



DEFENCE UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE WEBSITE ORDNANCE INFORMATION SHEET

**ALL UXO MAY BE HAZARDOUS IF DISTURBED
DO NOT TOUCH – TAKE A PHOTO – MARK THE LOCATION – CALL THE POLICE**

MORTAR - 2 INCH

Description

- The original British 2-inch Mortar (Mk I) was introduced during WWI but was quickly declared obsolete. The 2-inch mortar was re-introduced into Commonwealth service in 1938 as the Smooth-Bore Muzzle Loading 2-inch Mortar, Mark II (SBML 2" Mk II) and was used in Australia throughout most of WWII and into the Korean War.
- Several types of 2-inch mortar bomb were produced including:
 - **High Explosive (HE)** - several variations ('Marks'/Mk) of HE rounds were manufactured; all contain a fuze and High Explosive (HE).
 - **Smoke (Smk)** – contained a fuze, burster or expelling charge and potentially hazardous chemicals - typically White Phosphorus (Smk WP) or Titanium Tetrachloride (Smk FM).
 - **Illumination (Illum)** - contains a burster charge and incendiary-like chemical (often magnesium) attached to a parachute to illuminate specific areas.
 - **Signal** – either single or multi-star; contains a burster/expelling charge and a coloured incendiary-like chemical.
 - **Practice (Prac)** - several types were manufactured (some may contain a small burster charge).
- The 2 inch mortar was predominantly used by Australian infantry units (Regular and Reserve) and was fired at many live firing ranges throughout Australia. UXO of this type are usually found on the surface or shallow buried (<0.5m).

Technical Data

- Bomb length : approx. 225-250mm
- Bomb diameter : approx. 50-51mm (~ 2 inch)
- Bomb weight : approx 0.45-1.02 kg
- Fuse/Burster : May contain a sensitive fuze which can be easily detonated
- Filling : HE - approx 300 g high explosive (Amatol, TNT, etc)
Smk –White Phosphorus (WP) or Titanium Tetrachloride (FM)
- Identification :
 - The body may have one or more bands of colour. Red, yellow or green bands/stripes were most often used to denote hazardous munitions however other colours may have been used or colours may have faded over time.
 - It can be difficult to distinguish between dangerous and safe items - **treat all found munitions as dangerous.**

Images

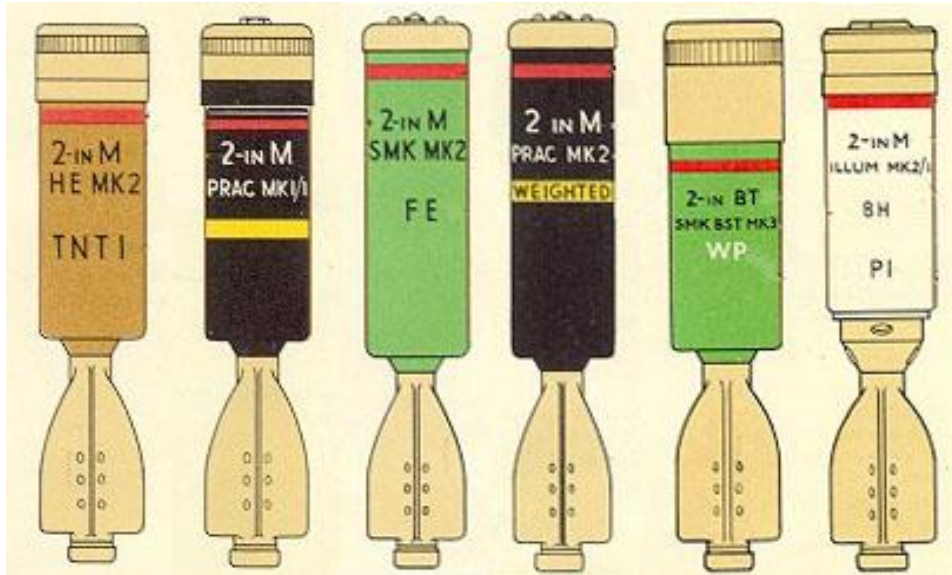


Figure 1 - Example 2" mortar markings (L to R): HE, Prac HE, Smk, Prac Smk, Smk WP, Illum (colours and markings may vary)

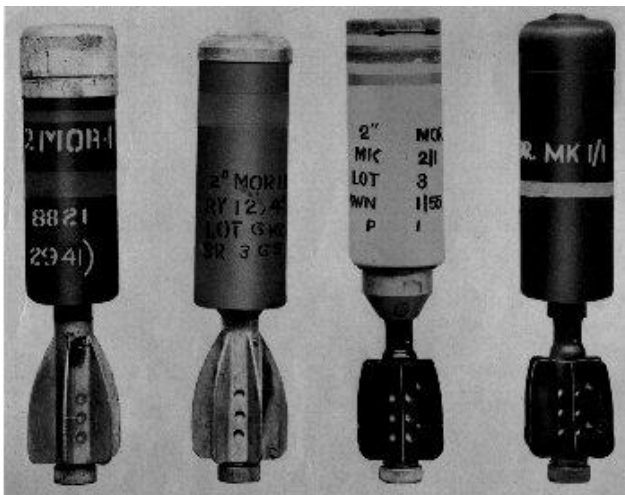


Figure 2 - Various 2 inch mortar bombs



Figure 3 – Unexploded 2 inch mortar found on a property near Warwick, Qld, 2014



Figure 4 - Australian infantrymen firing 2" mortar – New Guinea, 1945 (AWM ID number 094355)



Figure 5 - Unexploded 2 inch mortars found on the Atherton Tablelands, Nth Qld