

Recognizing Counterfeit L-3 EOtech Holographic Sights

Unscrupulous overseas manufacturers and criminal elements in the United States are selling counterfeit L-3 EOtech Holographic Weapon Sights to consumers, as well as police officers and soldiers. The counterfeits copied the outside appearance of the L-3 EOtech sights exactly and some also come with L-3 EOtech Logos and labels to make them appear to be genuine L-3 products. Unlike the counterfeits, all L-3 EOtech holographic weapon sights as well as the consumer models sold by Bushnell are made in the U.S.A.

Counterfeits of three models of the L-3 EOtech holographic weapon sight are now in the market, being sold through web sites based in China and Korea, through EBay and in local gun shows. They are the Model 552 which utilizes two AA batteries, the Model 551 which uses two N batteries and the model 553 (Military designation – SU-231/PEQ) which uses two CR 123 batteries and has two quick detachable throw lever mounts. Genuine and counterfeit L-3 EOtech holographic weapon sights are shown in Figure 1, 2 and 3 for the three models. The sight on the left is a genuine L-3 EOtech holographic sight and the one on the right is a counterfeit. As one can see, the outside appearances are near identical. Note also that the counterfeit Model 553 sight shown in Figure 3 has the L-3 EOtech logo imprinted on it.



Genuine L-3 EOtech sight

Counterfeit sight

Figure 1: Real and counterfeit Model 552 Holographic Weapon Sight.



Genuine L-3 EOtech sight

Counterfeit sight

Figure 2: Real and counterfeit Model 551 Holographic Weapon Sight.



Genuine L-3 EOTech sight

Counterfeit sight

Figure 3: Real and counterfeit Model 553 Holographic Weapon Sight. They come in black and tan colors

The counterfeiters copied the outside appearance of the L-3 EOTech sight but the counterfeit sights are not clones. The counterfeiters do not have the technology to copy a holographic sight. They simply mimic the operation of the L-3 holographic weapon sight using the old “red-dot technology. The counterfeits, regardless of model, can be recognized by their curved and reflective optics. The flat and anti-reflection coated optics of the genuine L-3 EOTech sight reflects very little light while the optics of the counterfeits reflects a bright and distorted image of the room light. This can be seen in Figure 4 and 5, viewing the sights from the front and the back. The sight on the left is a genuine L-3 EOTech holographic sight. Very little of the room light is reflected. The optics in the counterfeit sight, on the other hand, is curved and reflective and it reflects a lot of the room light.



Real L-3 EOTech Sight

Counterfeit

Figure 4: Looking at the front of a Model 552 with the sights angled to reflect room light



Real L-3 EOTech Sight

Counterfeit

Figure 5: Looking at the rear of a Model 552

The reflection from the optics can be used to recognize the counterfeits of any model of the L-3 EOTech holographic sight. In Figure 6, we show the reflection off the optics of a genuine and a counterfeit Model 553. Similar to the model 552 shown earlier, the difference in the amount of reflection from the two sights is easily discerned.



Real L-3 EOTech Sight

Counterfeit

Figure 6: Looking from the front of a Model 553 with the sights angled to reflect room light

Another feature that distinguishes a genuine L-3 EOTech sight from a counterfeit is the presence of an optical component behind the top part of the front window of the sight. As shown in Figure 7, one can see an optical component at the top of the front sight window of a genuine L-3 EOTech sight. It rounds off the top edge of the sight window. The lack of the component indicates the sight is a counterfeit.



Figure 7: Close up look at the front sight window.

Another means to recognize a counterfeit is to look at the bottom of the sights as shown in Figure 8. Of all the counterfeits we have seen so far, none has the L-3 EOTech manufacturer and serial number labels affixed to the bottom of the sight. However, we have recently found in EBay an offer to sell L-3 EOTech labels for use on counterfeits. So while the absence of labels is a good indication that a sight is a counterfeit, one cannot be certain that a sight with the labels is a genuine L-3 EOTech sight.



Figure 8: View of the bottom of a real and a counterfeit L-3 EOTech sight.

For the Model 553 (SU-231/PEQ), one can also recognize a counterfeit positively by opening the battery compartment. As shown in Figure 9(a) and 9(b), the battery

compartment of a genuine and a counterfeit Model 553 sight are very different, and the counterfeit uses two AAA batteries instead of two CR123 lithium batteries.



Figure 9(a): Battery compartment of a **genuine** Model 553 L-3 EOtech holographic weapon sight.



Figure 9(b): Battery compartment of a **counterfeit** Model 553 L-3 EOtech holographic weapon sight.

This applies only to the Model 553 which also has a pair of quick detachable throw lever mounts. The battery compartments of the counterfeit Model 551 and 552 look very similar to the genuine L-3 EOTech Holographic Weapon Sights.

The Model 553 has a pair of throw lever mounts for quick detachment and reattachment. The throw lever mounts are from our supplier, Atlantic Research Marketing Systems, Inc. (A.R.M.S. Inc) and the design of the throw lever mounts are patented and trademarked by A.R.M.S. Anyone manufacturing or marketing a copy of our Model 553 holographic weapon sight infringes on the trademarks of both L-3 EOTech and A.R.M.S.

If one inserts the batteries and turns the sights on, the difference in technologies also becomes obvious. The L-3 EOTech sight employs a unique holographic technology. The large ring-dot holographic remains undistorted and parallax free over the entire sight window. The counterfeits utilize the old “red-dot” or reflex sight technology. The ring reticle distorts when viewed through any part of the sight window other than right on center.

In Figure 10, we show the view of the reticle through the sight window away from the center. The L-3 EOTech holographic weapon sight presents a distortion and parallax free aiming reticle regardless of the part of the sight window through which the reticle is viewed. With the counterfeits which use the old red-dot technology, the reticle is not parallax free and the ring becomes visibly distorted when viewed away from the center of the sight window.

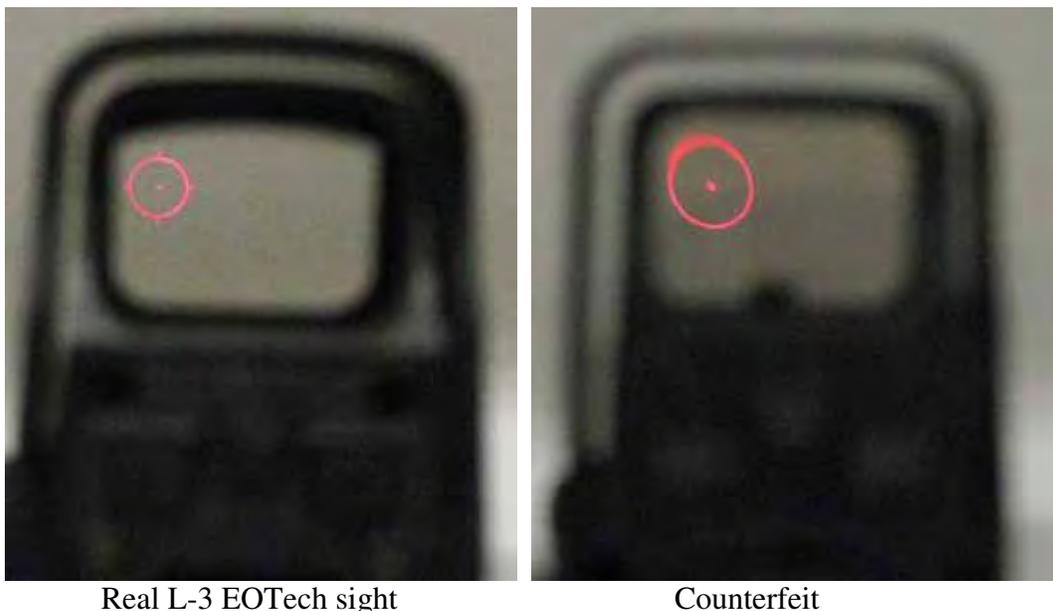


Figure 10: Distortion of ring-dot reticle when viewed near the edge of the sight window.



communications
EOtech

The counterfeits also do not have a Night Vision mode where the intensity of the reticle is lowered substantially so that it can be viewed with night vision goggles without blooming or saturating the image intensifier tube. When the button labeled NV as shown in Figure 11 is pushed, a genuine L-3 EOtech sight goes into the night vision mode and the intensity of the reticle is reduced substantially to a point that it is not visible by the naked eye. Pressing on the NV button again toggles the sight between the normal and night vision modes. With the counterfeit sight, on the other hand, the color of the LED is changed from red to a green when the NV button is pushed. Pressing the NV button again toggles the color of the reticle between red and green.



Figure 11. Back of the sight showing the Night Vision mode (NV) selection button.

The presence of counterfeit L-3 EOtech sights not only damage our company, it can also cause the lives of American soldiers and law enforcement officers as many of these counterfeits were sold as genuine L-3 EOtech holographic weapon sight. Our Customer Service Department had received many counterfeit sights for repair from victims of the fraud and some were from soldiers who bought the counterfeits with the intention of bringing the sights with them to their deployments. These counterfeit sights are not parallax free, cannot hold zero and can easily break. A soldier or a law enforcement officer bringing a counterfeit to battle thinking that it is a genuine L-3 EOtech holographic weapon could cost him his life.

One of our representatives was told by a seller of counterfeits at a gun show that what they are selling were “excess inventory from the Chinese factory manufacturing holographic sights for L-3 EOtech”. The counterfeits are not even holographic sights, they are red-dot sights dressed up to look like a holographic sight. All genuine holographic weapon sights sold by L-3 EOtech and the consumer model HOLOSight sold by Bushnell are and have always been made in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in the industrial heartland of the U.S.A.