

SECTION 31

INCENDIARY BOMBS COMBUSTIBLE CASED INCENDIARIES

Description

3101. a. These are usually small missiles weighing only a few pounds. They are generally long and narrow and are fitted with light tail units (Fig 31-1).
- b. The fuze ignites the main filling which is some sort of inflammable powder. This in turn ignites the outer casing, which is commonly composed of magnesium. Explosive attachments may be fitted. They may be either an integral part of the bomb or may separate from the incendiary portion after impact.
- c. The bombs are usually dropped in large numbers, being scattered either directly from the aircraft or from containers (Sec 33).

Fuzing

3102. Only simple impact fuzes are likely to be fitted to the incendiary portion but explosive attachments may operate on a pyrotechnic delay service.



Fig 31-1: Combustible Cased Incendiary Bombs

Reconnaissance

3103. a. Bombs without explosive attachments rarely penetrate and create no problems if unexploded. Those with explosive attachment may penetrate into buildings or into the ground but the cause of an entry hole should be obvious when related to the numerous other incidents in the vicinity.
- b. Explosive attachments which function may form small camouflets and craters. The latter may be originally reported as entry holes of unexploded missiles but indications of explosion and signs of burning give the correct answer.

Precaution

3104. a. It must be appreciated that soon after a combustible cased incendiary bomb begins to burn the bomb itself may explosive or an explosive may occur in the vicinity.
- b. Unexploded incendiary bombs are unlikely to be dangerous if treated with care.

Action if Unexploded

3105. It will probably be an all arms responsibility to collect these bombs into dumps for subsequent disposal in bulk by bomb disposal units. Report the incidents if unable to deal with them. Otherwise report the position of the dumps.

NON-COMBUSTIBLE CASED INCENDIARIES

Description

3106. Jettisonable aircraft fuel tanks and petrol tins have been used, but incendiary bomb of this type are usually constructed of thin sheet and are of a conventional bomb shape (Figure 31-2). The main filling may be almost any incendiary material such as petrol, Oil, liquid phosphorous, mixtures of latex and phosphorous or methane and petrol or may even consist of small individual incendiary units similar in construction to combustible cased incendiaries, Generally on impact the fuze initiates a small explosive charge which either splits the case and ignites and scatters the liquid filling or blow off the rear section of the

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bomb and ejects the solid incendiary units. Bombs containing small incendiary units have also been fitted with high explosive charges of appreciable size. These are designed to detonate and collapse building after the ejected units have started a fire. Non-combustible cased incendiaries in the 1939-45 war varied in weight between 6 and 4,000 lb.

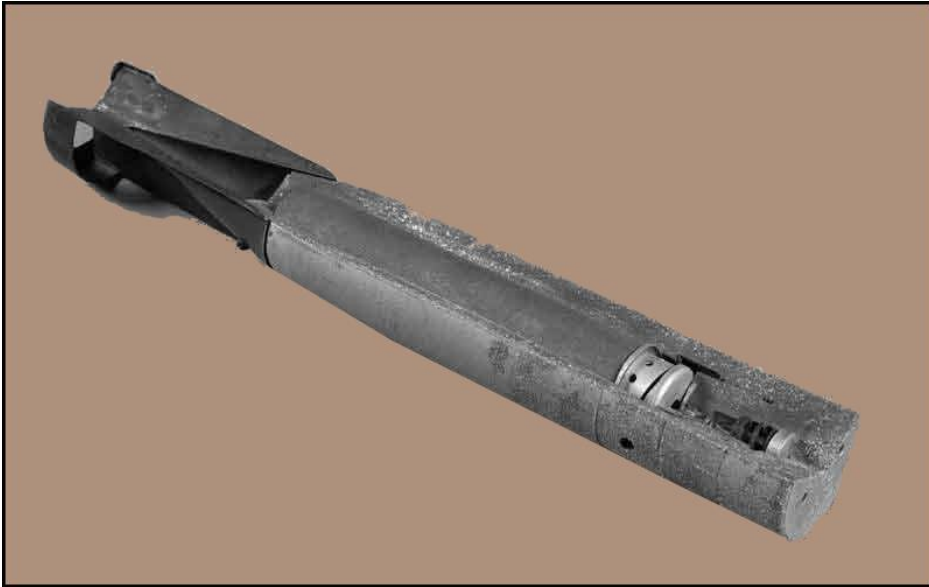


Fig 31-2: Non-Combustible Cased Incendiary Bomb Weighing About 500 - lb

Fuzing

3107. Normally impact or short delay.

Reconnaissance

3108. a. UXB can usually be identified by coloured bands or written or coloured markings.
- b. The bomb case may collapse on impact and permit the filling to escape.
- c. The burster or ejection charge may be powerful enough to form a fair size crater if the bomb explodes in the ground. There is little possibility of confusing this with the splash crater of an unexploded missile. The presence of pieces of bomb case and the residue of bomb case and the residue of burnt material are conclusive evidence of explosion.

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Precautions

3109. a. If the bomb has failed to explode the fuze may be in sensitive state and cause the bomb to function if disturbed. Even if the main filling has emptied away the buster charge will be lethal at short range.
- b. If a buried unexploded incendiary bomb containing phosphorous is uncovered and the case is broken the phosphorous will ignite spontaneously on being exposed to the air.
- c. If the filling of an unexploded incendiary bomb ignites, the heat may detonate the buster charge.

Action if Unexploded

3110. Mark and report.

3111-3200 Reserved.