



## 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 – 5 INCH (NAVAL)

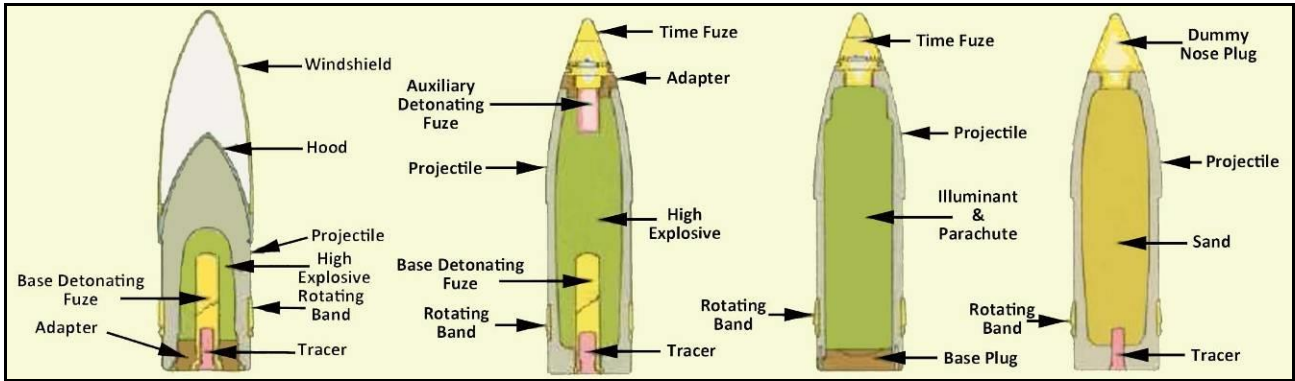
#### Description

- First developed by the British in the late 1870s but discontinued in favour of the QF 4.7 inch. During WWII, 5 inch guns were one of the most widely used guns of the US Navy and also used on some British, Dutch, NZ and Australian warships (e.g. *HMAS Perth, Hobart, & Brisbane* – all decommissioned 1999-2001), auxiliaries and merchant vessels. Early types of the 5" were surface-to-surface (low angle) or anti-aircraft (AA) until the Dual Purpose 5" gun was developed. 5 inch ammunition is currently the basic ammunition for the US Navy's main armament systems and is the main armament for ANZAC-class frigates (Australia & NZ) and Australian Hobart class destroyers.
- Many variants of the 5 inch projectile have been developed. A small sample of the more common, generic types of projectiles likely used by or in Australia are listed below:
  - **High Explosive (HE)** – 'Common' (gunpowder), 'Special Common' or 'SP Common', 'High Capacity' (HC) - all normally contained a nose or base fuse and explosive main charge. Fuzes typically included Point Detonating, Variable Time, Controlled Variable Time and Infrared Fuze.
  - **Anti-Aircraft – Common (AAC)** and with **Proximity Fuze (AAVT)** – similar to HE projectiles but usually fitted with a Base Detonating and Time/Variable Time (VT) nose fuze.
  - **Armour Piercing (AP), Semi Armour Piercing (SAP)** – naval AP and SAP projectiles were often base-fuzed and may contain high explosive or a shaped charge.
  - **Illumination (Illum or 'Star'), Smoke (Smk or 'WP')** and **Chaff** (radar jamming) - usually contain a fuze, burster or expelling charge and potentially hazardous chemicals or incendiary compositions. May use a parachute in order to slow their descent.
- Mostly used by Australian and other naval forces (US, Japan) in Australian maritime areas but also fired onto shorelines for practices or exercise. Quantities of 5 inch munitions may also have been disposed onshore and offshore after WWII. UXO may be encountered offshore (e.g. during fishing or dredging activities), onshore near naval ammunition depots or at onshore naval live firing ranges (on the surface or buried up to 2.0m).

#### Technical Data

- Projectile length : approx. 500-665mm (depending on type)
- Projectile Diameter : approx maximum 127 mm (approx 5 in)
- Projectile weight : Many variations - approx 22.5-32.0 kg
- Fuse/Burster : Many variations - nose and/or base fuse, VT fuze, bursting charges which may be easily detonated.
- Filling : HE types - approx 0.9-3.8 kg high explosive  
Others – various incendiary, smoke or chemical compositions
- Identification : Hazardous variants of the projectile are often painted yellow, green, black or grey with bands of yellow, red, green or blue. **Caution – this munition has been widely used over a long period of time by numerous nations - other colours may have been used or colours may have faded over time. Treat all found munitions as dangerous.**

**Images**



**Figure 1 – Cutaways of 5 inch projectiles. L to R: Common, AA Common, Illum, Target**



**Figure 2 - Australian Navy personnel load 5 inch projectiles during a Naval Gunfire Support exercise - Exercise Talisman Sabre - Shoalwater Bay Training Area, QLD, 2011 (Note differing colours denoting different fillers)**



**Figure 3 - HMAS Perth provides Naval Gunfire Support with her 5 inch gun exercise Talisman Sabre 2013 (Perth fired around 100 rounds from its 5-inch gun) - QLD, 2013**



**Figure 4 - HMAS Perth with 5 inch gun**