NEWS RELEASE:

January 25, 2001
Subject: Use of Checksums

In the beginning, there was the 6500 controller. This controller used a serial port for an interface to control the router. This is the first known use of the CPU link protocol. This protocol has remained in tact since the 6500 as the preferred means of controlling a PESA controller via serial port. As controllers have come and gone, the CPU link protocol has remained the same. It has worked to PESA's advantage that what used to work on the 6600 can now work on a 3500. It has also worked to PESA's advantage that what works on a 3500 also works on an Ocelot.

From day one, this protocol has had a checksum attached to the end of the command. The checksum provides a check and balance to insure that the command string requested by the user does not contain an error that can cause an incorrect switch. It is another check to guarantee that the router controller only does what it is supposed to.

Given the ability to configure the 3300, 3500, and 3500 Plus controllers, these controllers have been given the option to specially configure the characteristics of the CPU link port. Included in the configuration is the ability to drop the use of the checksum. However, the default is to use the checksum, keeping these controllers consistent with applications using older controllers. It also adds a check to insure that the controller does not take an unwanted switch.

It has been communicated from the field, that some of our customers interfacing to our CPU link may dislike the need to address the checksum computation in their programming. Typically multi-media customers not familiar with our protocol raise these issues. In an effort to simplify this programming process we will be placing on our website a document produced by AMX/Panja which details the steps of how to interface to a PESA router via an AMX/Panja device.

In addition, we will be providing on our website a configuration utility that will provide the programmer with the correct checksum calculations based on the switch request. Simply type in the command string and this utility provides the correct checksum. This should increase the programming efficiencies when writing an interface to our systems.

We will try to get some sort of document from Crestron similar to that provided by AMX/Panja, which should assist programmers interfacing with Crestron devices.