ARC-500 and Apricot MCA-BUS incompatibility

This bulletin is to announce an incompatibility between the DSP ARC–500 network card and fast Apricot MCA–bus computers. The incompatibility can result in extremely slow network access, data corruption and network errors. Consequently, we strongly advise against the use of the DSP ARC–500 card in fast Apricot MCA–bus computers.

As an alternative to the DSP ARC–500 network card in Apricot computers we recommend the use of the SMC MCA–bus PS110 card. Note that the ARC–500 card is configured as controller name "ARC–500" in the configuration file whereas the SMC PS110 card is configured as controller name "ARCNET".

Although the problem has only been experienced on Apricot MCA–based computers, it may also occur on other non–IBM MCA–based computers (e.g. the range of Compaq MCA–based computers).

The problems seem to be isolated to the MCA–bus DSP ARC–500 network card. There are no known problems with ISA–bus DSP ARC–200 and ARC–260X network cards.