

7.62x51 DRILL CARTRIDGES

In 1956 Australia commenced production of drill cartridges for the SLR rifle by simply taking a reject ball cartridge painting the primer pocket red and tinning the case. These early models are extremely rare today. The next model was designed with three flutes in the case, which was tinned. The primer pocket was empty. This model was referred to as the 7.62 drill L1A2 even though in most cases they were reject ball cases bearing the model number of a ball case. These minimal markings were soon shown to be insufficient with the occasional mix-up causing accidents. You would not think it could be possible, but it does happen. A new model was produced with the flutes painted red and the primer pocket being left unfinished and also painted red. The term for this type of unfinished pocket is "blind". In this case the headstamp showed the correct model number.

During our Vietnam adventure evidently some American influence rubbed off as we seem to have produced at this time a drill cartridge with all the characteristics of a standard USA dummy cartridge, they are not dated so we can't really be sure. This one is not seen very much outside of collections. It is believed that they may have been used for magazine testing at the small arms factory.

Occasionally a drill round will be found with a blind primer pocket, no flutes and a blackened projectile. It seems to have appeared around the seventies and is also quite scarce.

A cartridge that quite often confuses the collector is the sugar filled drill cartridge used by the then Commonwealth Government Clothing factory to test the bandoleers and magazine pouches using a cartridge that was totally inert yet possessed the same weight as a live service cartridge. These are sometimes pulled apart and when the sugar appears there appears to be no logical answer for its presence. It was identified by the black primer.

A point to be borne in mind is that drill cartridges are marked according to the prevailing circumstances at the time. In peacetime they are clearly marked and well produced and very quickly discarded when they show obvious signs of wear. During wartime when time is critical they become a different kettle of fish. They are cheap, poorly marked and usually of a local pattern, and they come in a bewildering variety. The accidents caused by mis-identifications are accepted as part of the price of warfare.



First model using a reject ball case.



Second model using a reject ball case.



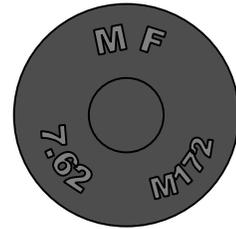
Third model using a purpose made case.



Fourth model using a chromed case and a reversion to no flutes.



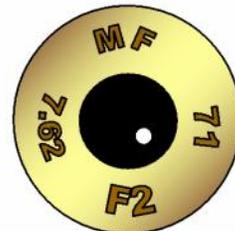
Sugar filled factory dummy cartridge. It is believed that they were used to fill magazines to test bandoleers at the Government clothing factory.



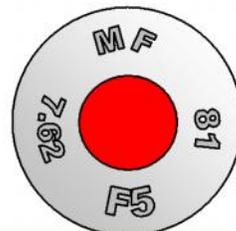
Fifth model using a blackened case and no flutes.



Sixth model using a brass case a blind primer pocket and no flutes. The significance of the blackened projectile is not known



Local pattern drill cartridge for grenade launcher training.



Drill cartridge for grenade launcher training.