

4000lb Medium Capacity Bombs

On the 12th of May 1942 Bomber Command asked the Air Ministry for a large bomb with a high blast performance which could be dropped safely from as low as 100 feet. The targets for this bomb were to be light and heavy industrial plants, aircraft and engineering factories and shipbuilding yards. It was realised that both the 4000lb HC and 4000lb GP bombs were available but it was pointed out that 4000lb GP had too low a charge to weight ratio and the 4000lb HC was likely to break up from very low heights.

Initially it was suggested to Bomber Command that the 4000lb GP would be better but the shipyard requirement pressed development ahead and 2000 bombs based on the Department of Designs sketch were requested. Production of the bomb was held up by the new JW bomb which was given higher priority.

The 4000lb MC bomb body was of similar construction to that of the 500lb MC Mk I and had a tail similar to that used on the 4000lb GP, initially both nose and tail fuzeing was provided and the bomb was also capable of fitting into the 4000lb HC stowage position.

4000lb Medium Capacity Bomb

Written by David Boyd

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By September the prototype bomb and tail were completed and it was sent for installation trials in a Halifax and the Ordnance Board was asked for their views on detonation and other trails as well as on filling. The first trials were completed in October when 4 bombs were released from 70 to 1100 feet against concrete. None of the bombs were damaged but one failed to arm and modifications to the tail pistol as well as additional fuzing positions in the tail were suggested. Ballistics of the bomb were also good and installation trials in a Halifax had also been satisfactory.

By January 1943 50 bombs were available for operational use and by June a small number of the bombs had been used by Bomber Command.

In April 1944 it was suggested for Mosquito's to carry out precision attacks from 28-32,000 feet and in October the 4000lb MC was found to be efficient at the breaching of dyke walls. It was found that against this target craters of up to 80 feet could be expected.

Over 21,000 4000lb MC bombs were dropped by Bomber Command with 13,000 of these being dropped in 1944.

4000lb Medium Capacity bomb specifications

Bomb 4000-lb MC Mk I-II

Construction Steel

Usual weight (1710.90kg)

Charge weight ratio

Total length (278.13cm)

Body length (189.23cm)

Body dia (76.2cm)

Wall thickness (1.9cm)

Tail length (83.82cm)

Tail width (76.2cm)

Filling Amatol 60/40, Amatex 9, RDX/TNT 60/40

Sources - AVIA 46 285