



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**

PROJECTILE - 20 POUNDER

Description

- The Quick Firing 20 Pounder (QF 20 pr) was a British-designed tank gun introduced to replace the QF 17 pr. Australian usage was primarily the main armament of the Centurion tank – the Australian Army's variant (Centurion Mark III) arrived in 1952, served in Vietnam and was eventually phased out by 1977 (replaced by the Leopard I tank).
- The Australian Army's Mk III Centurions (later Mk V) were equipped with a 20 pr Mk I gun and carried a basic load of 65 rounds of 20 pr shells. A total of 138 tanks were purchased including Armoured Recovery Vehicles (ARV), Bridge-layers and Tank-dozers plus 1 x ARV and 7 x gun tanks from New Zealand (the gun tanks were dismantled for use as spares).
- Several types of projectile were used – some made at armament factories in Australia - including:
 - **High Explosive, Tracer (HE/T) & High Explosive, Squash Head (HESH)** - contains a fuze, exploder and high explosive.
 - **Smoke (Smk)** – a 'Base Ejection' (BE) projectile which contains a fuse, burster and smoke composition.
 - **Canister (Can)** – not strictly a projectile; filled with pellets (no explosive content or fuse)
 - **Armour Piercing, Capped, Tracer (APC/T) & Armour Piercing, Capped, Ballistic Cap, Tracer (APCBC/T)** - solid shot (no explosive content or fuse)
 - **Armour Piercing, Discarding Sabot, Tracer (APDS/T)** - Tungsten Carbide insert, solid shot, weighing approx 4.1-4.5 kg. No explosive content or fuse however tracer compound is explosive.
 - **Practice** - No explosive content or fuse.

Technical Data

- Mmunition length : approx 520-620 mm
- Projectile length : TBC
- Projectile diameter : approx maximum 84mm
- Projectile weight : Varies – APDS 4.1-4.5 kg; HE 7.8 kg (approx 20lb); Smk approx 10 kg
- Fuse/Burster : May contains an explosive fuse and burster which can be easily detonated
- Filling : HE - contains approx 0.6-0.75 kg high explosive (TNT or RDX/TNT)
- Identification :
 - The projectile may have one or more bands of colour (depending on the specific type of munition).
 - Red or yellow bands/stripes were most often used to denote HE munitions however other colours may have been used or colours may have faded over time. **Treat all found munitions as dangerous.**

Images



**Figure 1 - 20 pr ammunition for Centurian tank
(LtoR): HE (yellow), Canister, HE (olive drab), APCBC, APDS, Smk, Blank/empty cartridge**



Figure 2 - Australian Centurian tank



**Figure 3 - 20 pr Prac (TP APDS) & HE
(AWM ID number REL35661 & REL35662)**



Figure 4 - Centurian tank firing at Holsworthy, NSW