

30lb Incendiary Bomb

Due to the failure of the 25lb incendiary bomb supplies of incendiary bombs were short but large stocks of empty gas bombs were available. It was decided to convert these into incendiary weapons by filling them with incendiary matter such as perspex, phosphorous, petrol and benzene - the result was the 30lb incendiary bomb.

These bombs were fairly reliable, although the thin case reduced its penetration power. The volatile nature of the filling coupled with the thin case meant that they were vulnerable to anti-aircraft fire and could cause the aircraft to catch fire. It was also felt that the 30lb Incendiary was too heavy. In 1942 design of the 30lb Jet (J) incendiary bomb was started, the idea of this bomb was to "throw out a jet of flame which would start a fire in the floor of any wooden floored room generating so much heat in the process that no fire part could approach".

Design of the J bomb was completed in the middle of 1943 with deliveries beginning by the end of 1943. It did however not fulfil expectations as it was found that the complex construction was likely to cause failures.

30lb Incendiary bomb

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Thursday, 01 January 2009 20:57 - Last Updated Saturday, 03 January 2009 14:08

The 30lb Incendiary consisted of a cylindrical body with a tail at one end and a hemispherical nose at the other. The J bomb contained approximately 1mb of thermite and had a burning time of around 1 minute.

30lb Incendiary bomb specifications

I. BB30lb Mk I J Mk I

Construction Welded

Total Weight (34.09 kg)

Total Length (83.534 cm)

Body Length (72.72 cm)

Body Diameter (13.97 cm)

Total Diameter (13 cm)

Tail Length (10.06 cm)

Filling Various

Sources - AVIA 46 163