



## 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 – 25 POUNDER

#### Description

- The British Quick Firing 25 pounder (QF 25 pr) artillery gun was introduced during WWII and was the primary artillery piece of the Commonwealth Forces until the 1960's. Guns were built in Australia starting in 1942 by GMH and other companies and Australian Army usage continued until 1965 when the 25 pr was replaced by the 105mm Howitzer.
- A short barrelled version (the '*QF 25 pr Short*') was designed and manufactured in Australia specifically for jungle warfare in PNG (air transportable and easily broken down for transport). Issued in 1943, it used the same ammunition as the standard QF 25 pr but was deemed obsolete in 1946. The Australian self-propelled gun '*Yeramba*' (post-WWII) also used the QF 25 pr gun.
- Variants of the 25 pr projectile produced included the following:
  - **High Explosive (HE)** - contains a nose fuse and high explosive; Variable Time (VT) or proximity fuzes (T97) were available for the 25 pr HE ammunition after early 1944.
  - **Armour Piercing, Tracer (AP/T) & Armour Piercing, Ballistic Cap, Tracer (APBC/T)** - Solid shot with no explosive element apart from an integral tracer.
  - **Smoke (Smk)** - Base ejection or bursting projectile; White Phosphorus or coloured smoke. Propaganda material/leaflets were sometimes installed into empty smoke shells for dispersion.
  - **Chemical (Chem)** - base ejection shell filled with a toxic agent (usually Mustard Gas).
  - **Flare (Flare) and Illumination (Illum)** - base ejection or bursting projectile typically containing a parachute flare (bright white or multiple colours).
  - **Practice, Tracer (Prac/T) & SH Practice, Tracer (SH Prac/T)** – solid shot or filled with an inert high explosive substitute. No explosive other than tracer.
- Unexploded items of this type are most often found in/near areas used by the Army for artillery practices - typically on the ground surface up to 1.5m deep. Dumped items may also be found offshore.

#### Technical Data

- Projectile length : approx. 285-350 mm
- Projectile diameter : approx. 87.6mm (3.45")
- Total weight : Projectile - approx 11.33kg (approx 25lb)
- Fuse/Burster : Typically contain an explosive fuse & burster/expelling charge.
- Filling : HE - varied between 450-900 grams of high explosive (TNT, Amatol, RDX).  
Smk/Chem – approx 400-1500 grams of smoke, chemical or incendiary.
- Identification : Normally cast iron/steel. Hazardous variants of the projectile are often painted yellow, green or grey with bands of yellow, red or green. **Caution – this munition has been widely used over a long period of time - other colours may have been used or colours may have faded over time. Treat all found munitions as dangerous.**

**Images**



**Figure 1 - Various 25 pr munitions – L to R: Smoke, Armour-piercing (Pre-1955 UK markings), HE (RDX/TNT), HE projectile (Amatol, Pre-1955 UK markings), Smoke projectile (Pre-1955 UK markings)**



**Figure 2 - Australian artillery gunner with 25 pr HE projectile – PNG, 1943 (AWM ID 062765)**



**Figure 3 - Standard (left) and Short (right) 25-pounders. This is the prototype, which was fitted with a gun shield that was later removed (AWM ID 085823)**



**Figure 4 - Unexploded 25 pr projectile found at Coomera, SE QLD**



**Figure 5 - Unexploded 25 pr HE projectile found on the Sunshine Coast, SE QLD**