

Connector Savers -- For Space Data Bus Couplers

In the satellite business, one of the biggest problems is known as FOD, or foreign object damage. FOD is a substance, debris or article which is alien to a vehicle or system which could potentially cause harm. The problem occurs when something that does not belong in the satellite is floating around and lands on a critical component and causes damage. This can be very small particles, and in many cases is the scratching off of the plating on the many connectors used on a satellite.

During the extensive testing of the satellite, these connectors can be mated and unmated many times. We have reduced this problem by making "Connector Savers" that are used on the original connectors so that they are mated once and left on through the testing until ready to launch. This prevents the plating on the connectors from being abraded and peeling off.

Besides its deadly potential, FOD costs over \$4 billion every year in aircraft repairs industry-wide. Although making them space rated causes them to be expensive, the cost of an inoperative satellite far exceeds the price.



North Hills Connector Saver.
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