

Thermo CRS

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Obsolescence Announcement – A465 Articulated Robot System

Dear Colleagues,

After a very successful 12-year production run with 620 units delivered, the A465 robot model will be placed into our “Obsolescence” program officially on June 9th, 2003.

The A465 and its predecessor the A460 robot found its way into industrial and laboratory applications of all kinds. Its unique elbow design allowed it to be one of the first small robots to be mounted in an inverted format. It was easily mounted on a linear track. It was the industry’s first six-axis robot with a powerful parallel processing controller.

The power of this controller technology allowed the A465 robot to:

- ? perform force and vision guided tasks for product testing and polishing including polishing eyeglass lenses to testing automotive components at –35°C.
- ? testing cement to coating electronic engine control modules.
- ? manufacturing surgical instruments to gluing bathroom products.
- ? drilling holes in dashboards to assisting in laproscopic surgery – the A465 has performed well over the years in applications too numerous to count.

The world of robotics has changed significantly since February 1991 when the A460 robot was delivered. Thermo CRS can best satisfy the needs of its 6-axis robot customers by focusing on a single product - the F3 - and that is what we will do. Thermo CRS will continue to develop successful new automation products. Thermo CRS is executing a successful strategy that has been in place for many years – transforming from a company that has in the past provided generic robotic products, into a Business Unit within the Thermo Electron Corporation dedicated to the delivery of flexible automation solutions to our life science customers. This event is a step along that chosen path.

In preparation of this event, Thermo CRS has worked to provide adequate commercial and technical contingency plans for the use of the F3 robot. Of course, there will be some applications for which the obsolescence of the A465 means a significant design change for some of our customers. For that purpose, the A465 will be available for sale until December 31, 2003. This provides adequate time for customers to respond with last-buy purchases and it provides adequate time for them to work with our support staff to design other TCRS components into their applications.

It is important to impart upon our customers that this obsolescence does **not** mean that the product will not be serviced. Service will remain fully intact for the next 10 years, so long as our vendors provide TCRS with the components necessary to perform any needed repairs. We are fully committed to the success of our customers, and a smooth transition over this period of time.

As a courtesy to our major customers, I would like our sales professionals to make contact with them during the week of June 9th, and provide personalized notification of this significant event. This is your opportunity to personalize this event and manage your customer’s expectations.

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According to our obsolescence process, the following steps will be taken:

1. General sales channel and customer notification will happen during the week of June 9th.
2. Final orders will be accepted by October 1st, 2003.
3. Final shipments to be made by December 31, 2003.

Do not hesitate to call me if there are any questions.

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