

Evaluation Report 114



Shur Shock 6 Volt SS Fence Controller

A Co-operative Program Between



SHUR SHOCK 6 VOLT SS FENCE CONTROLLER

MANUFACTURER:

J. C. Hallman Manufacturing Company Ltd.
80 Alpine Road
Kitchener, Ontario
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RETAIL OUTLETS:

Co-op Label -- Interprovincial Co-operative Ltd.
Manitoba & Saskatchewan
Shur Shock Label -- Other retail outlets in the
prairie provinces

RETAIL PRICE:

\$43.45 (August, 1979, f.o.b. Humboldt)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Shur Shock 6 Volt SS fence controller was suitable for use over a limited range of fence conditions.

With the voltage switch in the low-position, peak voltage output on a 5.4 km (3.3 mi) single wire fence varied from 820 V for a well-insulated, grass-free, dry fence to 25 V for an uninsulated, grass-grown, wet fence. For most normal fence conditions, output was below the 700 V minimum guard voltage recommended for short-haired animals, while for all conditions it was below the 2000 V minimum needed for long-haired animals. Effective animal control could be ensured only on short, well-insulated fences.

With the voltage switch in the low-position, peak current flow through a cow touching a well-insulated 5.4 km (3.3 mi) single wire fence was 0.05 A for both a cow standing in water and for a normally-grounded cow. The peak current output indicated that the Shur Shock 6 Volt SS was suitable only for well-insulated fences shorter than 5.4 km (3.3 mi) in length.

Total charge delivered by the Shur Shock 6 Volt SS varied from 0.41 to 0.71 mC.

The Shur Shock 6 Volt SS was suitable for cold weather use on short feeding fences, only if a heated enclosure was provided for the controller.

No durability problems occurred during testing.

THE MANUFACTURER STATES THAT

With regard to recommendation number:
1&2. This model has been discontinued.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Shur Shock 6 Volt SS fence controller is designed for 6 V battery operation and for outdoor use, without a weather shelter.

The Shur Shock 6 Volt SS contains solid-state electronics with no moving parts. It has a two position shock intensity switch and a light to indicate shock intensity.

Detailed specifications are given in APPENDIX I.

SCOPE OF TEST

The performance characteristics of the Shur Shock 6 Volt SS were determined in the laboratory for a range of simulated fence conditions.* It was evaluated for ease of operation, quality of work, safety and suitability of the instruction manual.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

EASE OF OPERATION

Installation: The Shur Shock 6 Volt SS is equipped with wire leads for connection to a 6 V fencer battery. The cover of the controller is removed and the battery is installed inside the controller. The controller is designed for outdoor use, without a weather shelter. The controller is connected to the fence with a length of insulated wire. In addition, a suitable ground rod has to be installed and connected to the controller. Depending on ground conditions, a 2 to 3 m ground rod length may be needed. Two wires and a clip are supplied for connecting to the ground rod and fence wire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the manufacturer consider:

1. Revising the instruction sheet to provide information on low temperature operation, the use of insulators and types of fence arrangements suitable for livestock.
2. Modifications to permit field replacement of the indicator light bulb.

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Senior Engineer -- L. G. Smith

Technical Officer -- J. M. Williams

*PAMI T7850, Detailed Test Procedures for Electric Fence Controllers.

Fence Condition: It is recommended that the Shur Shock 6 Volt SS be used only on well-insulated fences.

For cattle fences, in areas with normal ground conditions, a single charged wire fence erected about two-thirds of animal height above ground provides a suitable fence. For very dry or frozen soil, which provide poor ground conditions, a two-wire fence, with one charged wire and one ground wire, may be necessary.

Operation: The Shur Shock 6 Volt SS is equipped with a two position shock intensity switch. The high-position increases the voltage output and is used for training livestock to respect an electric fence.

The indicator light may flash slightly all the time. Bright flashes indicate that insufficient charge is being placed on the fence, which may be the result of too long a fence or poor insulation.

Since the controller was not sealed, the indicator light bulb could be replaced by means of solder connections. It is recommended that the manufacturer consider modifications to permit indicator light bulb replacement without the need for soldering.

QUALITY OF WORK

General: Operation of an electric fence controller is quite complex. To be effective, an electric fence has to deliver a minimum guard voltage to overcome the insulation resistance of the hide and hair of an animal. In addition, once the insulation resistance of the animal is overcome, the controller must deliver a pulse of electrical energy to the animal to create a shock. The amount of energy (charge) delivered is related to the current flow and its duration. If too much energy is delivered, the fence will be hazardous to both animals and humans while if not enough energy is delivered, animal control will be ineffective. For safety reasons, the total electrical charge in each pulse of power line-operated controllers should not exceed 1 mC if it has an on-time less than 14.2 ms. For an on-time of 200 ms, 4 mC is the allowable total electrical charge. Electrical regulations do not apply to battery-operated controllers.

Little is known about the physiological effect of shock pulses on animals. In general, the following guidelines are used in assessing fencer performance: the minimum guard voltage needed to overcome animal insulation resistance should be at least 2000 V for sheep and for long-haired cattle, such as Herefords or Charolais. For shorter haired animals, such as most dairy cows, a minimum guard voltage of 700 V is sufficient. The shape of the current pulse affects what the animal feels when it touches an electrical fence, but little reliable information is available. It has been found that shock intensity is more related to the peak current value in a pulse than to the total value of the electrical charge.

Fence conditions determine the guard voltage produced by a fence controller and limit the amount of charge which a controller is capable of delivering to an animal. The insulation resistance of a 1.6 km single wire fence typically varies from about 1 kΩ for an uninsulated, grass-grown, wet fence to well above 500 kΩ for a well-insulated, grass-free, dry fence. The higher the fence insulation resistance, the greater is the length of fence on which a certain controller can be effectively used. To receive a shock from a single wire electrified fence, an animal must be sufficiently grounded to permit current to flow from the fence, through the animal. Typical electrical resistances of cattle vary from about 0.5 kΩ for a cow standing in water and licking a charged wire to about 4 kΩ for typical ground conditions. If ground conditions are too poor, animal resistance to ground is so great that no shock occurs.

Peak Voltage Output: FIGURE 1 shows the peak voltage output of the Shur Shock 6 Volt SS for a 5.4 km length of single wire fence over a range of insulation resistances. With the voltage switch in the low-position, peak voltage output varied from 820 V for a well-insulated, grass-free, dry fence to 25 V for an uninsulated, wet fence with considerable grass touching the charged wire. The voltage output was above the 700 V minimum guard voltage needed for short-haired animals for fence insulation values greater than 56 kΩ, while it was below the 2000 V minimum

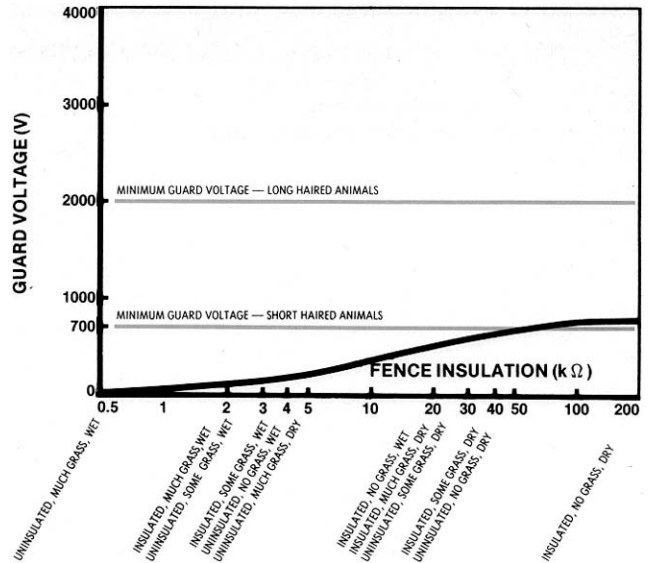


FIGURE 1. Guard Voltage Produced on a 5.4 km Single Wire Fence.

guard voltage needed for long-haired animals for all fence conditions. From FIGURE 1, it can be seen that plant growth touching an insulated dry fence reduced the voltage output. The Shur Shock 6 Volt SS can not be satisfactorily used on this length of fence. A shorter fence is needed to ensure effective animal control.

With the voltage switch in the high-position, the peak voltage output was above the 700 V minimum guard voltage needed for short-haired animals, for fence insulation values greater than 22 Ω. This increased output would still not ensure effective animal control. The voltage switch is usually set in the low-position, once the livestock are trained, to conserve battery life.

Electrical Charge: FIGURE 2 shows the current output of the Shur Shock 6 Volt SS when a cow touches a 5.4 km length of well-insulated, single wire, fence. The current output shown is for an animal resistance of 0.5 kΩ, which represents the most extreme condition of a cow standing in water and licking the charged wire, as well as for an animal resistance of 4 kΩ, representing more normal ground conditions. The shock intensity is related to the peak current in the pulse; the higher the peak current, the more intense will be the shock.

With the voltage switch in the low-position, the peak current delivered by the Shur Shock 6 Volt SS was 0.05 A for both a well-grounded and a normally-grounded cow touching the 5.4 km

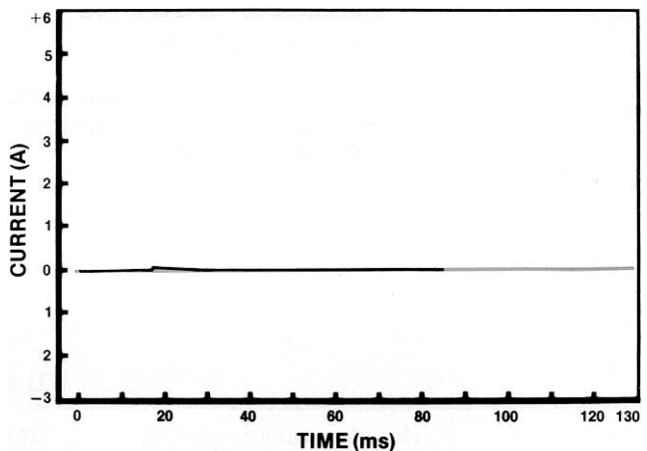


FIGURE 2. Current Delivered to both a Well-Grounded and a Normally-Grounded Cow Touching a 5.4 km Well-Insulated Fence.

fence. The total charge delivered to the cow varied from 0.41 to 0.71 mC. The shock was inadequate for effective animal control on this length of fence.

About 36 charge pulses per minute were delivered. The number of pulses and the on-time did not vary with fencer load. On-time was about 85 ms.

Low Temperature Operation: The Shur Shock 6 Volt SS could be used to energize cattle feeding wires during low winter temperatures, only if a heated enclosure is provided for the controller. During normal operation the peak voltage output on a 5.4 km single wire fence was 820 V, slightly above the 700 V minimum required to overcome the insulation resistance of short-haired animals, but below the 2000 V minimum required for long-haired animals. A higher peak voltage output could be expected on a short feeding fence. Since battery voltage is severely reduced at low temperatures, it is necessary to provide a heated battery enclosure to ensure effective winter operation. As frozen ground is often a very poor electrical conductor, two-wire systems, utilizing a separate ground wire are usually most suitable for winter cattle feeding.

The peak voltage output of the controller at -37°C on a 5.4 km single wire fence was about 700 V, 15% lower than its output at room temperature. The manufacturer, however, verbally recommended a minimum operating temperature of -18°C since operation during lower temperatures eventually causes internal damage

to the controller. It is recommended that a statement to this effect be included in the instruction manual.

Battery Consumption: A 6 V fencer battery will operate the Shur Shock 6 Volt SS about 1 month. The consumption rate did not increase as the load on the controller increased. The battery should be regularly checked to ensure effective controller performance.

SAFETY

No safety problems were evident if the manufacturer's instructions were followed.

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

The instruction sheet was clear and concise. It outlined installation, safety considerations and operation. It is recommended that additional instructions be provided to advise on low temperature operation, the use of insulators and to include a short discussion on the types of fence arrangements suitable for livestock.

DURABILITY RESULTS

The intent of the test was functional evaluation. An extended durability evaluation was not conducted. No problems occurred during functional testing.

APPENDIX I

SPECIFICATIONS

MAKE; Shur Shock Fence Controller
 MODEL; 6 Volt SS
 TYPE; Solid State Electronic
 POWER REQUIREMENTS; 6 V DC
 WEIGHT; 2.3 kg
 OVERALL DIMENSIONS:
 -- length 270 mm
 -- width 155 mm
 -- height 243 mm
 NUMBER OF INDICATOR LIGHTS: 1 (for shock intensity)
 TYPE OF ENCLOSURE: for outdoor operation

APPENDIX II

SI UNITS AND SYMBOLS

(a) In keeping with the Canadian metric conversion program, this report has been prepared in SI units. For comparative purposes, the following conversions may be used:

1 millimetre (mm) = 0.039 inches (in)
 1 metre (m) = 3.28 feet (ft)
 1 kilometre (km) = 0.62 mile (mi)
 1 kilogram (kg) = 2.2 pounds (lb)

(b) The following symbols are used in this report:

electric current = ampere (A)
 electric potential = volt (V)
 electric charge = coulomb (C)
 electric resistance = ohm (Ω)
 pulse time = second (s)



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