

Repair or Replace Door Latch Bushing

Monaco Coaches

Symptoms:

- ❑ To open the door, you find that you need to pull the handle out and then all the way to the left. This gets progressively worse over time.
- ❑ You may need to push on the door while pulling on the door handle to get the latches to fully release.

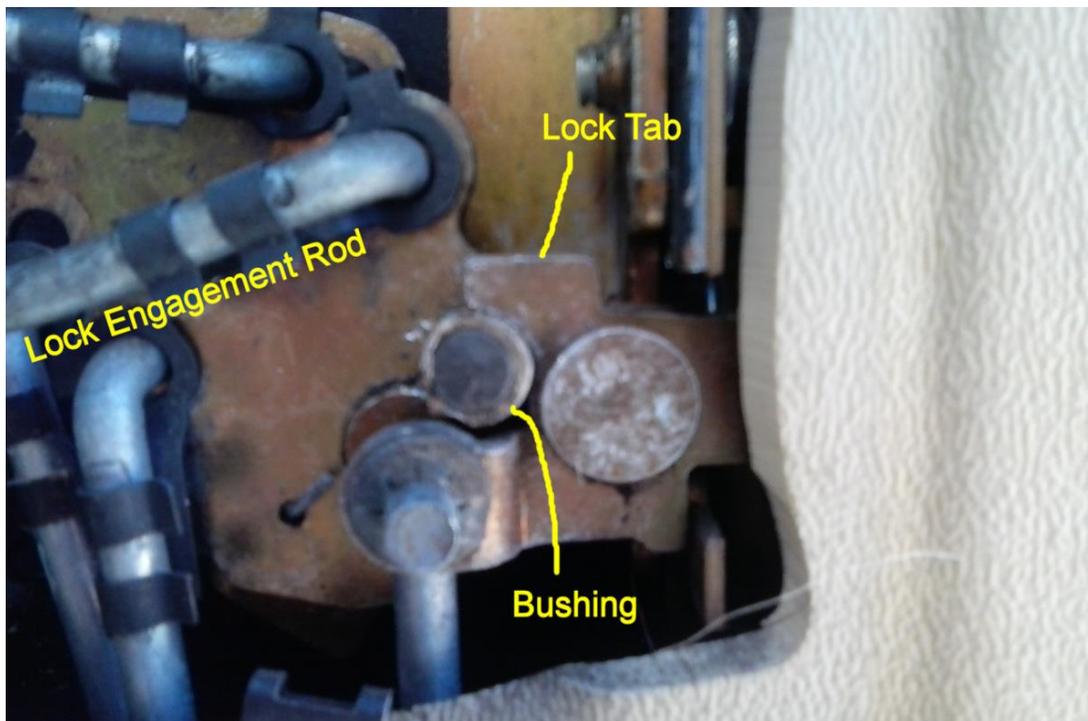
Replacing the bushing VS. Adjusting the latch rods.

In the files section of the Monacoer's Yahoo Group, there is an excellent write up on how to adjust the nut(s) on the actuator rods. [Click Here](#)

Before adjusting the actuator rods, it is recommended to check the condition of the brass/copper bushing on the lock mechanism. The reason for this is:

- ❑ If the bushing is worn, it will result in the symptoms listed above.
- ❑ The bushing serves to protect the hard steel parts (*lock tab and bushing spindle*) from wear.
- ❑ If the bushing fails, the steel parts will wear excessively, resulting in permanent damage and ultimately the failure of the mechanism.

The bushing can be easily inspected by removing the door access panel. It is not necessary to remove the inside door skin.



Note: Note the wear starting on the lock tab against the top of the failed bushing.

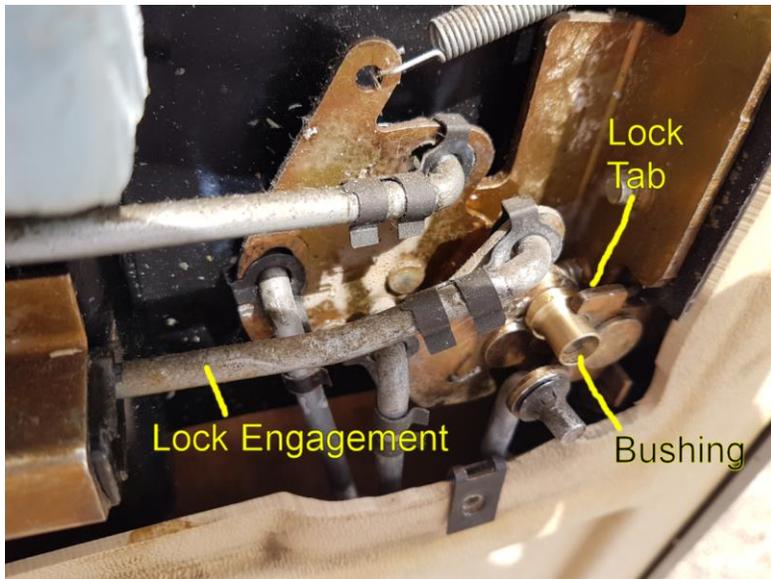
Damaged Bushing



If the bushing is found to be in good condition, then proceed to the previously mentioned door adjustment procedure to adjust the actuator rods.

How it works.

- ❑ If the lock engagement bar is in the locked position (to the left), it pulls the bushing out of the lock tab and the door handle will not actuate the latches.
- ❑ When the lock engagement bar is moved to the right to the unlocked position, the bushing engages the lock tab. When the door handle is opened, the bushing pushes up on the lock tab, which in turn moves the actuator rods which unlatch to door.



- ❑ If the bushing is damaged, then the door handle has to move further to move the lock tab. A damaged bushing also creates more wear on the lock tab resulting in more play in the mechanism over time. Due to the design of the mechanism, even a small amount of wear on the internal parts will result in a noticeable change in how far the exterior handle has to be moved.

Replacing the bushing.

Replacing the bushing is a very simple job. However, I have not found a source for the bushing so it must be fabricated.

Check and/or remove the old bushing.

The bushing is a friction fit.

- Remove dead bolt inside cover if so equipped. Once the access cover is removed, replace the deadbolt inside cover so that the deadbolt is kept in place.
- Remove the inside door handle and lock bar face plate.
- Remove the door access panel. At this point, do not remove the inside door skin until the condition of the bushing has been determined.
- Slide the door lock tab to the left to disengage the bushing from the lock tab.
- Inspect the bushing for noticeable wear. If no wear is detected, continue to adjust the latch actuator nut(s).
- Using a small flat screwdriver, pry the rear of the bushing outward. If necessary, use pliers to pull the bushing off. Take care not to crush the bushing if you are going to use it as a template to have a replacement fabricated.

New Bushing.

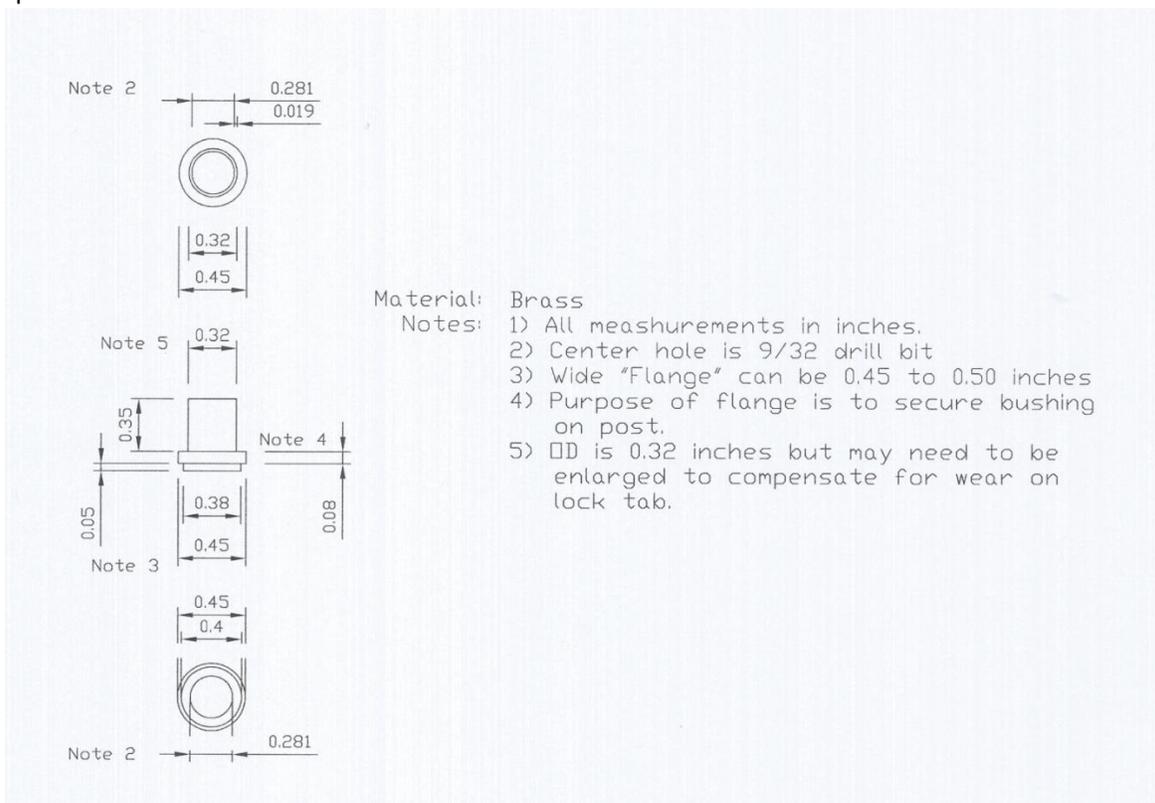
You may be able to find a replacement bushing from the original manufacturer. An alternative which is close in size is available from Home Depot, Lowes and Ace Hardware. The following illustration shows the bushing available from Ace Hardware.



Some modifications will be required:

- Drill out the center using a 9/32 inch drill.
- You may need to shave the outside diameter to fit your door latch. See the following fabrication drawing for dimensions. Note: The door lock tab may be worn requiring a larger O/D. Measure before modifying.

If you can find a replacement, then proceed to installing the bushing. If not, then use the following drawing to have a new bushing fabricated. Any machine shop can do this. The cost should not be excessive as the time required to fabricate on a lathe is less than 15 minutes. I would recommend that you have several made so you have a spare.



Notes:

- 1) The bushing design is different from the original because in my case, the bushing was so badly damaged that it was not possible to use it as a template. In your case, you may be able to take the old bushing to the machine shop and have it duplicated. If so, the important dimension is the inside diameter so that it is a friction fit and will not slip off the spindle.
- 2) If your lock tab is worn excessively, it may be necessary to increase the outside diameter from 0.32" as necessary to compensate. The idea is that the bushing should connect with the locking tab with as tight a fit as possible without affecting the ability to lock and unlock the door
- 3) The purpose of the larger section on the bushing in the drawing is to keep the bushing from sliding off the spindle. I built my bushing on a cheap Harbor Freight hobby lathe and did not have the tools to create a reliable friction fit.

Installing the new bushing.

- Slide the door lock tab to the left to disengage the bushing from the lock tab.
- Slide the new bushing on to the spindle. If the bushing was fabricated using the above drawing, you may need to push the lock tab to the right
- Test both the lock function and observe how far the door handle needs to be pulled to open the door. In my case, I had to work the lock back and forth to seat the bushing into the lock tab.
- Using white lithium grease, lubricate the outside of the bushing and inside of the locking tab.

Summary

In my specific case, I found that replacing the bushing fixed my door problem completely and I did not need to adjust the rods to the latches. Others may have a different experience. However, inspecting the bushing is a good place to start before adjusting the rods.