



HISTORY OF SIGNALLING IN 100 OBJECTS MOBILE POWER SUPPLIES FOR HQS & AREA COMMUNICATIONS



Often Onan comes to mind when power supplies for area communications are mentioned. The AFV 439 has an Onan mounted on the hull to power the C50 Radio Relay. The second is of TRIFFID radio relay, but the PTARMIGAN radio relay was a conversion of the BRUIN/TRIFFID UK/PTC-471. As can be seen the installation comprises of a pallet mounted generator on a 4-Tonne Bedford MK flat-bed.

However, there were many more generators that the Royal Signals Electrician Driver had to operate and maintain. The BRUIN Commcen Trunk exchange, 6 Channel 6 and Commcen Command were powered by a Perkins diesel 10 KVA generator mounted on a 1 Ton Trailer.

Included in 5 Sqn of 7 Signal Regiment was the RE Corps HQ Lighting Troop, which for many years operated the Meadows 27.5 KVA 3 phase generator, which in the early 1980s was replaced by a Perkins 8 cylinder 3 phase 40KVA generator. The PTARMIGAN Central shown in the UN base had a Petters twin mounted diesel mounted back to back. This could deliver 3 phase and was rated as 4.5kW. It appears to have been dismantled from the Central pallet in this photo and is running on the ground beside the flatbed truck.

The WAVELL Automatic Data Processing System also required a 3 phase generator. This was a Leyland 11kW diesel generator. The PTARMIGAN trunk node moved up to having a 20kW Leyland 3 phase diesel generator that was mounted on its own Bedford MK flatbed truck. This powered all the vehicles in the Trunk Node including the Switch & Facilities Control, The System Control Computer, the System Control Staff vehicles and the Electronic Repair vehicle (ERV), all of which were normally located some distance from the radio relay vehicles associated with the Trunk Node. The 20KVA & the 4.5KVA were silenced, which was a considerable advantage over the previous BRUIN generators.

At HQs power became more of a challenge. Initially the staff were in Box bodies or at Bde in ACVs. However, the preference then came to dismount the staff functions into buildings or cellars. All of this required all the comms to be dismantled and powered by cables sometimes to comms vehicles and generators mounted some distance from the staff desks. This dismantled mode remains the preference so it seems to this day!

