



Mk. 17 (v1.02)  
Country of origin: England

**DATA SUMMARY**

**Organisation:** MI6 SIS.  
**Design/Manufacturer:** SIS Section VIII, Whaddon Hall/ Little Horwood workshops.  
**Year of Introduction:** Probably 1943.  
**Purpose:** Agents, Resistance groups.  
**Receiver:**  
**Circuit Features:** Superheterodyne with RF stage, mixer, local oscillator, 2x IF stage, limiter, discriminator, AF output. FM R/T.  
**Intermediate Frequency:** Not known.  
**AF Output:** Headphones.  
**Valves:** 6AK5 2x, 954, 6SK7 3x, 6H6.  
**Transmitter:**  
**Circuit features:** Master oscillator/doubler, RF power amplifier, microphone amplifier/FM modulator.  
**Valves:** 6V6 2x, 6J7.  
**Frequency Coverage:** 30-36MHz.  
**Power Supply:** 6V accumulator. Vibrator 4256 - G5, rectifier 6X5.  
**Size (cm):** Height 28.5, length 27.2, width 15.2.  
**Weight (kg):** 9.6.  
**Accessories:** Microphone, headphones, aerial.

**REMARKS**

The Mk.17 was believed the first version of the ‘Ascension’ simplex VHF FM communication system ground station. It allowed agents to have direct voice contact with an operator in an aircraft, flying at high altitudes, probably equipped with a wire recorder for later playback of the conversation. Full details of this system are not known though noted is the use of frequency modulation, believed for a high quality recording. The Mk. 17 was built in two separate units, bolted together and mounted in a metal case, forming a single self contained unit. Recommended reading on this topic: The Secret Wireless War, by Geoffrey Pidgeon.



Rear and side view of the Mk.17 metal enclosure.



Frequency calibration card. It is interesting to note that the support/protection plate for the card is identical to that of the Mk.21.

**References:**

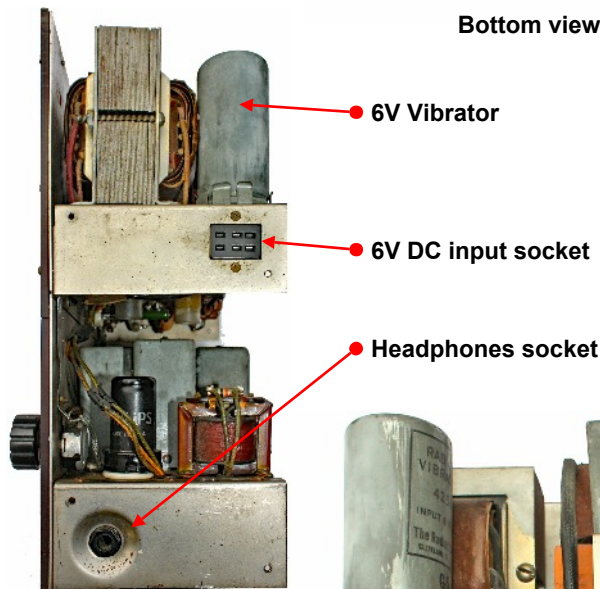
- Many thanks to Eric Pierret, France, for providing the photos and general (technical) information for this chapter.
- WftW Supplements, Chapter 330, Mk.18.
- ‘The Secret Wireless War’, G. Pidgeon, ISBN 1-84375-252-2.



Function of controls Mk.17 receiver.



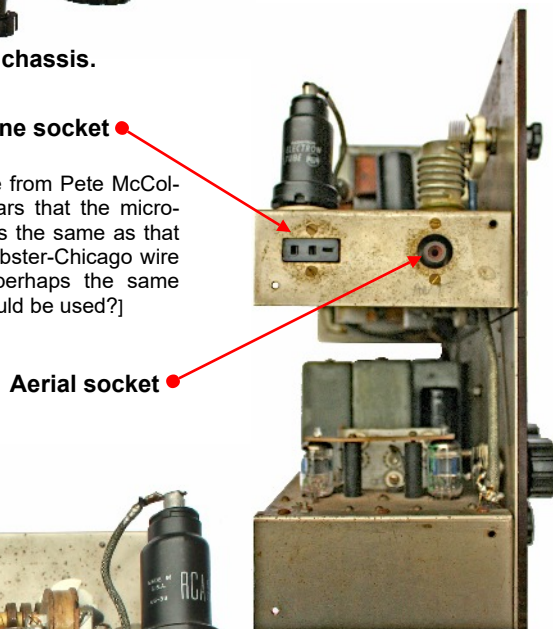
Bottom view of Mk.17 receiver chassis.



Left hand side view of Mk. 17.

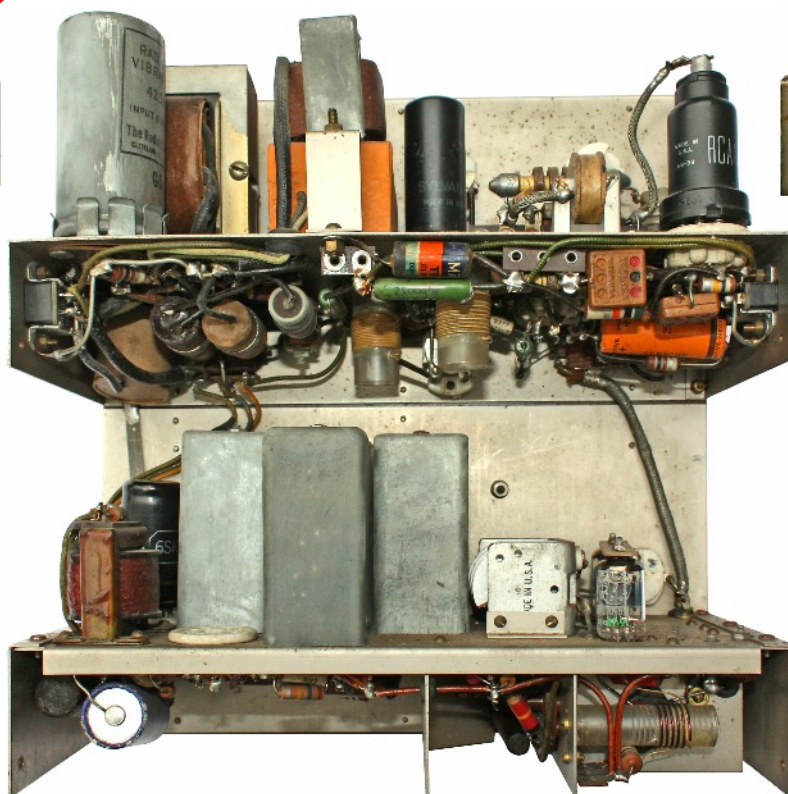
Microphone socket

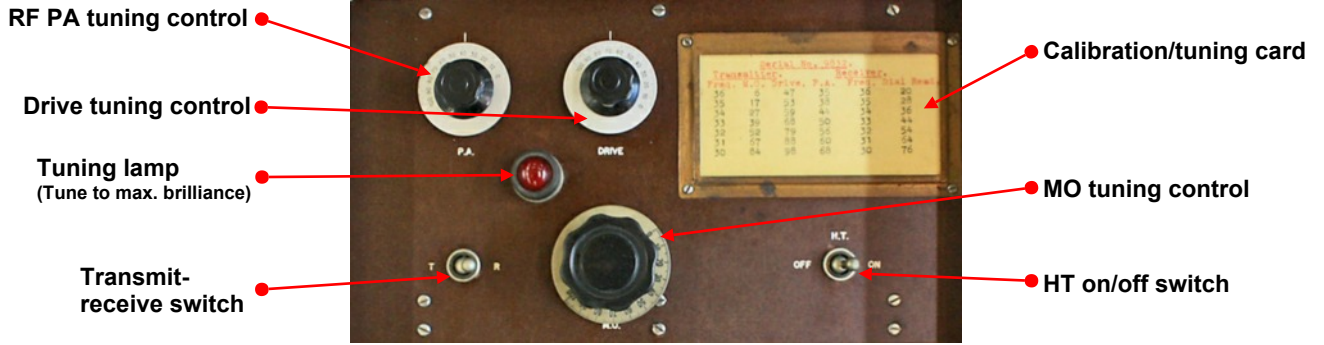
[Technical note from Pete McCol- lum: ...it appears that the micro- phone socket is the same as that found on a Webster-Chicago wire recorder. So perhaps the same microphone could be used?]



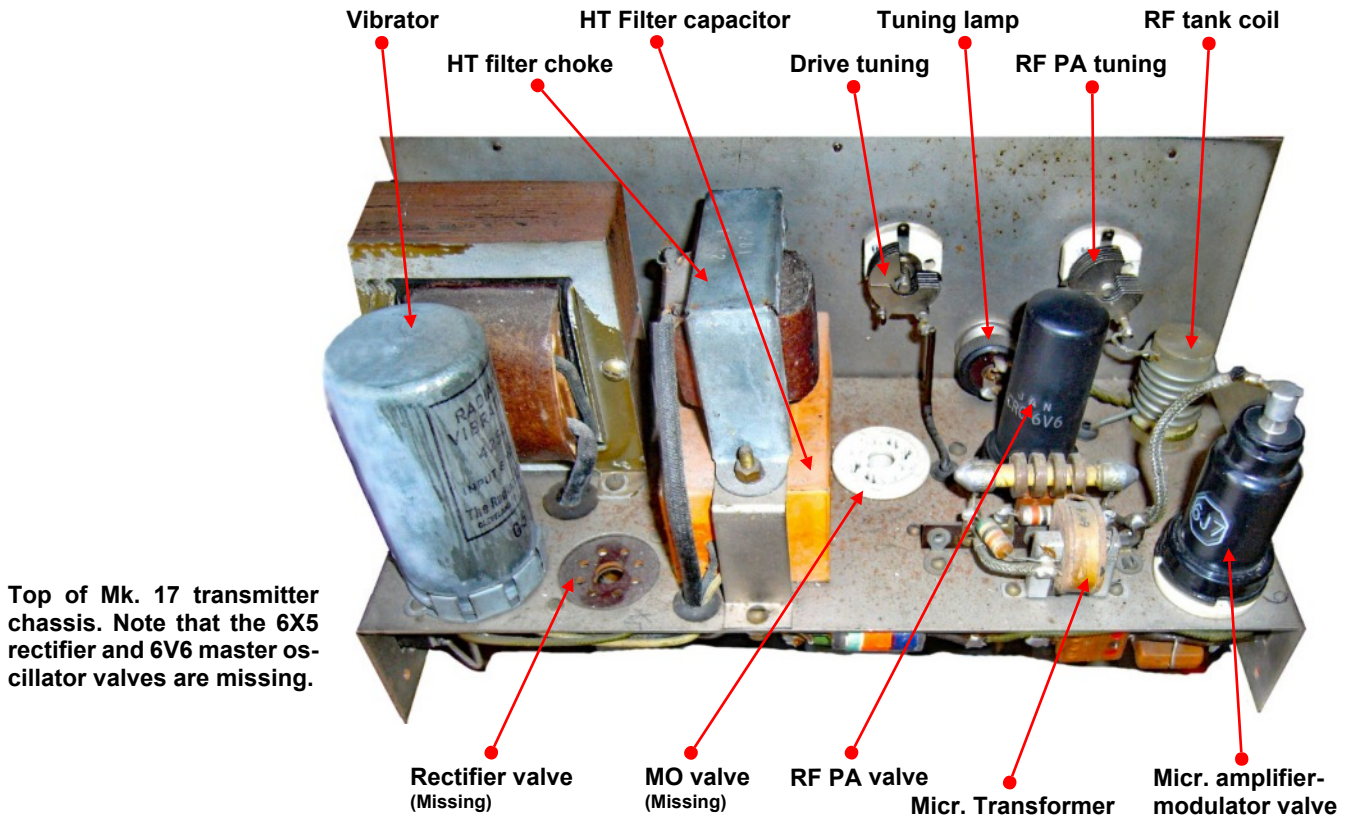
Mk. 17 right hand side view.

Rear view of Mk.17: transmitter (top) and receiver (bottom).

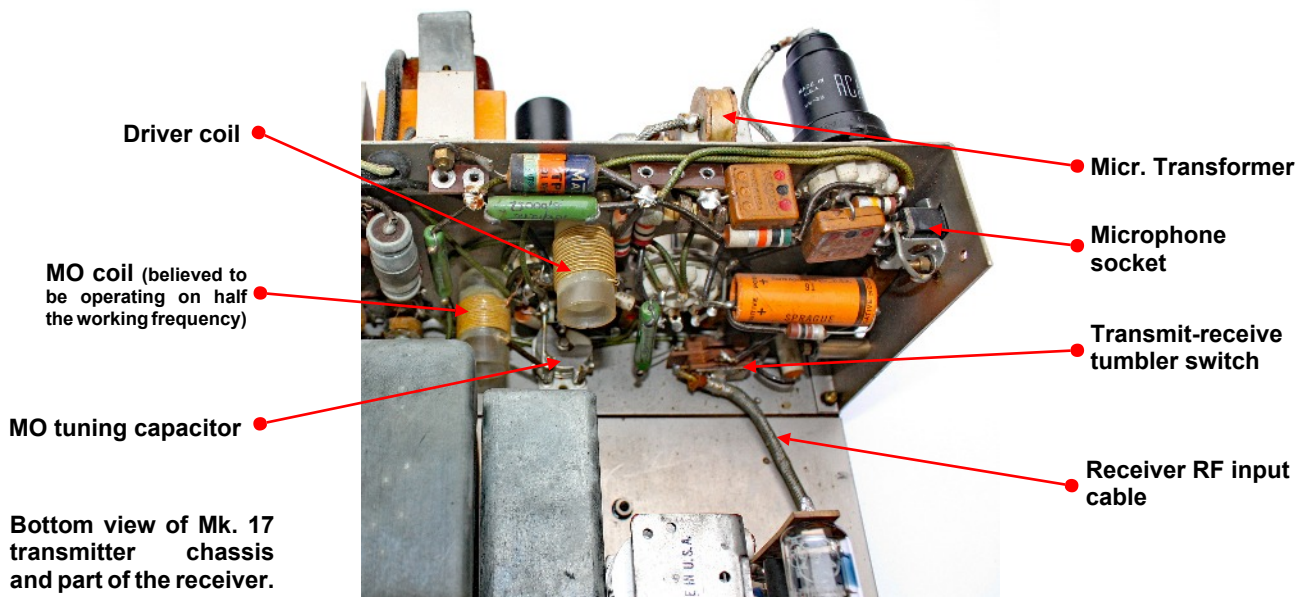




Function of controls Mk.17 transmitter.



Top of Mk. 17 transmitter chassis. Note that the 6X5 rectifier and 6V6 master oscillator valves are missing.



Bottom view of Mk. 17 transmitter chassis and part of the receiver.