

Right to repair

I am an Ex-RAAF Avionics technician warrant officer have repaired autopilots, FLIR LASER systems IR and High Altitude cameras, Radar, Radio and much more from Mirage, F111 to F18, Winjeel, to Mustang P51 and Spitfire, Blackhawk and Iroquois (ARDU research SQN).

I am well versed in repainting all Avionics and their test equipment.

Nowadays I and a DVA invalid and got involved in Amateur Astronomy (I did a diploma of Astrophysics, not for a job, but for self-help)> I help other Amateurs with their electronic technical difficulties. Aka and I can manage to repair some equipment for Australian users of blown Telescope systems and Astro cameras.

As you can imagine, these are not cheap. I mainly repair systems for Losmandy Telescope (Hollywood General machining (HGM)) in Australia as I have owned one of their systems since yr 2006. I started repairing for friends as return and repair is hellacious costs and time consuming.

Luckily, I got to know the designers and owners and was allowed access to in bedded firmware etc (but I had already reverse engineered the systems and firmware) ...that was easy for me from my training.

Typical turn around process time to USA is nowadays 6+ months if not more. Without my help the company would flounder. They are a small company that are family like yet make great products made to be repaired to circuit level.

Now here's the catch.

Almost all other manufacturers of similar equipment, telescope computer drive systems cameras etc do not have the same repair facilities in Australia and demand the items are returned for repair. Postage alone to USA or Europe is hundreds if Australian dollars. Add return costs. These items need special packing, anti-static and special anti-vibration anti crush from handling.

Then we see the Chinese Astro mounts and products that are deliberately made not to be repaired to component level. They are made to buy a new PCB (if you can...mostly you cannot) with a "to bad attitude".

I can repair these. I source the world for these parts but without firmware for such I cannot complete repairs.

This is a restraint of trade. Imagine if you cannot get your car fixed but had to send it to China or Europe for repair. Some of this equipment costs thousands to multiple of thousands. Many coat their PCBs with conformal coatings to stop repairs. They

consider a bad board throw away...yet you cannot get replacements for them...like skywatcher.

The computers I repair cost \$4000 Aud ...and I repair them for less than \$200 ea.

It's absurd that most companies would restrain repair trade and make you thrown them away. It's a disgrace. At least Losmandy (The USA company) pride themselves on their products being repairable. They now have a repair centre in UK ...I taught him.

Yet the Return TAT to USA is still around 6 months even for USA users.

We need more in country repair ...we need more properly trained techs to do such and there are many ex-service personnel out there to do such...instead

we are forced to throw away products for the want of a \$.10 cent part!

Well this is a little late but I see it day in and out forced to disappoint users who purchased \$3000 Chinese telescope mounts that are useless after 5 years. Meanwhile I have repaired every Losmandy mount I have touched....around qty 40 many less than \$100 cost of repair.

Restraint of trade...is endemic and hidden. All companies selling such should be forced to provide spares and repair facilities...or...not allowed to sell in our country.

It's that simple! Consumers have rights, that are being trampled.

Regards

Brendan Smith