

Fixed: Instrument panel rheostat by [Jetfever](#) » Wed Sep 09, 2009 3:40 pm

I suffered Instrument panel rheostat failure. None are available worldwide. (part # SPEC36232) and this part is obsolete. Many have drilled a new instrument panel hole, and installed a toggle for the nav lights, and a "new" rheostat.. (Jan, 2009 SWP News). This part # is for the entire Nav/ rheostat assembly.

I spoke with Brandon at OHMITE, the OEM. He said OHMITE rheostat (part # RHS25R) is similar to the one installed in the I quote: "Original, special order from Piper" combination Piper Nav light/Instrument switch.

I ordered one RHS25R from Newark, \$26.00 delivered to my front door:

http://www.newark.com/ohmite/rhs25r/rheostat/dp/01F7552?in_merch=true&

Here is a second source, Digi-Key:

<http://search.digikey.com/scripts/DkSearch/dksus.dll?Detail&name=RHS25RE-ND>

I also ordered a used Cherokee 140 part. (My worldwide search gave me this idea). I ended up not using this part, but I think it would also work, and these C 140 switches are more readily available.

PROBLEM: New rheostat (lower photo, on the left) is NOT threaded on the aft side for the Nav light toggle "activator", a simple device.

Solution: I took the new OHMITE rheostat apart, it is easy, just remove the circlip. I placed the new center steel shaft in a lathe, and then drilled/tapped the aft end for the fastener (screw) and the "activator". (First photo, "activator lever is at 7 o'clock). I re-used the activator donated from the old burned out rheostat.

Caution: The rheostat is ceramic, remove the steel shaft carefully, it will slide right out when all of the parts are lined up correctly. DO NOT force the shaft, or other parts. It is a bit like a puzzle getting the parts to line up correctly for removal. This is mainly due to the internal "stop" on the steel shaft.

Now for the best part: After tapping the new shaft, I looked at my friend and laughed. It would be easier to just use the old steel shaft from the original (burned out) rheostat. It is already tapped, and it is exactly the same as the new shaft.

So simply re-use the steel shaft from the old burned out rheostat and the old activator, screw and washers. This old steel shaft should have little to no wear on it.

Take your time on re-assembly there is a spring that controls friction on the "wiper" that runs over the coils. Slight "tuning" of the main shaft fastener (the nut just behind the rheostat control knob) is required.

