



DASMA
Door & Access Systems
Manufacturers Association
International

DOOR OPERATOR & ELECTRONICS DIVISION

TECHNICAL DATA SHEET

#374

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Land-Mobile-Radio (LMR) System Frequency Interference with Garage Door Openers Questions and Answers

DASMA has received numerous questions from media and consumers regarding the issue of the U.S. military LMR (Land-Mobile-Radio) system and interference with the operation of garage door or gate operator remote controls. Following are some answers to common questions.

What problems might a homeowner experience?

When a nearby military radio system operates on the same frequency as the remote controls to your garage door or gate operator, your remote controls may not work, even from a close distance; however, wired controls, such as a wall pushbutton, should continue to operate the garage door or gate operator with no problems.

What is being done to solve the remote-control problem?

Garage door or gate operator manufacturers are working with military and government officials to develop a solution that is best for homeowners and the military. Since many military and government personnel also enjoy the convenience of garage door or gate operators, a mutually beneficial solution is best for everyone.

How widespread is this problem?

Throughout the U.S., as many as 40 million homeowners with garage door or gate operators could be affected by interference from the military's new LMR system. The new system, mandated by the Department of Defense, began operating in 2004 at select military installations. However, that system is expected to spread to military bases nationwide.

Is this a new problem?

It is not a new problem. Over the years, frequency interference near military installations and elsewhere has occasionally occurred, but the problems have usually been for relatively brief periods of time. Garage door or gate operator remote controls have been legally using radio frequencies for more than 40 years.

Note: Technical Data Sheets are information tools only and should not be used as substitutes for instructions from individual manufacturers. Always consult with individual manufacturers for specific recommendations for their products and check the applicable local regulations.

This Technical Data Sheet was prepared by the members of DASMA's Operator & Electronics Division Technical Committee. DASMA is a trade association comprising manufacturers of rolling doors, fire doors, grilles, counter shutters, sheet doors, and related products; upward-acting residential and commercial garage doors; operating devices for garage doors and gates, sensing devices, and electronic remote controls for garage doors and gate operators; as well as companies that manufacture or supply either raw materials or significant components used in the manufacture and installation of the Active Members' products.

This situation may appear to be new because of the perception of a seemingly widespread effect and an increased number of occurrences. In the last few years, with the rapid growth of low-power wireless devices for consumers, the potential for frequency conflicts with high-power equipment has grown dramatically.

Who owns these frequencies?

The government owns a wide range of radio frequencies, but many common household devices are allowed to operate in these frequencies. These devices are known as Part 15 devices, named after the document the FCC maintains that regulates the devices.

What are some examples of Part 15 devices?

Part 15 devices include baby monitors, cordless telephones, computers, garage door or gate operator remote controls, wireless mice, radio-controlled toys, wireless headsets, and many other common devices. These devices are usually low-power and not under continuous use.

What happens when a military radio system interferes with a Part 15 device?

If a military radio system (which usually consists of high-power devices) causes your Part 15 device to malfunction, then, by law, you must accept the interference.

Is my garage door or gate operator interfering with military communications?

Since your remote control operates intermittently on very low power, it is extremely unlikely that you are interfering with military communications. Military radio systems, however, typically operate continuously on high power. That's why they may interfere with your garage door or gate operator located near a military installation.

What can a homeowner do if this problem is encountered?

Call the manufacturer of your garage door or gate operator or your local garage door or gate operator dealer. Buying a new garage door or gate operator is probably not necessary. But you may need to purchase a retrofit to your remote control system to allow operation on a frequency that is not used by your local military.

How should a homeowner operate the door or gate in the meantime?

In the meantime, if you need access in or out of your garage during a time your operator does not work, you can manually operate your door or gate. Consult your owners' manual for instructions or call your local garage door or gate operator dealer.

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