

RCM Technical Note — Custom EPO Wiring Schemes

Custom Field Wiring of Marway's PDU EPO Connectors
with Optima RCM Networked PDUs
when Not Using one of Marway's Commander UCP Panels

Sep 2026 • r1

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Introduction

This document describes how the Remote Panel Control System (a.k.a EPO system) in Marway Optima power distribution units (PDU) can be wired using buttons provided by the end user.

The remote panel connector (a.k.a. EPO connector) has been designed primarily to interface with Marway's [Commander UCP Remote Control Panels](#). There are two models that provide the option to utilize either a simple two-button solution, or a full-featured solution with On, Off, Reset, EPO, audio alarm, and more.

However, for those preferring to create their own circuits, or needing to adapt to existing circuits, the PDU wiring for the remote panel connector is designed for external dry contact interfaces. This allows for customized external wiring. This document addresses using only buttons to fulfill the remote On/Off and EPO functionality. More complex circuits can offer additional features emulating the full features available on the Commander, but that's beyond the scope of this document.

The remote panel control system evolved to allow for a variety of configurations regarding normally open vs. normally closed, and maintained vs. momentary signals. While this document explains multiple configurations, some of these configurations come from legacy requirements.

Not all combinations are ideal for Marway's RCM smart PDUs, and not all combinations are recommended for modern installations.

Applicable Models

Marway has a wide variety of models which share the Optima™ product brand and the Optima RCM™ networking hardware and software. These models can be categorized into two groups:

- ❖ Standard models, which are pre-designed and listed in [Marway's Standard Products Catalog](#) (these will have part numbers beginning with MPD 820, 833, 829, or 839).
- ❖ [Custom models](#), which are either modified versions of standard models, or completely unique designs for specific customers, but which have the Optima RCM networking hardware and software. Model numbers start with MPD, but then have a variety of possible numbers.

This document applies to all Marway Optima PDU products with the RCM networked control system.

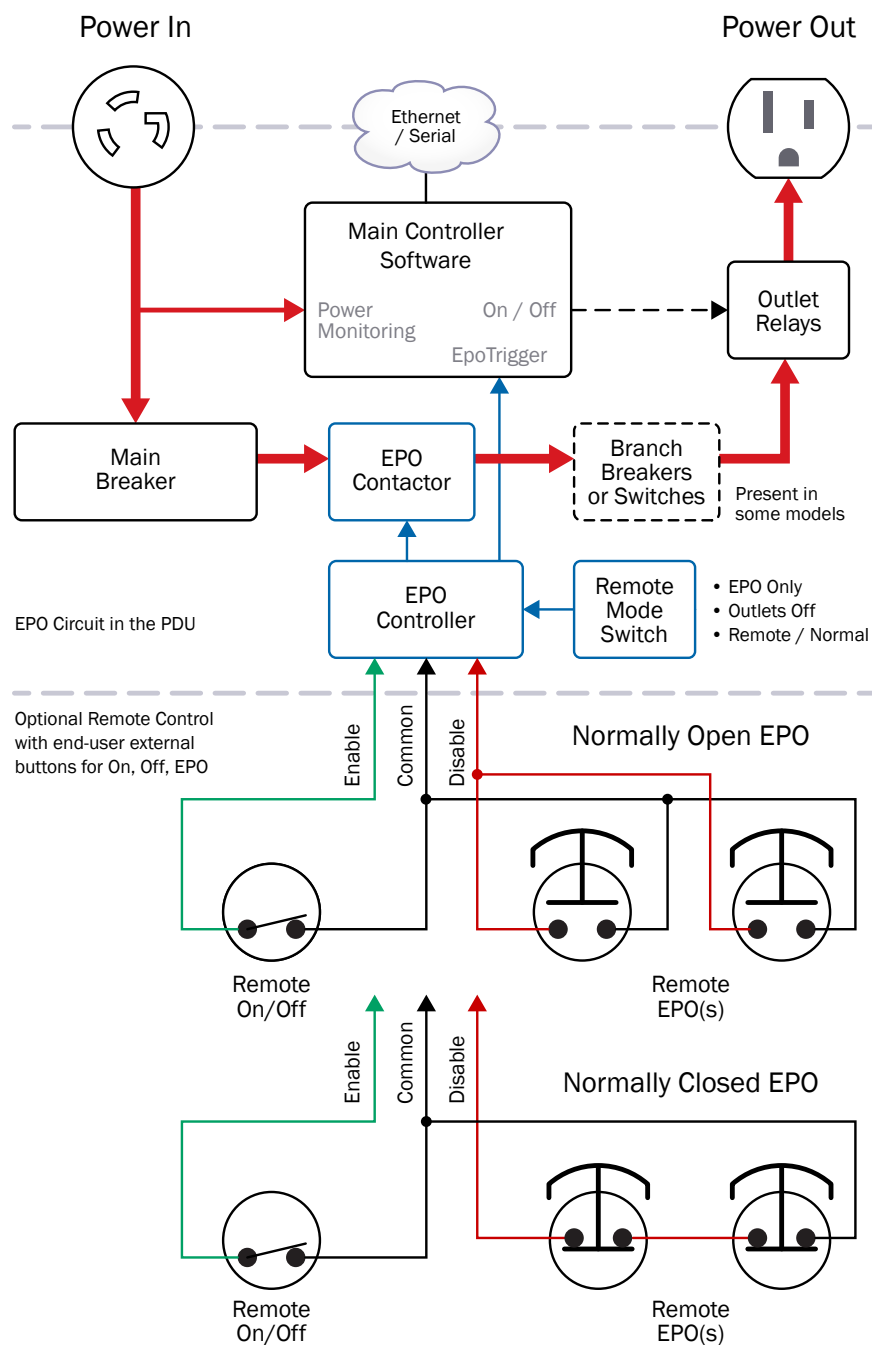
Operating With and Without Networking

The most common use of an Optima RCM PDU involves operating the product while connected to a network, and using one of the software interfaces (web browser, command line, RESTful API, or SNMP) to monitor power and manage outlet control. However, there are scenarios where end users may be using the PDU not connected to a network. This affects some considerations for the EPO circuit, and software configuration options which are addressed in this document as well.



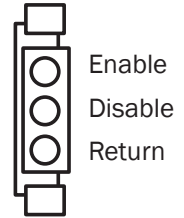
Block Diagram

Use this diagram as a companion for the descriptions on the following pages. The upper section is the PDU's main power control elements including the software controlled outlet relays. Below that are two wiring examples of buttons which can be wired to the EPO connector. There are several EPO configuration options and wiring options. As the document progresses, alternative wiring schemes will be shown to match specific EPO configurations. (Note that the remote mode switch has used varying labels over the years, but the functions of the up/middle/down positions have remained the same.)



The Remote/EPO Connectors

Every PDU with the remote panel system has at least one connector with three pins, usually mounted vertically. The three pins are labeled **Enable** (top), **Disable** (center), and **Return** or **Common** (bottom). The connector provides On/Off and EPO control, but it is often referred to simply as the **EPO Connector**.



One vs. Multiple Connectors

Some units, particularly the 1U models, have only one of these connectors. Many models will have multiple connectors with some on the back panel, and/or some on the front panel. Whenever there is more than one connector, they are all wired in parallel (all **Enable** pins connected, etc.).

An external On/Off and EPO circuit would be wired to just one connector (even if there are multiple EPO buttons). The additional connectors are intended to daisy chain out to additional PDUs so they can all be controlled from the same circuit. It doesn't matter which PDU the remote panel buttons are wired to. All PDUs will get the signals.

Before wiring the **EPO Connector**, be sure to [know the EPO Controller configuration](#).

Enable Pin

The **Enable** pin is essentially the On/Off control for the **EPO Contactor**. The **EPO Controller** of the PDU primarily uses the **Enable** state to switch the **EPO Contactor** On and Off, enabling power to be applied to the outlets (assuming there is not an active EPO condition).

In a basic (non-networked) PDU this pin would be used as the primary Outlet On/Off control. With Marway's RCM smart PDUs, the **Enable** signal would normally remain On while the individual **Outlet Relays** would be used for the primary outlet power On/Off control with one of the software interfaces.

The **Enable** input can be configured to require a maintained signal, or a momentary signal. However, unless there's a specific reason (usually legacy compatibility), we don't recommend using a momentary **Enable** signal for most systems. Reasons for that are discussed below.

Maintained Enable

With a maintained signal, the contacts between **Enable** and **Return** must be maintained closed in order to keep the **EPO Contactor** switched On. With a rocker, toggle, or similar SPST maintained switch, this creates a single On/Off master outlet control switch from a remote location.

A triggered EPO condition will ignore the state of the **Enable** signal even if it is On to ensure the **EPO Contactor** is Off.

Momentary Enable

With a momentary signal, the contacts between **Enable** and **Return** do not have to be maintained in order to keep the **EPO Contactor** switched **On**. A momentary button can be used to briefly create a closed circuit, that otherwise is normally open.

However, a momentary **Enable** button provides only an **On** signal. It cannot generate an **Off** signal. The **Disable** button (which is usually the EPO button) has to be used to switch the **EPO Contactor Off**.

Both OSHA and NFPA have rules declaring that the EPO button must be distinct from the **Off** button, and that the EPO button is not to be used for day-to-day **Off** operation. This can be compensated for by adding a second (non-mushroom) button on the **Disable** line with the EPO button to perform the **Off** function.

This solution works well for basic (non-networked) PDUs. However, for RCM PDUs, triggering the **Disable** signal, even if just for an **Off** purpose, will trigger an EPO event in the RCM software. This has side effects that need to be understood (explained more in **EPO Overlap with RCM Software**). Additionally, with some **Disable** configurations, the momentary **Enable** creates challenges when resetting or clearing an EPO event.

With the combination of downsides and side effects with a momentary signal, we suggest that when using only a button (without additional relay logic) to interface to the **Enable** signal, that it be a maintained type of button.

Disable Pin

The **Disable** pin is activated to create an active EPO condition which switches the **EPO Contactor Off** denying power to all outlets (or most outlets in some PDU designs). When **Disable** is activated, **Enable** is overridden (essentially ignored).

Normally Open vs. Closed

The **Disable** input can be configured for normally open or normally closed operation.

Normally Open means the connection between **Disable** and **Return** pins are an open circuit (the two are normally not connected). To trigger an active EPO state, the two pins are connected (via button or relay contacts).

Normally Closed means the connection between **Disable** and **Return** pins are a closed circuit (the two are normally connected). To trigger an active EPO state, the two pins are disconnected (by a button or relay contacts). This option is considered a fail safe design in that any accidental severing of the wire (e.g. loose connection) will cause an active EPO state, and is the preferred option for modern installations.

Maintained vs. Momentary

The **Disable** input can be configured to require a maintained signal, or a momentary signal.

With a maintained signal, the contacts between **Disable** and **Return** must be maintained (whether open or closed) in order to keep an active EPO state engaged.

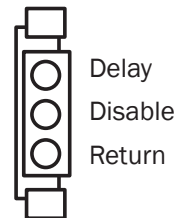
With a momentary signal, the normal state (open or closed) has to be changed for only a brief moment to trigger the EPO state and keep it engaged. If configured this way, the **EPO controller** needs an explicit **Reset** signal to clear the EPO condition. This is done by activating then deactivating the **Enable** input. The momentary **Disable** option has a small advantage in that it does not rely on a sustained signal to keep the EPO state engaged, and therefore is more resilient in conditions where the EPO button may bounce or the wiring is compromised.

Return (a.k.a Common)

Both the **Enable** and **Disable** inputs are to be wired back to the **Return** pin. The external wiring to activate or deactivate the inputs are to run through dry contacts, whether they're switches or relay contacts.

Delay Connector

Some systems will have a modified version of the **EPO Connector** which has a **Delay** pin in place of the **Enable** pin. If present, this connector is always in addition to the standard **EPO Connector**. This connector is designed as an output to daisy chain directly to another PDU. It is not designed for external button input connections.



Consider a set of three PDUs connected together through the **EPO Connectors**. One PDU, we'll call the primary PDU, has the On/Off and EPO buttons wired to it. When the On/Off button of the primary PDU triggers the **Enable** pin, all other **Enable** pins on other connectors are triggered at the same time. All PDUs will switch their **EPO Contactors** on at the same time, and thus applying power to outlets at the same time across all PDUs.

There may be a reason, perhaps inrush control, to stagger the switching on of each subsequent PDU in the daisy chain. With the **Delay Connector**, the activation of the **Delay** pin is delayed by the **EPO Controller** for some number of seconds. The delay is preconfigured at the factory—two seconds is typical for standard PDUs, up to 16 is possible for custom PDUs. By daisy chaining a second PDU with the **Delay Connector**, the second PDU is powered a few seconds after the primary PDU. A third PDU could be daisy chained off the primary PDU or the second PDU and use the standard **EPO Connector** or the **Delay Connector** based on the need for a delay or not.

Electrical Ratings

The **EPO Connector** pins have a 5 Vdc potential, are wired directly to TTL logic, and therefore have no load capacity. They cannot be used to drive lamps or relays.

We recommend that wiring should be no more than a combined 200 feet between the **Enable** and **Return** pins, and separately between the **Disable** and **Return** pins. This allows for a remote panel approximately 100 feet away from the PDU. For these long distances, 16g wire should be used.



The Enable, Disable, Delay, and Return pins are wired directly to 5 Vdc TTL logic. They must be connected to dry contacts only. There is no capacity to drive lamps or relay coils.

EPO Controller Configuration

The **EPO Controller** can be configured for a variety of switching arrangements and a few other options. However, these configurations are set at the factory, and are generally not changeable as the PDU is a sealed system, and opening it voids the warranty.

Still, in order to wire the PDU's remote panel On/Off and EPO circuits correctly, the EPO Controller configuration must be known. Contact Marway for model documentation if needed.

Standard Optima 8 Series

For the standard Optima 8 Series (820, 833), the last three digits of the model number are used to indicate the EPO configuration — if the EPO Controller is included in the model. Check [Marway's Standard Products Catalog](#) for model numbers which include the remote panel / EPO capability.

- ❖ -000 = NO EPO (maintained enable, normally open EPO, no reset required)
- ❖ -001 = NC EPO (maintained enable, normally closed EPO, no reset required)

Custom PDUs

For custom PDUs, the original specs and/or design discussions would have established the EPO related options. If the original documentation is not available, Marway can always reference it's internal documents based on the model number.

DIP Switch Reference

While these generally should not be changed in the field, the following configuration switches may come up in conversations when planning for new remote panel/EPO requirements.

ON Purpose	Switch #	OFF Purpose
Output 2 Delay 1 Second	1 – 1SEC *	Combine the delays
Output 2 Delay 2 Seconds	2 – 2SEC *	switches for longer delays.
Output 2 Delay 4 Seconds	3 – 4SEC *	
Output 2 Delay 8 Seconds	4 – 8SEC *	
Momentary Start (Enable)	5 – MOM	Maintained Start (Enable)
Delay Output 1 at Start	6 – DLY1 *	No Start Delay
Output 1 and 2 Operate Together	7 – DLY2 *	Output 2 Delays After Outlet 1
Disable is Normally Closed	8 – NC	Disable is Normally Open
Reset Required	9 – RST	No Reset Required
Always in Remote Mode	10 – MOD	Normal Operating Toggle Switch

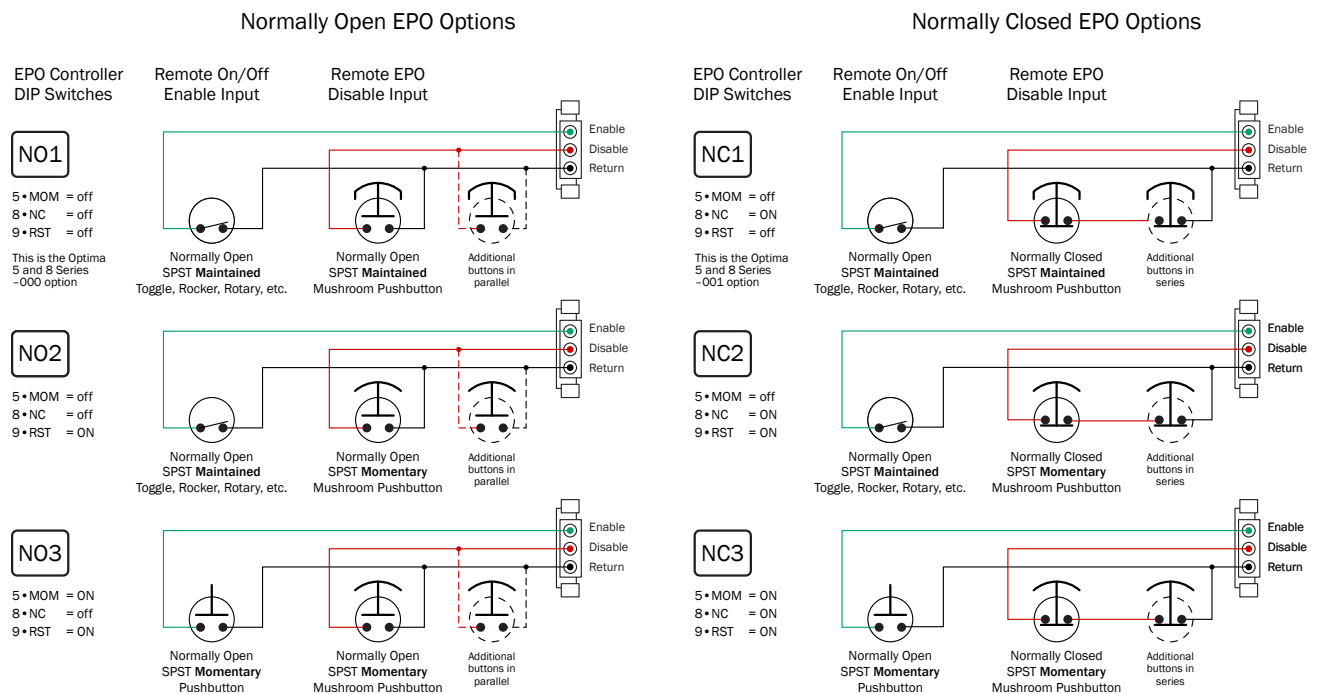
* The delay features are used for models which have the Delay Connector.

On/Off and EPO Button Configurations

The following chart shows the On/Off and EPO button configurations, and the EPO Controller DIP settings that correlate to the button types. In all cases, if there are to be multiple EPO buttons, the same button type is wired on the **Disable** circuit (N.O. buttons in parallel, and N.C. button in series). Note that if there are to be additional shutoff interlocks (typically SPST N.C.), the best option is to use a normally closed EPO circuit, and wire the interlocks in series with the EPO buttons.



As discussed in sections above, not all of these configurations are equally suitable for use with the RCM networked smart PDUs, and not all are suited to modern safety guidelines. For installations using only buttons to engage the Enable and Disable control signals, our recommendation is to use either the NC2, NC1, NO2, or NO1 options shown below.



Note that the NO1, NC2, etc. designations are not related to PDU part numbers. They're designations used only for this documentation.



EPO Overlap with RCM Software

The system as a whole is set up at the factory assuming the PDU will be run with access to its networked software control system. The PDU can be run without a full time network connection, but it may require configuration adjustments. These will be addressed in subsequent sections.

Relevant Software Settings

There are three configurable settings which are relevant to remote panel On, Off, EPO behavior.

- ❖ Outlet **StartupState**
- ❖ Outlet **OnDelay**
- ❖ Outlet **OnAfterEPO** (aka **IgnoreEPO**)

On the web interface, these settings are presented as seen below.

Inlets

Phases

Outlets

Outlet Settings : All

?

Revert

Save

ID	Outlet Label	Switch Delays in Seconds			Startup State	State Change Alertable	On After EPO/Interlocks Cleared
		On	Off	Cycle			
1	Outlet 1	0.0	0.0	5.0	On	☒	☐
2	Outlet 2	0.0	0.0	5.0	On	☒	☐
3	Outlet 3	0.0	0.0	5.0	On	☒	☐
						☒	☐

Outlet StartupState

This setting determines whether an outlet is **On** or **Off** when the PDU is powered up from a cold start. The factory default is **On** so that all outlets are switched on when the PDU is powered up. Users with network access can configure these as needed for their application.

If the PDU is never connected to a network, this default setting means all outlets will turn **On** (after the PDU completes it's software startup) out of the box without a need to do an initial setup.

Outlet OnDelay

When the system is powered from a cold start, outlets are switched **On** (based on the **StartupState** setting) in sequence. There's a fairly short, but noticeable delay between each outlet (enough to stagger most inrush currents). If the application needs longer delays between outlets turning on, the RCM software will have to be configured, or an external control script (written by the end user) can manage those delays with it's own sequence of outlet **On** commands.

Outlet OnAfterEPO

This is the most significant setting to think about. When an EPO circuit is tripped (external EPO button is pushed), the **EPO Controller** disables the **EPO Contactor** (shuts it Off), and also sends an **EpoTrigger** signal to the **Main Controller** (refer to the block diagram).

The **Main Controller** can be configured to respond to the **EpoTrigger** signal in one of two ways. The configuration manages whether the **Outlet Relays** will be switched Off in response to an **EpoTrigger**, or whether the relays remain switched On.

Regardless of the On/Off state of the **Outlet Relays**, in an active EPO state, the **EPO Contactor** is the primary component cutting power to the outlets. The **EPO Controller** governs that, not the **Main Controller**.

The design concern at this point is that when the EPO state is cleared, the **EPO Contactor** is switched back On, and power is available to the outlets. So, now it matters what state the **Outlet Relays** are in.

The safest thing to do is switch **Outlet Relays** Off so that when the EPO state is cleared, there is not an unexpected source of power to the outlets. For applications where the PDU is used to power machinery, this is the safe assumption. Therefore, this how the PDU ships from the factory — **OnAfterEPO** is disabled (a.k.a. false) so that the **Outlet Relays** will be switched Off.

However, for some use cases (perhaps all IT equipment), once the EPO state has been cleared, the automatic resumption of power to outlets is the end user's preferred behavior. For these cases, the end user can configure the **OnAfterEPO** setting can be enabled (a.k.a. true).

Additionally, for cases where the PDU will not be connected to a network, it's also likely that the automatic resuming of power to the outlets after an EPO state is cleared is the preferred behavior. Otherwise, to get power back on to the outlets means the whole PDU has to be powered cycled. For Optima 8 standard PDUs, enabling the **OnAfterEPO** setting will require that the end user configure the PDU. For custom PDUs it is possible for the factory to pre-configure this setting prior to shipment.

Regardless of how **OnAfterEPO** is configured, every instance of **EpoTrigger** will be logged. As referenced elsewhere in this document, this is one of the side effects of having a separate Off button on the **Disable** circuit. Even though the button's semantic purpose is Off, it is still logged as an EPO trigger event (the software cannot distinguish between two buttons on the **Disable** line).

Configuration Reference

The above sections review the various hardware and software elements relevant to an external remote control panel and the EPO Connector interfaces. The following sections examine the various settings, button types, wiring, and operation of the possible configurations.

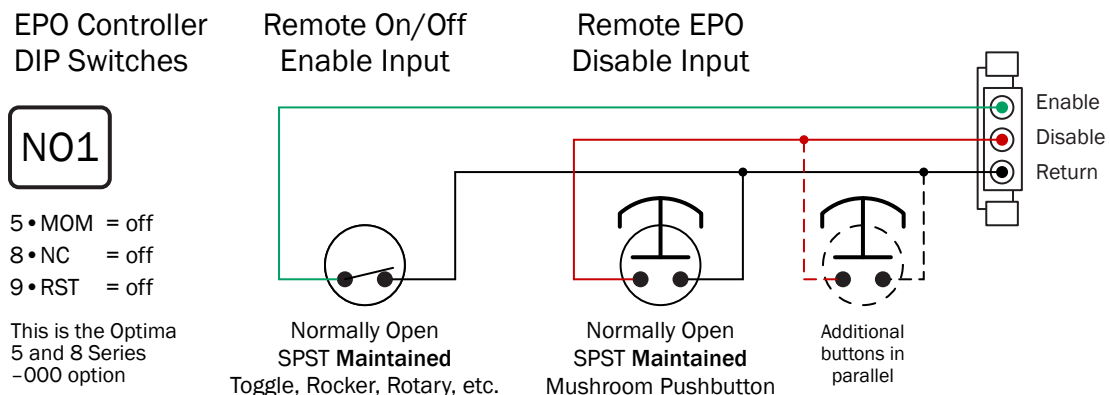


As discussed in sections above, not all of these configurations are equally suitable for use with the RCM networked smart PDUs, and not all are suited to modern safety guidelines. For installations using only buttons to engage the Enable and Disable control signals, our recommendation is to use either the NC2, NC1, NO2, or NO1 options shown below.

NO1 • Maintained On/Off, Maintained EPO N.O.

This option is suitable for use with RCM PDUs. It is functionally equivalent to Marway's Commander UCP 4900 panel. It's the simplest design, but one could argue that NC1 or NC2 are better in that they offer a fail-safe design. The key disadvantage is that if the **Enable** button is still **On** when the EPO button (**Disable**) is released, then power is restored to the outlets immediately (a procedure where On/Off is switched off before releasing the EPO button will prevent automatic power restoration). This configuration is the default "Normally Open" option in standard Optima 8 RCM models (–000) for reasons of compatibility with legacy installations.

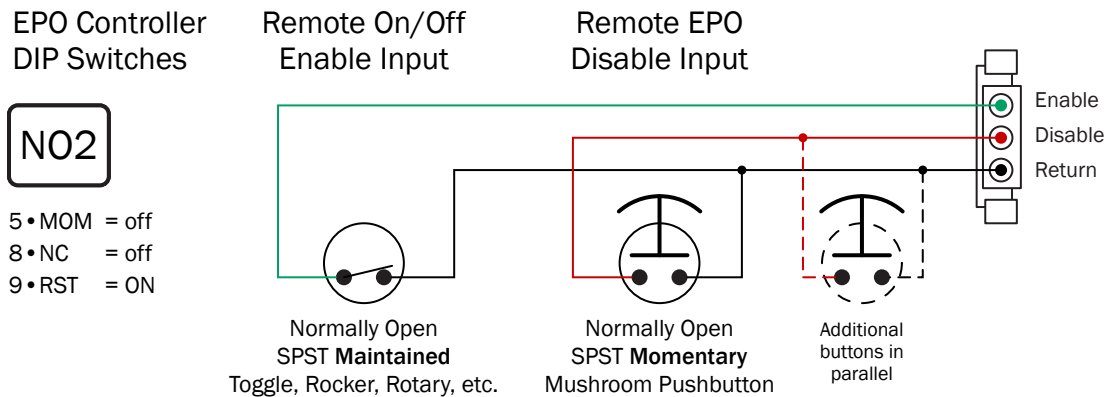
Prevent outlet power ("Off")	Trigger an active EPO (cut outlet power)
Ensure Disable is open Ensure Enable is open	Ensure Disable is closed The Enable state does not matter
Enable outlet power ("On")	Clear/Reset an EPO
Ensure Disable is open Ensure Enable is closed	Ensure Disable is open Outlets will be on if Enable is closed



NO2 • Maintained On/Off, Momentary EPO N.O.

This option is suitable for use with RCM PDUs. It has an advantage over NO1 in that after the EPO button (**Disable**) is pressed, it requires the **Enable** button be switched **Off** to **Reset** the EPO condition. Then, power is available to the outlets only when the button is switched back **On**.

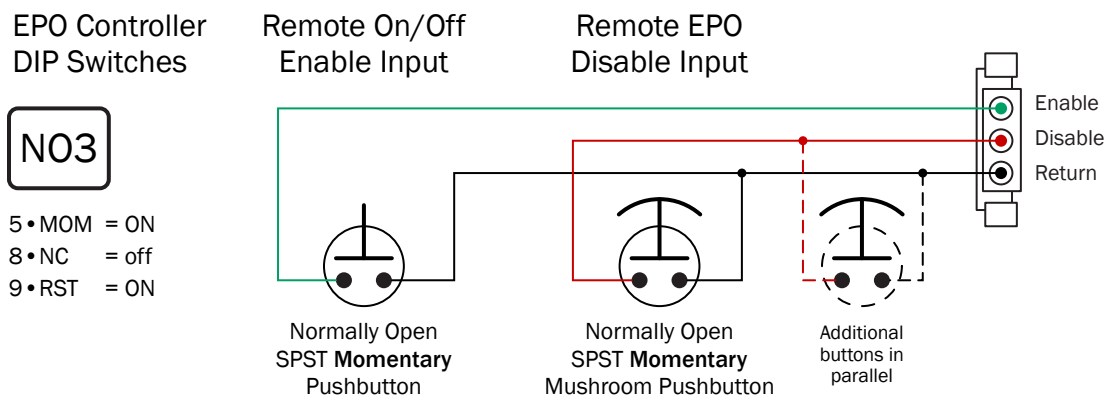
Prevent outlet power ("Off")	Trigger an active EPO (cut outlet power)
Ensure Disable is open Ensure Enable is open	Ensure Disable is closed at least briefly The Enable state does not matter
Enable outlet power ("On")	Clear/Reset an EPO
Ensure Disable is open Ensure Enable is closed	Ensure Disable is open Ensure Enable is open after Disable is open



N03 • Momentary On/Off, Momentary EPO N.O.

This option is NOT ideal for modern installations, and is not ideal for RCM PDU's. While it will work, there are two concerns. First, the momentary **Enable** signal does not provide an **Off** capability. In a simple two-button circuit, the EPO button has to be used as an **Off** button. Adding a second, non-mushroom N.O. button in parallel as a dedicated **Off** button can solve that. However, every use of the **Off** button would still trigger an EPO event in the RCM software. In general, we don't recommend this configuration due to the side effects.

Prevent outlet power ("Off")	Trigger an active EPO (cut outlet power)
Ensure Disable is open Ensure Enable is open	Ensure Disable is closed The Enable state should already be open
Enable outlet power ("On")	Clear/Reset an EPO
Ensure Disable is open Ensure Enable is closed briefly	Ensure Disable is open Briefly closing Enable both resets and enables power



This is one of the two (along with NC2) most ideal configurations. It is both suitable for RCM PDUs, and has a more modern safety design. It's a simple design, but one could argue that NC2 is better in that it requires a **Reset** prior to power being restored to the outlets. The key disadvantage is that if the **Enable** button is still On when the EPO button (**Disable**) is released, then power is restored to the outlets immediately (a procedure where On/Off is switched off before releasing the EPO button will prevent automatic power restoration). This configuration is the default Normally Closed option in standard Optima 8 RCM models (-001) for reasons of compatibility with legacy installations.

**EPO Controller
DIP Switches**

5 • MOM = off
8 • NC = ON
9 • RST = off

This is the Optima
5 and 8 Series
-001 option

**Remote On/Off
Enable Input**

**Remote EPO
Disable Input**

**Enable
Disable
Return**

**Normally Open
SPST Maintained**
Toggle, Rocker, Rotary, etc.

**Normally Closed
SPST Maintained**
Mushroom Pushbutton

**Additional
buttons in
series**

NC2 • Maintained On/Off, Momentary EPO N.C.

This is the the most ideal simple, two-button configuration. It is both suitable for RCM PDU's, and is a more modern safety design. It has an advantage over NC1 in that after the EPO button (**Disable**) is pressed, it requires the **Enable** button be switched Off, to **Reset** the EPO condition. Then, power is available to the outlets only when the button is switched back On.

Prevent outlet power ("Off")	Trigger an active EPO (cut outlet power)
Ensure Disable is closed Ensure Enable is open	Ensure Disable is open briefly The Enable state does not matter
Enable outlet power ("On")	Clear/Reset an EPO
Ensure Disable is closed Ensure Enable is closed	Ensure Disable is closed Ensure Enable is opened after Disable is closed

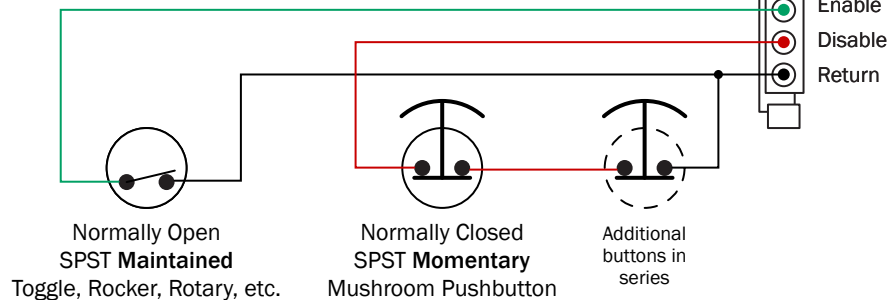
EPO Controller
DIP Switches

NC2

5 • MOM = off
8 • NC = ON
9 • RST = ON

Remote On/Off
Enable Input

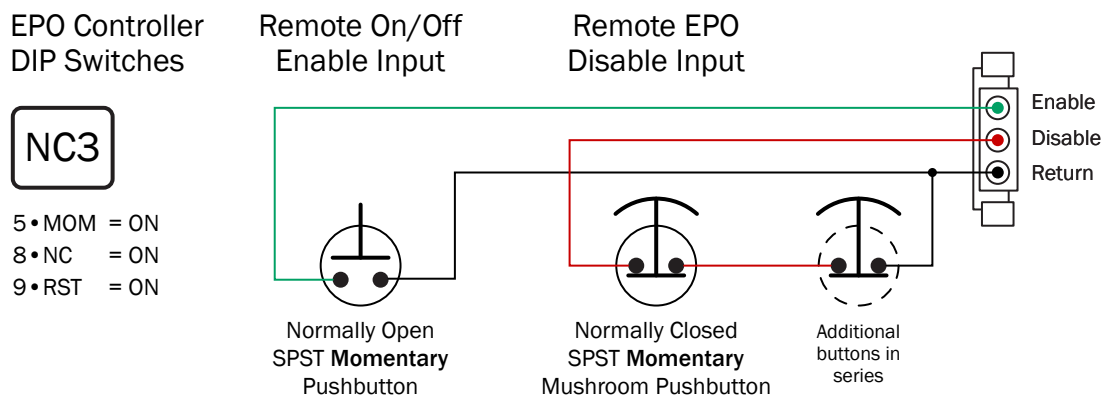
Remote EPO
Disable Input



NC3 • Momentary On/Off, Momentary EPO N.C.

This option is NOT ideal for modern installations, and is not ideal for RCM PDUs. While it will work, there are two concerns. First, the momentary **Enable** signal does not provide an **Off** capability. In a simple two-button circuit, the EPO button has to be used as an **Off** button. Adding a second, non-mushroom N.C. button in series as a dedicated **Off** button can solve that. However, every use of the **Off** button would still trigger an EPO event in the RCM software. In general, we don't recommend this configuration due to the side effects.

Prevent outlet power ("Off")	Trigger an active EPO (cut outlet power)
Ensure Disable is closed Ensure Enable is open	Ensure Disable is open briefly The Enable state should already be open
Enable outlet power ("On")	Clear/Reset an EPO
Ensure Disable is closed Ensure Enable is closed briefly	Ensure Disable is closed Briefly closing Enable both resets and enables power



Change Log

R1 — Sep 4, 2026 — gw

❖ Original release.