

Part 1: Canadian Sub hunters

Liberator GR.V (Can)
586-A, 10 (BR) Squadron
Eastern Air Command
RCAF, late summer 1943

Based at Gander NL. 19 September 1943, F/L R.E. Fisher & crew sank U-341 while on convoy escort.
and 26 October 1943, F/L R.M. Aldwinkle & crew sank U-420 while on convoy escort.



Liberator GR.V (Can)
595-X, 10 (BR) Squadron
Eastern Air Command
RCAF, January, 1944

Based at Gander NL. 22 September 1943, F/L J.R. Martin & crew engaged U-377 and U-402 while on convoy escort.



Liberator GR.V (Can)
600-N, 10 (BR) Squadron
Eastern Air Command
RCAF, Summer 1943

Based at Gander NL. 22/23 September 1943, F/O A. Cirko & crew engaged an unidentified U-boat while on convoy escort.



North West Air Command
from Spring/Summer
1945

As photographed
after conversion
circa late 1945



Liberator GR.V
BZ792-G, 224 Squadron
Coastal Command
RAF, Summer 1944

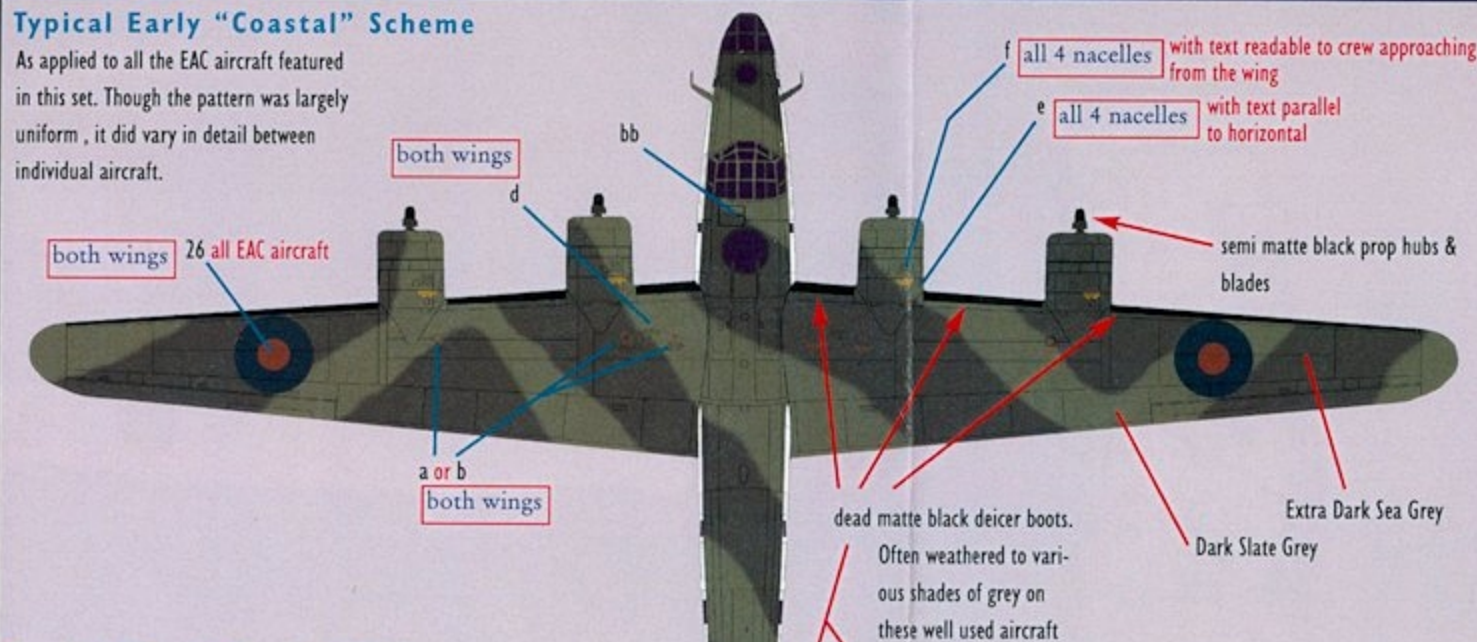
Based at St. Eval UK. 7/8 June 1944, F/L K.O. Moore (RCAF) & crew sank U-373 and U-441 during the same sortie while on a "Cork" patrol in support of the D-Day landings.



Many thanks to Carl Vincent, Mike Belcher, and sub hunter of note, Kenneth "Kayo" Moore, for their kind assistance

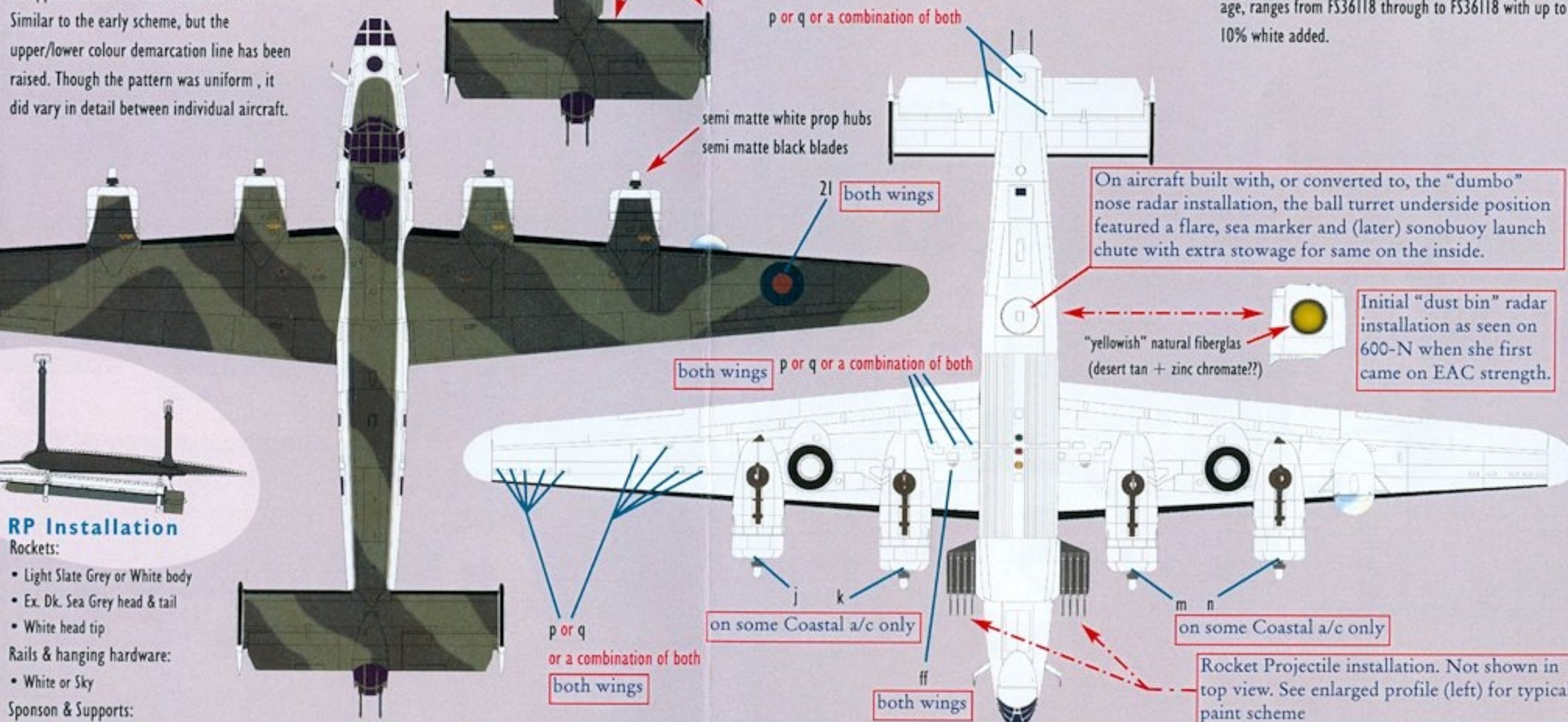
Typical Early "Coastal" Scheme

As applied to all the EAC aircraft featured in this set. Though the pattern was largely uniform, it did vary in detail between individual aircraft.



Typical Late "Coastal" Scheme

As applied to BZ792 featured in this set. Similar to the early scheme, but the upper/lower colour demarcation line has been raised. Though the pattern was uniform, it did vary in detail between individual aircraft.



Temperate Sea Scheme Colours

Coastal Command Liberator GR.Vs came from their US production lines finished in the Temperate Sea Scheme. As outlined in the Air Ministry Orders document "A.664 Camouflage, Colouring and Markings of Aircraft" of 2/7/42, this comprised a disruptive pattern of Dark Slate Grey and Extra Dark Sea Grey on the top surfaces with White side (including inner vertical tails) and lower surfaces. Coastal's RCAF home based equivalent, Eastern Air Command, also employed this scheme. Likely depending on the production run and / or production line, the demarcation between colours varied from a hard line to minor (3 or 4 inches) feathering. Modellers should note that the US production paints may have exhibited some difference in hue or saturation when compared to the "official" British specs. Nonetheless, for modelling purposes Dark Slate Grey (which can be described more accurately as a mid green!) approximates to FS34096 while Extra Dark Sea Grey, depending on its age, ranges from FS36118 through to FS36118 with up to 10% white added.

On aircraft built with, or converted to, the "dumbo" nose radar installation, the ball turret underside position featured a flare, sea marker and (later) sonobuoy launch chute with extra stowage for same on the inside.

Initial "dust bin" radar installation as seen on 600-N when she first came on EAC strength.

"yellowish" natural fibreglas (desert tan + zinc chromate??)

Rocket Projectile installation. Not shown in top view. See enlarged profile (left) for typical paint scheme

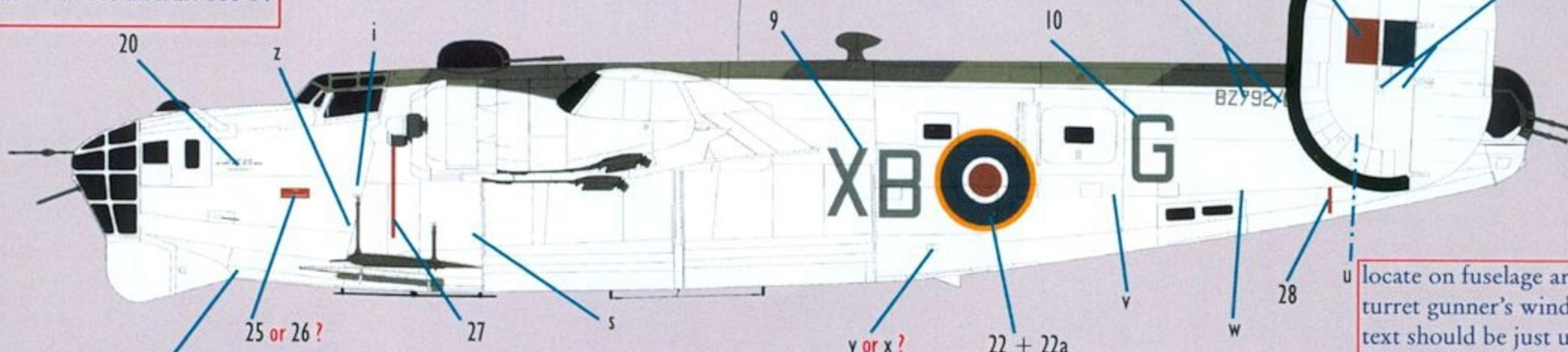
RP Installation

- Rockets:
- Light Slate Grey or White body
 - Ex. Dk. Sea Grey head & tail
 - White head tip
- Rails & hanging hardware:
- White or Sky
- Sponson & Supports:
- Extra Dark Sea Grey
 - White (lower inboard section)

Decal "19" for aircraft 586-A
 Decal "16" for aircraft 595-X
 Decal "15" for aircraft 600-N

It is likely that the "/G" security marking (decal "14a") was applied to BZ792. Pilot K.O. Moore remembers being impressed by the fact that guards were immediately assigned to his aircraft whenever they diverted to Gibraltar.

23 Also on inside of fin



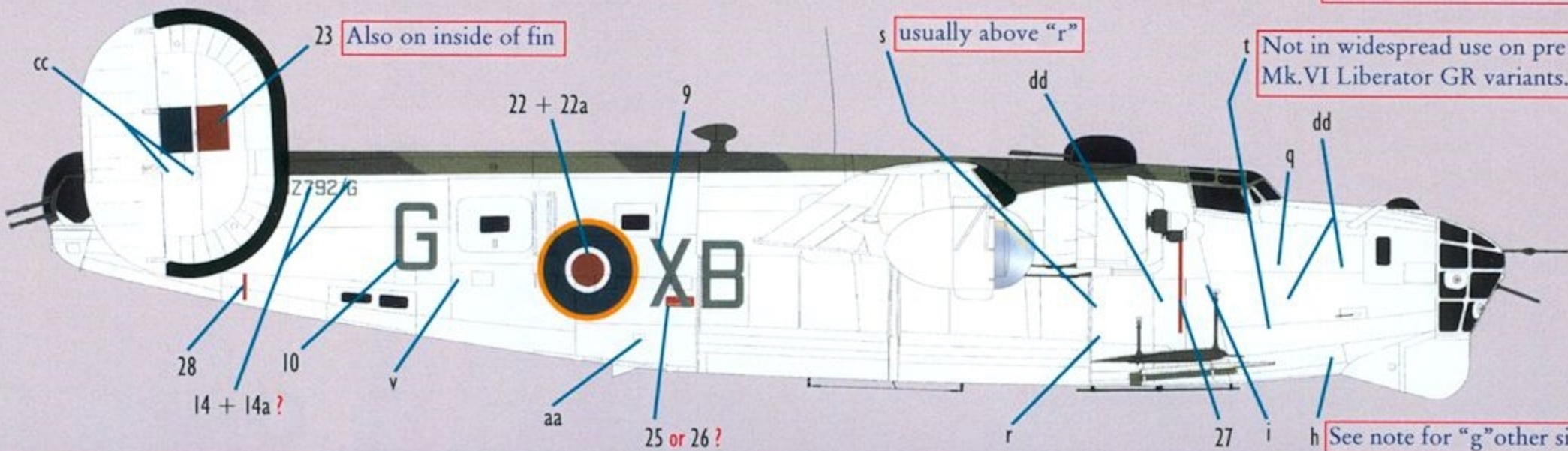
g Evidently not used much on B-24D (Liberator V) airframes. Especially true for early production examples.

u locate on fuselage around turret gunner's window. text should be just under the window baseline. May not have been used on Liberator GR variants.

23 Also on inside of fin

s usually above "r"

t Not in widespread use on pre Mk.VI Liberator GR variants.



See note for "g" other side

Modeling Notes

Part 1: Canadian Sub Hunters

General

- Airframe stencil decals as per the BZ792 profile and plan colour placement instructions. Generally EAC Liberators appear to have carried minimal stencilling upon delivery, and even less so after repainting.
- Paintwork on EAC Liberator GR.V(Can)s seems to have weathered more excessively (chipping and flaking, etc) than that on Coastal Command GR.Vs. Though, with the large white areas of this paint scheme, exhaust, oil, hydraulic and fuel stains became noticeable after only a short time in service.

Liberator GR.V(Can) 586-A

- Note various antennae installed under forward/mid fuselage.
- Decal "17" should be applied centrally on the upper face of the nose radome directly below the nose glazed area and similarly below the tail turret. For this latter, the "5" and "8" characters may have been split by the rear fuselage position light housing.
- During the U-341 sinking sortie, the weapons load comprised 10x 250lb D/Cs.
- During the U-420 sinking (or was it U-91 damaged?) sortie the weapons load was 8x 250lb D/Cs and 1x Mk.24 homing torpedo.

Liberator GR.V(Can) 595-X

- Note various antennae installed under forward/mid fuselage.
- Decal "18" should be applied centrally on the upper face of the nose radome directly below the nose glazed area and similarly below the tail turret. For this latter, the "5" and leading "9" characters were split by the rear fuselage position light housing. Decal "4" is on the port side.
- During the U-377 / U-402 engagement sortie, the weapons load comprised 4x 250lb D/Cs and 2x Mk.24 homing torpedoes. Possibly a reduced load to extend patrol endurance.

Liberator GR.V(Can) 600-N

- Note various antennae installed under forward/mid fuselage.
- If modeling the early configuration, decal "11" is applied on both sides of nose (see profile) and, quite possibly, directly below the tail turret. If so, the "6" and leading "0" characters were likely split by the rear fuselage position light housing).
- During the engagement of September 22/23 1943 the radar was of the retractable "dust bin" type. The weapons load is unknown.
- Radar installation was later converted to "dumbo" fixed type sometime in 1944.
- Nose art "Nannette" (decal "1") seems to have been applied late in the aircraft's EAC career, or very early in its NWAC service. "Nannette" lettering may have been black (decal "5"). In this configuration, decal "13" goes on the rear fuselage well behind decal "3" while decal "2" goes on the nose and decal "6" on the tail. These markings were in the same location port and starboard. Decal "12" is supplied in case you discover that the serials were applied nose and tail like the other "dumbo" endowed EAC aircraft herein. In the author's opinion, this is unlikely.

Liberator GR.V BZ792-G

- Note various antennae installed under forward/mid fuselage.
- During the U-373 / U-441 sinking sortie this aircraft was FULLY loaded with 12x 250lb D/Cs, 2x Mk.24 homing torpedoes, and 8x 3in. A/S (armour piercing heads) rockets. The (relatively) short range trips from St. Eval to the upper Bay of Biscay "Cork" patrol area meant such a max load was possible. Even with all of this ordinance on board, the two subs were sunk with D/Cs only (a stick of 6 per boat). The aircraft returned to base with the Mk.24s and rockets still on board! Equally interesting, the installed Leigh Light was not used on the sortie.
- Pilot K.O. Moore does not remember if BZ792 had the standard US turret, or the Boulton Paul 4 gun turret. Either was possible for this "vintage" of GR.V. The B.P. type is shown herein.

The General Reconnaissance / Anti-submarine Warfare Liberator

Beginnings

Though outwardly similar to the bomber version of the Liberator, the evolved maritime long range general reconnaissance GR.V was significantly different in detail. For modeling purposes, the most noticeable change was the “dust bin” radar installation that replaced the bomber’s retractable ball turret. This mod was first used on USAAC anti-submarine B-24Ds and carried over to the British “Coastal” version. The centrimetric radar housed in this unit was later moved to a more aerodynamic fixed nose fairing (likely in an effort to improve the aircraft’s ground-handling center of gravity issues). The mid fuselage space was then used as a roomier stowage and launch post for various mission pyrotechnics and (later) sonobuoys.

The Light

The Leigh Light, a Coastal Command development for continuing the U-boat war on into the night, was also added to the Liberator in RAF service. It was later adopted for use on US anti-submarine B-24Ds and Canadian EAC Liberators (only a few aircraft).

Depth Charges, Torpedoes & Rocket Projectiles

The Libs also carried different slung weapons for ASW work. Most common was the British 250lb depth charge; either the Mk.VIII or more lethal Mk.XI. Both types looked very similar on the outside but had different explosives, fusing pistols, and water-entry characteristics (the late Mk.VIII featured a concave nose “spoiler” that became standard on the Mk.XI). Theoretically, 16 of these could be housed in the Lib’s huge bomb bay. However, the maximum load was usually determined by the mission endurance requirements, and whether or not other weapons were being carried. It ranged from 4 all the way up to 12.

The Mk.24 passive acoustic homing torpedo came into use on RAF, USN (who took over the long range ASW mission from the USAAC) and Canadian Liberators during the early Fall of 1943. The usual load was one or two on one of the Libs 4 vertical racks, with D/Cs on the other racks.

At the request of Coastal Command, Boscombe Down began Rocket Projectile trials on Liberators (initially GR.IIIIs) in 1943. Two installation types entered service. One was a retractable, reloadable system comprising folding pallets each mounting 2x Mk.I rocket rails. This system entered service on select RAF GR.IIIIs, some early service GR.Vs, and a few RCAF GR.V(Can)s. A later development had airfoil-profiled sponsons fitted to either side of the lower nose. This installation featured 4 Mk.I rails aside. Compared to the bomb bay kit, this had the benefits of not endangering the forward fuselage underside with potentially wayward rockets and, as everything was already out in the airstream, zero change in trim while lining up for the attack run.