



A quick overview commentary - Is it warranty or not"

About this "quick guide"

This is intended as a quick overview only.

Any warranty is, at its core, a positive marketing tool. The overriding motivation is to create good and fair balance between the customer and the brand. However, you as the retailer are in between us and you are in the front-line. To be able to use a warranty as a positive thing, the rules must be understood!

As with all warranty, it is up to YOU as a retailer to confirm that the unit was purchased from you by the claimant or that he is the original owner. Private or E-bay purchases are specifically excluded.

We trust you, but if you do not know the customer, recall making the sale, cannot validate it, or, if it was purchased elsewhere, then you should require proof of purchase before offering any warranty support.

IF the customer cannot provide that information, if he/she is not the original purchaser you can:

- **Reject the warranty request but offer to send it for repair at his/her cost.**
- **Request that he deals directly with us (email warranty@DCCconcepts.com)**

IF this is a good customer, we leave your approach in your hands. We are able to be helpful and we will always be supportive, but only if the product is complete and unmodified in any way.

What's warranty, what's not. This is a "black and white" overview that should be used in conjunction with the full warranty guide for the product range involved...

Electronics and Powered DCC Devices of all types...

- **Electronics of all types are wiring and power sensitive. They DO need to be treated with respect.**
We can tell by the resulting failure how any electronic fault happened. We look at all of them and find out why every time one is returned, as it helps us in future designs. Each failure has a distinct "signature".
If they made a mistake or did not read the instructions, or shorted the back of the PCB when they put it down, or wired it up with the power turned on and shorted it, or if they used an old soldering Iron with mains-earth leakage that damaged the processor, or used the wrong power supply, or it was accidentally mis-wired, then we are sorry, but it is not really warranty.
- **If it has been physically modified or damaged, or opened up, then it is not warranty.**
- **If it is not installed in line with instructions, then its not warranty.**
- **If they used an old "Trainset Controller" or a home-made power supply instead of the regulated DC or DCC track voltages we recommend, then we are sorry but it is not warranty.**
We are sorry but we HAVE to make this distinction because old (and some new) train-set controllers do NOT deliver the voltage as per their labelling... (they are always well over-voltage) & their DC output is very messy - it has ripples and surprisingly high voltage spikes that should NOT be there!
Additionally, older train controllers would not meet safety standards now even if new... and as it is, the things they used for insulation are steadily breaking down.. And most are now becoming quite dangerous.
- **Creative Re-tasking:** Modellers are endlessly creative and sometimes, they try to make something do what it was not designed to do. We admire creativity but when it results in failure, it is NOT warranty!
- **Overloading...** by shorting things or asking a unit to do more than its design limit. You may think it is hard to prove but it always has the same result. It generates HEAT. It is not a warranty issue.
- **Installing it INTO something that is faulty: More often than is realised, locomotives have faults that destroy decoders. The customer reaction is "I just plugged it in and there was a puff of smoke".**
Well, we test EVERY decoder under power more than once before it gets packed, and if the decoder was actually faulty, it would smoke then... not wait for a customer. We DO however understand its not really their fault... so we make provision for this in our decoder warranty. Please take the time to read it!



A quick overview commentary - Is it warranty or not"

Continued... What's warranty, what's not.

Decoders

We thought we'd add this as a separate addendum to the "Electronics" part.

- 100% of Decoders are tested under power more than once and they are also tested carefully in the areas of CV setting and addressing. This makes it easy for us to have a really fair warranty.

If a decoder with NO damage to decoder or harness and no re-soldering anywhere or modification or damage to the heat-shrink... will not take or respond to an address or accept programming commands after 3 attempts at reset, then it is OK to replace it no charge and claim warranty.

If a customer has MORE THAN ONE like this then there is something else going on. His wiring may be bad, his DCC system or loco may have a problem... or maybe it's how he is using it perhaps? In this case its better to be careful and ask us for help.

If a Decoder has damage to the heat-shrink, obvious signs of heating, burn marks anywhere or if a decoder smells burnt... 99.999% of the time it's NOT warranty. (remember we test under power).

In this case... ask him to return it straight to us, and WE will give him a new decoder at half retail price.

Again, we are prepared to be reasonable, because there is that .0001 chance it was a component that has failed so every now and again you CAN if you wish do a free replacement under those conditions for a customer you KNOW is good with DCC... but don't be too generous, or instead of free replacement, if we really feel it was a bad call and it's repeated, YOU may end up with a replacement at half retail price...

The MOST important thing you can do it to reduce decoder returns is to TEACH users how to act when they install a decoder... always putting it onto the program track first to make sure that they get a pre-warning of a bad installation before full track power can destroy it! Prevention is always the best cure!

LEDs, LED powered lamps, Gas, Oil, other lamps

- **LED based items.** Loose LEDs are parts and parts are not warrantable, but we DO allow you to use common sense and good judgement. Please TEACH customer the right way. This "live link" will help:

<http://www.dccconcepts.com/vamr/leds-and-how-to-get-the-best-from-them>

- **NANOLights™ are tested 100% as they are produced. They ALL work when we pack them.**

The fine wire leads are not loose, the LEDs all work... But they DO require careful handling.

Basically as we cannot control what power supply the customer uses, and we can't ever see how they handled them, or if they added a resistor or not according to instructions there is NO warranty on LED products other than the correct number / correct accessory items having been packed in the first place.

Actual failures & problems are so low however that we DO try to be both understanding and sympathetic to problems... so where a customer is honest and up-front about a failure or its something that is really out of the ordinary or a genuine and understandable accident, we will do our best to help.

Example: We had a customer whose layout set-up assistant carried his car keys in the same hand as he helped carry end of an exhibition layout baseboard . His keys tangled in the wiring, damaging the wiring of 6 of our Station Gas lamps. We felt for the poor owner of the layout & gave him some new lamps free.

- **Incandescent lamp based items.**

We power test 100% on receipt from the factory before packing. We inspect them very carefully.

The packaging is also made strong to protect them and clear so that YOU can see what is in the packs you sell, and you inspect when you sell them... so of course, you know it was OK when you sold it!

Basically they WILL work if used with the correct power supply. We recommend a low voltage in the instructions and we also include "light control PCBs" that will protect them by reducing the voltage that gets to the lamp if the power supply the customer uses is at the high end of recommended voltage scale.

If its burned out or the heat has caused damage, it's an over-voltage issue. Please use good judgement!

If you learn about our products, look after customers and test before you return, we'll always help!



A quick overview commentary - Is it warranty or not"

Continued... What's warranty, what's not.

Cobalt Motors

Mostly this is just common sense... Most failures come from carelessness & not reading manuals properly. Annoyingly, MOST Cobalt returned as faulty have actually been OK, so there has been a real failure in reseller AND end user for this to happen. **Please understand Cobalt & read the detailed Cobalt Warranty overview.**

Tools

In general, tools last forever if well used, and carelessness is the cause of most damage, so warranty is an easy thing. If it was perfect when you sold it and then it broke... suspect customer use as the problem.

There is ONE exception.

We very slightly over-harden the jaws of our high quality track-cutters so that they will stay sharp longer.

We felt this was better than a tool that would lose its edge reasonably fast as one popular brand does.

Because of this, if best practice isn't used (Cut rail from top to bottom not side to side for the cleanest cut & least strain on the cutters) or if they cut larger than code 100, then it is possible a blade may snap.

If this happens and there is NO other sign of damage such as deep grooves in the edge indicating use on wrong materials, then please replace them.

We will replace them to you free of charge (Its not common - perhaps 1 per 300 or so, but it does happen).

Other

Other DCCconcepts products. We happily follow all local rules and regulations for each country and we acknowledge our responsibilities as well as we can. We just ask you to take a methodical approach to warranty.

So... "Just use common sense".

Read your customer from his attitude and approach ...and the words he uses. Give support where it's deserved, not in order to avoid conflict. Make a sensible judgement and we will support you. If you are not sure, ask.

What is NEVER going to be warranty... again, this is mostly common sense!

- **Modified items.** Eg: Cobalt with plastic case cut or drilled, lamps that have been modified, or most things that have been cut / bent / changed from the way they were when we sold them to you.
- **Packaging damage.** Every item leaves our shelves in top condition. We check as we pack them.
If the packaging was damaged when you received it, you should have told us or your distributor about it, and / or claimed on the carrier or your insurance. There are strict policies for this with most carriers.
If you sold it and the customer finds it has damaged packaging, its between you, your carrier and him!
- **Incomplete returns.** It left us complete. It must be returned complete. If the harness is missing, the accessories are missing, or in some cases, the packaging or parts are incomplete, then its not complete.
This is especially important with things like Cobalt motors where the fulcrum bar is part of the case tooling and made 1:1 with the case when it is injection moulded. Use good judgement and take care please.
What to do? Its common sense - If they return one without the fulcrum and accessories, give them one without them... and return the ones from the replacement with the warranty return so that it IS complete.
- **EBAY purchases.** By definition most E-bay sales are second hand. We value real specialists within the hobby so we do not support resellers without bricks and mortar stores as the core of their business.

We hope this quick overview is of help to you.

Please read all of the more detailed warranty and customer service info we have made available here.



A quick overview commentary - Is it warranty or not"

Continued... What's warranty, what's not.

A few things that help - and that we think you as a specialist should always do.

Modellers are strange beings... They will spend hundreds on a loco but go skip-diving for wire.

They will lavish care on buildings and scenery, doing or placing everything according to detailed research... but they are careless and try to wire up complex electrical and electronic things before they read the instructions.

They will look for the best and prettiest DCC control system but often try to use 50 year old train-set controllers or old or hand made power supplies to power it - or use them for expensive scenic lighting or electronics...

There lies a BIG problem. Accessory products are at the core of YOUR profitability, but the products that we make and you sell are very often not being powered, wired or used properly... and if you let it continue, then you are actually contributing the problem, inviting more problems than you want... AND missing out on some seriously good, quite profitable sales opportunities!

Please....

- **Learn to listen - Take time and REALLY listen when something is returned.**

Listen... and listen again. Let the modeller talk about how or why it failed, ask simple questions... the real situation will often emerge and you will then have the possibility to talk him through it and teach him how to do it right so he will not repeat the problem. More often than not, failure is really all about how things are installed or were used... so there's NO point in replacing it if the customer is not also taught how to do it right, or history will just repeat itself!

Be a true specialist and make every customer contact an opportunity to share good knowledge.

- **Stock and sell the right wire and wiring Accessories.**

Learn about wiring for DCC in particular... and make the Accessory / wire sale. To see what it really takes, look at the DCCconcepts website for dead accurate "best practice" for DCC wiring.

Look at the DCCconcepts wire range and the DCC-tags for a truly useful shop range. It has a very good margin potential. It is top quality at a good price (and margin) and it sells well. **Any modeller that follows good wiring advice usually has no problem elsewhere, making him the perfect customer!**

- **Encourage modellers to throw away or at least not use older controllers or unregulated DC units.**

They are NOT safe and their output is NOT suitable for modern model railway electronics. They seldom put out less than 1/3 more than the voltages printed onto their output panels. Electrically they are also really unsafe compared to modern units and as time goes by they will become quite dangerous.

- **Other than for CDU use steer clear of all AC power supplies.**

Every bit of modern electronics, including DCC systems that sell AC supplies like Lenz, actually work BETTER on regulated DC. Stock only quality power supplies with regulated DC outputs.

There is great potential income for you available from high quality DC power supplies, whether they are common wall plug types or "benchtop lab power supplies". **Take advantage of it!**

- **Get them to throw away Grand-dads soldering Iron.**

Stock only good quality soldering Irons (Antex Irons are a good choice. Sell 50watt, not 25, and read our web data on soldering please). Make sure every sale includes DCCconcepts top quality solder and flux- because all solder is NOT the same and it is by a long way the best there is. It isn't cheap but it's not a price sensitive area anyway... and performance really validates the cost! **Add to sales value!**

- **Learn about the potential of DCCconcepts products as most can do more than you think!**

Every electronic item that we make has features other brands cannot offer, Cobalt motors are by a long country mile the best there are, Cobalt-S Levers are a pleasure to use, incredibly versatile and superb quality (did you know that the internal contacts are actually gold plated). Our lamps have a fineness and quality that no other brand can match... it goes on. Quality always sells.

Your future existence as a specialist really does depend far more on knowledge and accessory sales than on loco's and the like. We have tried to provide you with knowledge here and on our website. Please use it, succeed and bring a new lease of life to Model railway specialist retail!