on the R-390 list server who *has* such a radio -- still with the ceramic filters! This may be one of the rarest R-390As around !!! He is correct in pointing out that the audio quality would be better than had the mechanical filters been installed. For the military, however, there was a practical degradation in intermod suppression in the harsh RF environment of a ship with multiple HF transmitters.

EAC went on to produce some of the last R-390A receivers, considered by many to be the best among all produced. The 1967 contract (production from this order seems to have spanned 1966-1968) included many units with Teflon, rather than vinyl insulation on the wiring harnesses. Years later, we all can appreciate the ability of such wire to withstand abrasion, kinking and heat-related deterioration better than the older type.

It was these late-model R-390As that also enjoyed an upgrade of tube shields to the black, heat-dissipating IERC-types. Older silver types -- which share the IERC's function of shielding from stray RF fields -- were said to contain rather than convey heat. Chuck, WA4HHG, has written extensively on how this can shorten tube life (Steve's AM Radio Page contains his report).

The 1967 contract also improved the RF and AF meter readability and mechanical smoothness, through different paint and (apparently) improved d'Arsonval movement, respectively. Older meters include radioactive, brownish-yellow paint (which is a hazard if the meter is opened and particulate matter inhaled), and some were prone to sticking.

The radioactive issue prompted an order to depots that are responsible for processing such radios for government surplus auction. It forced the removal and destruction of the meters by the most efficient means possible. I have heard stories of blowtorch removal, and disposal barrels FULL of meters later filled with concrete and hauled to a toxic waste dump. Tragically, there was no distinction made between "new" non-hazardous meters and older types. In later years, R-390As have come out of military depots with meters intact (perhaps the memo has been lost).

The effects of cost-cutting continued to show up in EAC's later models. The dust covers are made of thinner, less rigid material than older contracts (with the gray dust covers of the R-390 series being the strongest of all). There are widespread reports of Q.C. problems, including new radios delivered DOA to government prep sites. These sites would "recondition" allegedly problematic modules, PTO assemblies and RF decks to make a working radio that could be deployed.

Eventually, so many of the radios were testing bad that the contractor was booted in the rear, and lots of "make good" work had to be done at the factory as the government rejected instead of reconditioning those that failed.

As communications needs changed, demand for the R-390A was tapering off. Electronic Assistance Corp still had a number of refurbished units that the government had earlier rejected. It was these radios that were later offered directly to civilian markets. CQ Magazine in 1968 carried regular advertisements (I have a photocopy). As far as I have been able to determine, EAC indeed "fixed" whatever was wrong with the radios that were returned to government service.

I have never seen a verified civilian model, which reportedly does NOT include the military nameplate or nomenclature, but does include some sort of substitute in its place on the front panel. I have no information on numbers sold to non-government markets. The price tag was pretty steep.

Date: Tue, 30 Nov 1999 12:11:54 -0800 (PST)
From: Tom Marcotte
Subject: Re: [R-390] Dittmore-Freimuth EAC Question...

The Dittmore-Freimuth radios were all made by (GASP!) EAC.

I was lucky enough to buy a cherry 390A from the former chairman of EAC, Robert Edwards. The rig was presented to him by the company employees, and has a special brass presentation nameplate. The rig was immaculate, and came with two sets of spare parts marked with the Dittmore-Friemuth contract number. I've known folks who had DM tagged radios that said all modules were EAC.

Conclusion, DM did not make any 390A's. They did however make telephone gear, and mechanical filters. They were based in Milwaukee.

While I'm digressing, EAC made all sorts of stuff prior to 390A's, including recorders for the first U-2, radar altimeters for Navy helos (spacecraft recovery helos specifically), bottling equipment, and parimutual betting calculators for racetracks.

EAC Industries is still in operation making plastic labeling, but the old radio EAC remnants are now owned by Cardwell Condensor (which also owns nearly all of the old boatanchor company rights. If you can name a BA company, Norman likely owns it).

From: "Ronald Davis"
Date: Tue, 11 Jun 2002 18:53:58 -0400
Subject: [R-390] EAC question?

I have picked up a couple R-390A's and I have a question. Both have EAC tags and EAC modules but the tags are different. One has FR-36-039-N-6- 00189(E) and the other has DAAB05-67-C-0155. Does anyone know the difference? I am new to this and please remember that hi. Both are in very good shape and work FB. Thanks for any help.

From: Llgpt 'at' aol.com
Date: Tue, 11 Jun 2002 19:02:28 EDT
Subject: Re: [R-390] EAC question?

One is the order number, the other the contract number. Look closely at the tags, they will state that. Both are from the 1967 EAC contract.

From: "Chuck Rippel"
Date: Wed, 19 Jun 2002 12:57:20 -0400
Subject: [R-390] Oooops...

The nametag problem is fairly common. Tags were swapped for inventory control or at depot. Hank Arney did make repro tags that were supposed to be of good quality. Maybe he will contact you if more are available. I guess you could check the back of the chassis and see what manufacturer and contract number you find. You can check the AF deck and power supply easily for manufacturers. That will give you some idea of what components are there for starters. It was common to throw in whatever component was on the shelf at depot, so don't be surprised to find a mix of manufacturers.

Date: Tue, 26 Jul 2005 12:53:17 -0400
From: "Veenstra, Lester"
Subject: [R-390] EAC Quality

When I was on active duty and the getting the last run of receivers from EAC, we all agreed that these new receivers were trouble. As I recall they had a higher failure rate, burning resistors and bad small electrolytic caps, than the previous production run of receivers.

Date: Sun, 4 Dec 2005 17:39:45 -0600
From: Tom Norris
Subject: [R-390] 1968 EAC 390A

Figured I'd raise more of a discussion over the civilian EAC '390A (similar to that seen on Ebay). It wasn't meant as strictly an ebay subject, but a discussion of this particular sort of R-390A. Seriously, while we've raised the issues of ballasts, end points and gear rebuilds on a regular basis, this isn't a subject I've heard discussed in some number of years. We've discussed other contract years of note, but not mentioned much about the EAC end-run.

Looking at Tom Marcotte's s/n list, the high serial seen for these seems to be near 118. Anyone know how many of these were sold? Were these all repaired QC failures or were they simply the "tail end" from the 1967 contract? Anything in particular different about these units other than the front tag?

Date: Sun, 04 Dec 2005 19:49:35 -0500
From: Barry Hauser
Subject: Re: [R-390] 1968 EAC 390A

Glad you brought this up because I have a question. Tom Marcotte's production chart shows DAABO5-67-C-0155 for the EAC '67 Contract, followed by EAC Industries/Hammarlund '68 as "consumer" -- no contract number -- with highest reported S/N as 118. Following the consumer run the chart shows DAAB05-68-C-0040 -- '68 contract, but as DittmoreFriemuth with highest s/n as 215.

I recently acquired a '390A with a '60 EAC tag on it, but nothing is from that contract. The contract stamped on the back panel is DAAB05-68-C0040, however the rubber stamp job shows "Electronic Assistance Corp." not Dittmore-Friemuth. The serial # on the back panel is 153.

The IF deck has the same contract and mfr as does the Xtal Osc. deck. The power supply is a '67 EAC, and has what looks like a depot rectifier upgrade job -- tube shield mounts crushed in the

usual fashion. The audio deck is a Collins -- just has "Collins" and a serial number.

However, the plug-in caps have a '67 date. I have not pulled the RF deck and can't see the stamping, but looks like it belongs to that Xtal deck -- probably that '68 contract. So ... did the D-F's say Dittmore-Friemuth on the back or EAC? Or what ??? standing by

Date: Sun, 4 Dec 2005 19:04:26 -0600
From: "Les Locklear"
Subject: Re: [R-390] 1968 EAC 390A

My understanding is that the Dittmore Freimuth receivers were all 67 EAC built R-390A's.

Date: Sun, 4 Dec 2005 23:45:35 -0600
From: Tom Norris
Subject: Re: [R-390] 1968 EAC 390A

So, where did the commercial receivers end up coming from, supply-line wise? Did the good EAC receivers go to them and the ones that didn't pass QA end up being sold commercially?? I didn't get an email off to the ebay seller before he had his radio boxed up, or he'd been happy to have taken a shot of the back panel.

Date: Mon, 5 Dec 2005 04:36:59 -0800 (PST)
From: "Tom M."
Subject: Re: [R-390] 1968 EAC 390A

All the ones I've seen had the contract number marked out. I think they were all over runs or QC repairs. The one I got from Robert Edwards had very low and very high s.n.s in it, indicating it may have been made from QC repairs.

Date: Tue, 6 Dec 2005 03:48:31 -0800 (PST)
From: "Tom M."
Subject: Re: [R-390] 1968 EAC 390A

The tooling was owned by EAC, not the Govt. This was not a govt ammunition plant. It was a private business. EAC built the units sold as commercial units by EAC. Collins did not make a small proof of production batch of R-390As, they made about 6000 units or more than 10%.

Date: Sat, 18 Mar 2006 09:20:08 -0600
From: "Les Locklear"
Subject: Re: [R-390] possibly the last teledyne R390A

That highest serial number is the highest serial number that was reported to either Tom Marcotte or myself when we ran that informal survey years ago.

Those contracts were typically for 5,000 units with the exception of the 1967 EAC contract for 10,000 + and various small contracts to both military and civilian governmental agencies.

Date: Thu, 19 Jul 2007 09:02:04 -0500
From: "Mac McCullough"
Subject: Re: [R-390] Fowler Industries R-390A on eBay Now

EAC did one PUBLIC offer one time I think, late 68 or very close 1.6 -1.8k I forget, that is the only

Manufacture offer I know of, then you had Columbia Electronics Paul Kees who was always a leader in that era .. Columbia was the good stuff surplus dealer in the day mac/mc

Date: Mon, 12 Mar 2012 13:15:23 -0400 (EDT)
From: chuck.rippel 'at' cox.net
Subject: [R-390] \$5k R390A on E-Pay

If its the same radio I'm thinking of, I know it well. It was one of 2 brand new EAC R390A's I have. This one came with a Delta Electronics, Solid State SSB adaptor/Sync Detector and a cabinet built to fit both. There is a picture on my old site, its the first radio at the top/right hand side of the page.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20080110001901/http://www.r390a.com/html/shacktour.htm>

I ran it with my Collins 20V-2 for several years. The receiver was very, very sensitive and if memory serves me, the serial number was something over 10,000. Sort of an update; this could not have happened intentionally if I had planned it. The web-hosting company where the R390A www site was kept folded. A week later the motherboard for computer which held the backups failed. The USCG has had and has me very busy at USCG CAMSLANT but I'm hoping that will slow down just a bit. I haven't restored a radio in a couple years but will be throwing the shingle out officially soon. Un-officially, I'm ready to start restoring today. I really miss workling on them. Resubscribing to this list was a good first step. Best Chuck.Rippel 'at' cox.net

Date: Wed, 22 Aug 2012 12:24:25 -0400
From: "Todd, KA1KAQ"
Subject: Re: [R-390] EAC Contract info in Red Bank Paper

Not only that, the 'cheap' price listed in the ads for the civilian version was only if you bought multiple sets. A lot of folks miss the fine print. George Rancourt recently came into a civilian version and said he wasn't terribly impressed with the overall quality compared to the mil versions. He said it looked like they took reject modules, repaired them, and built the sets. He has my EAC mil version at his place and said the civilian model wasn't as nice. I've never been into one myself beyond casual viewing. Probably along the lines of the Fowlers, scarcity wins out over quality for collector types. They do have a cool tag, though.

Date: Thu, 23 Aug 2012 13:43:45 -0400 (EDT)
From: chuck.rippel@cox.net
Subject: [R-390] EAC Rocket Ship Radios

I have one of the 252'ish R390A's that was offered to the general public. Save for the Rocketship on the front tag, I can't tell the difference between it and mil-spec. It's just, IMHO, another '67 EAC with a rear serial number stenciled on the back plate of just over 11,000.

Date: Fri, 24 Aug 2012 09:10:41 -0400
From: "Lester Veenstra"
Subject: Re: [R-390] EAC Rocket Ship Radios

As I recall from active duty days, these last production runs from EAC were notorious for the acid leaking tantalum caps in the audio assembly.

Tom also found the following on Moody's:
One point of interest is acquiring Hammarlund on 5-1-1968.

History

Incorporated in New York June 6, 1958 as Electronic Assistance Corp. Present name adopted on May 26, 1976.

In 1961, acquired Industrial Instruments Division of Specialties, Inc.
On May 29, 1963 acquired Ideal Brass Works of St. Paul, Minn., for 2,175,000 and 150,000 shares of common stock.
On Sept. 6, 1963, acquired Security Hardware Mfg. Co. for cash. On July 6, 1967, merged Security into Ideal. On Aug. 3, 1967 changed name of surviving subsidiary to Ideal Security Hardware Corp.
On Dec. 19, 1967 acquired Interstate Manufacturing Corp., Orange, Conn., for 70,000 common shares (liquidated).
On Jan. 31, 1968 acquired Electronic Mechanisms, Inc., Philadelphia, Pa., for 13,352 common shares and \$4,500 cash. (closed in 1973).
On Apr. 1, 1968 acquired Precision Grinding Wheel Co., Inc., Philadelphia, Pa. for 70,000 com. shs. and cash (sold in 1975).
On May 1, 1968 acquired certain assets and business of Hammarlund Manufacturing Co., Inc., Mars Hill, N.C. for \$1,068,000 cash plus assumption of \$664,000 of liabilities. In Dec. 1971 assets transferred into Radiomare Corp.
On July 1, 1968 acquired Radiomarine product line of Radio Corp. of America for \$2,420,000 cash and \$1,000,000 note.

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EAC INDUSTRIES, INC.

In July 1968 acquired Welco Industries, Inc., Cincinnati, OH. for 129,412 com. shs.
On Sept. 1, 1968 acquired Dumont Mobile Communications product line for \$825,000; relocated to Mars Hill, N.C. and in Dec. 1971 transferred assets into Radiomare Corp.
In Jan. 1969 acquired Monteray Manufacturing Co., Chicago, Ill. for 30,000 com. shs.
In Mar. 1970 acquired 80%, and in Nov. 1971 acquired an additional 8% interest in Auto-Trol Corp., Denver, Colo. for cash.
In July 1970, acquired net assets and business of Einson Freeman and De Troy Corp. in exchange for \$4,226,500 of debentures and a \$423,200 note.
In Sept. 1970, acquired 68% of common stock of Ecological Assistance Corp., formerly International Patents & Development Corp. for 25,206 shares of common stock and cash. Subsequently, acquired an additional 16% upon merger of Ecological Assistance Corp. (sold in 1975).
In June 1971 acquired 67% of Goodren Products Corp., Englewood, N.J., and has option to acquire minority interest. In July 1972 acquired remaining 33% interest.
In May 1973, sold Auto-Trol Corp. to Howard Hillman of Greenwich, Conn. for \$950,000 in securities.
In July 1978, sold Einson Freeman & DeTroy Corp. and Einson Freeman, Inc. to Herman E. Anstatt, Jr. for \$2,326,000 in cash and note.
In Sept. 1981 acquired Sterling Corp., White Pigeon, Mich.
On Aug. 17, 1983 acquired The Stalker Corp. for \$7,750,000 cash.
In May 1984, started production at Sterling Manufactured Homes, Inc., a newly formed subsidiary.
In Sept. 1984, Ideal Security Hardware Corp. (subsidiary of EAC), acquired S-B Manufacturing Co.
On Apr. 17, 1985, acquired 51% of com. shs. of Frantz Manufacturing Co. for approx. \$15 million (all of these shs. were sold back to Frantz on Nov. 6, 1985).
In Feb. 1986 acquired R-Anell Homes Inc., Denver N.C. and Vidalia Homes Inc., Vidalia, Ga.
In Sept. 1986, acquired the assets of Simpson Hardware Corp. of Los Angeles.
On Dec. 31, 1987, sold Sterling Manufactured Homes, Inc. to Oak Creek of N.C., Inc. for \$5,700,000 in cash.
On Mar. 30, 1988, Co. sold the business operations and assets of Welco Industries, Inc. to Vickers, Inc., for \$13,903,000 in cash.
In July 1988, Co. acquired businesses of Western Products Manufacturing Co.
In Dec. 1988, Co. acquired Handy Things' Christmas tree stand product line from Citation-Walther Corp.
On Apr. 20, 1989, Co. sold the business operations and assets of its Stalker Corporation subsidiary to Chromalloy Compressor Technologies

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EAC INDUSTRIES, INC.

Corporation, a subsidiary of Chromalloy Gas Turbine Corporation.
In Jan. 1991, Co. sold its Canadian affiliates, La Compagnie Ideal Security Inc. and Electro-Finition for approximately \$700,000.
On June 2, 1993, Co. sold its former housing plant located in Albemarle, N.C., to Palm Harbor Homes, Inc. for approx. \$1,020,000.
On Dec. 12, 1994, Co. through a newly formed subsidiary, FFP Acquisition Corp. Flexible acquired certain of the assets of Flexible Printed Products, Inc. for approx. \$340,000.

Business

Co., through its subsidiaries, designs and produces point-of-purchase advertising displays, wall decorations and packaging overwraps on semi-durable plastic. It also produces and prints on plastic, pre-cure in-mold heat transfer labels for the identification and decoration of rubber and silicone hoses, belts and tire patches.