

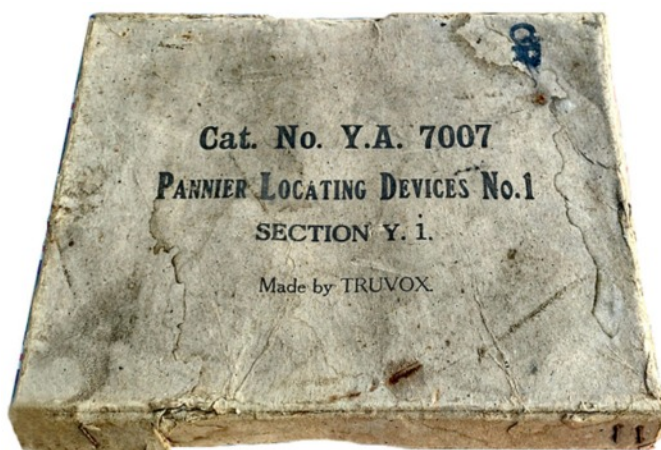
Pannier Locating Device No. 1 in the opened position, showing the bell, switch assembly with peg, and the position of two 4½V batteries.



Pannier Locating Device No. 1 with metal cover attached. With the device assembled, access to the switch assembly peg was through a hole in the panel.

Pannier Locating Device No. 1.

Country of origin: England By Andy Jackson, G8JAC.



Original storage box for the Pannier Locator Device No. 1.

DATA SUMMARY

Organisation: British Army.

Developer/maker: Truvox and possibly others.

Year of production: Possibly 1945 considering the '45' stamped on one of the straps.

Purpose: Audible aid in finding and retrieving a pannier.

Power supply: 2 x 4½V flashlight batteries in series.

Size (inches): Height 2, length 7, width 9½.

Weight: 4 pounds, 2.7 ounces. (1890 grams).

Acknowledgements:

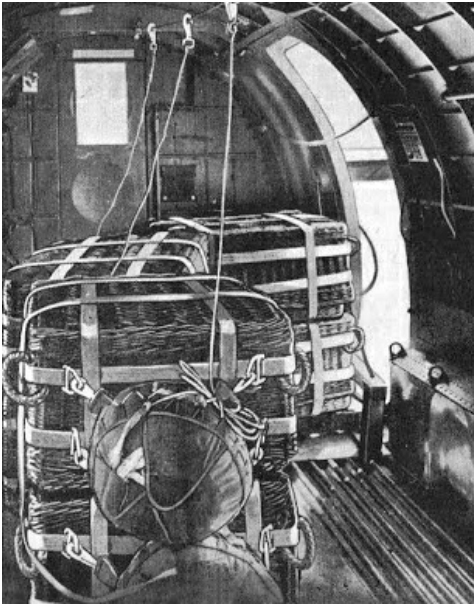
- With many thanks to Andy Jackson G8JAC, who took colour photographs of his Pannier Locating Device No. 1, and wrote the text for this WftW 'Various' chapter.
- Scans of the 'Wood Baffle' courtesy Ronald Evers, Holland.

Pannier Locating Devices No. 1 (Y1/YA 7007) was thought to be an audible aid that assisted in finding and retrieving a pannier dropped into an operational area. The pannier in the title was a generic term covering a range of containers used for packaging supplies needed for battle, such as medical supplies, ammunition, arms, rations, etc. WW2 panniers were a semi-standardised design based on wicker basket style containers, with internal fittings to separate and protect the contents if required. There was also a range devoted to signals equipment. While these were taken into the battle area on unit transport, replenishment during battle often meant that supplies had to be dropped from aircraft by parachute. This gave the receiving troops the problem of finding and retrieving them, often under fire and at night. To assist in this process, an audible device was added. As this was essentially a single-use device, it had to be simple and cheap, but robust enough to survive a parachute drop. The device used to do this was the Pannier Locator Device No.1 made by Truvox (and possibly others) – a light engineering company that usually manufactured domestic goods such as vacuum cleaners and floor polishers. It was given the V.A.O.S. (Vocabulary Army Ordnance Stores) code of YA 7007, which was Signal Stores – Line, Telegraph & Telephone Equipment, Visual & Sound Recording.

Equipment.

It was a simple arrangement of a 1930's style DC 'doorbell', a 9-Volt battery, and a rudimentary switch that was kept in the open position by the insertion of a simple metal pin. The dark square where the battery located was a 'sorbo' rubber pad which kept the battery in place and secure. The wires to the battery were provided with small ring tags.

These were mounted on a bare steel sheet with an untreated sheet steel cover secured by four large screws, the two forming a 'sandwich' measuring 9½x7x2 inches. This served to retain the batteries against a rubber pad and protect the bell. Two standard 1937 pattern webbing straps and buckles were riveted to the back to attach the device to a pannier—or, in fact, anything else. The operational routine was that for an air drop, the panniers were fitted with locator units with the peg inserted and the load prepared. Just before dropping and over the D.Z. (Drop Zone), the pegs were pulled by the launch crew, setting the bells ringing. The bells continued to sound until the battery was exhausted, giving an audible sound for the supplied troops to locate. With their job done, the locators were probably just scrapped, so an intact, unused one in its original box is now a considerable rarity. The item shown had no markings apart from the number 45 ink-stamped on one strap.



The wicker panniers were placed on rollers for easy and swift handling when arriving at the drop zone.



Opening a wicker pannier after a successful air drop.

Lighting Baffle.

The Pannier Locating Device No. 1 was particularly useful in locating containers and panniers dropped during daylight. For night supply drops when sounds carried far, which was potentially dangerous for resistance ground parties, a wooden Lighting Baffle with 4 lamps was used. The assembly included four lamps, a plunger contact, a contact pin, and a battery, all of which were attached between the percussion head and a type CLE container. After landing, the plunger contact was activated, causing the four lamps to light up.

