



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**

ROCKET – 66MM ANTI-ARMOUR

Description

- The 66mm M72 Light Anti-Armour Weapon (66mm LAW) is a US-designed, portable, pre-loaded, one shot, unguided anti-tank weapon. Introduced into service in the 1960s to replace the M20 'Super Bazooka', it was used by during the Vietnam War and remains in use today. 10 variants of this weapon have been made (M72A1–M72E10). The Australian designation used in Vietnam was the (M72) L1A2 F1 Short Range Anti-Armour Weapon (SRAAW); the current weapon in use is the M72A6.
- The rocket motor is solid fuel which burns out before it leaves the launcher. Fins spring out of the projectile after firing to stabilise the flight. The launcher was discarded after use.
- The main rockets available for the 66mm LAW include the following:
 - **High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT)** - Uses a piezoelectric, Point Initiating Base Detonated (PIBD) fuze. Contains approx. 450g of Octol High Explosive.
 - **Sub-Calibre Practice Rocket (SCPR)** - for training; utilised the reusable M190 launcher and the 37mm M73 sub-cal practice rocket. The practice projectile contains a spotting charge of 1.5g of composition mix M80 explosive. A 21mm sub-calibre training rocket is also available.
- Unexploded items of this type are most often found in/near areas used by the Army for infantry live firing practices – typically on or just below the ground surface. The piezo-electric nose fuze is highly sensitive – even to sudden changes of temperature.

Technical Data

- Munition length : approx. 630 mm (unarmed) to 880 mm (armed/extended)
- Projectile length : HEAT - approx. 510 mm; 35mm SCPR – approx 225 mm
- Projectile diameter : HEAT - approx. 66mm; 35mm SCPR – approx 35 mm
- Total weight : HEAT Projectile – approx 1.0-2.1 kg; 35mm SCPR – approx 135-145 g
- Fuse/Burster : HEAT - Piezoelectric, Point Initiating Base Detonated (PIBD) fuze.
- Filling : HEAT - approx 450 grams of high explosive (Octol) depending on munition.
SCPR - 1.5-10.0 g of composition mix M80 explosive
- Identification :
 - The launcher is made of aluminium and plastic and olive drab in colour with white writing.
 - The 66mm HEAT projectile is aluminium and consists of the rocket motor (painted brown) and the warhead (painted black). Lettering on the projectile is normally in yellow.
 - The 35mm SCPR spotting head and fins are plastic painted black; the remainder of the rocket is olive drab. A blue band appears on the forward end of the rocket motor. On later production rockets, the spotting head is painted blue and the fins are painted brown.
 - It can be difficult to distinguish between dangerous and safe items - **treat all found munitions as dangerous.**

Images



Figure 1 - M72 (L1A2F1) Rocket Launcher in closed/unarmed position (AWM ID REL22751)



Figure 2 - Fired and ruptured M72 rocket



Figure 3 - 35mm SCPR projectile

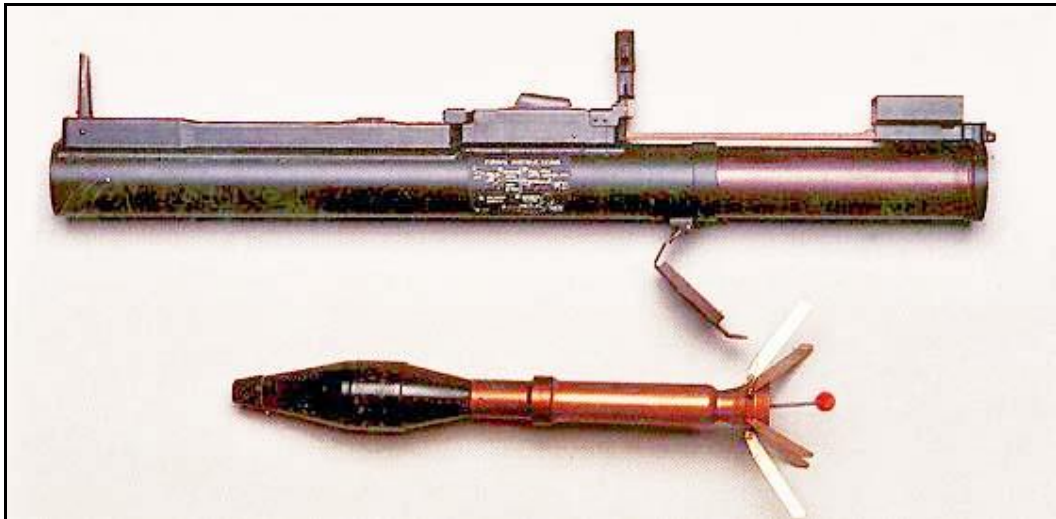


Figure 4 - Top: M72 Rocket Launcher in extended/armed position. Bottom: 66mm HEAT rocket

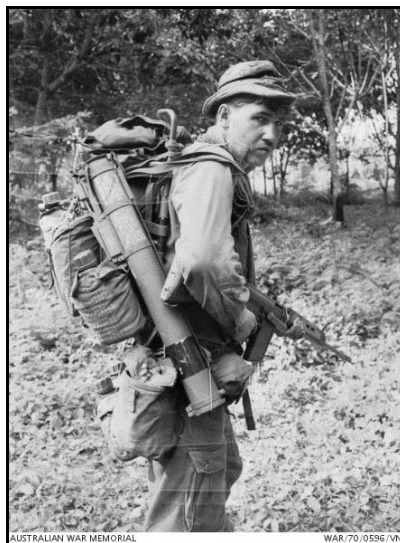


Figure 5 - Australian soldier R with 66mm M72 LAW slung over shoulder – Vietnam, 1970 (AWM ID WAR/70/0596/VN)

