

## Republic-Ford JB-2 "Buzzbomb"

September 1944

The JB-2 was an American copy of the Fieseler V-1 flying bomb, an early cruise missile developed in Germany during World War II. The V-1 was designed as an inexpensive "vengeance weapon" which was launched across the English Channel in 1944-45, primarily at London. The fuselage was constructed of welded steel, and the wings were made of wood. A pulse-jet engine was mounted on top of the fuselage, and the distinctive sound it made gave the weapon its "Buzzbomb" nickname. In mid-1942 an early test version of the V-1 was captured and reverse-engineered in the U.S. The American JB-2 version had airframes built by Republic Aviation and engines by Ford Motor Company. In September 1944 a detachment of the USAAF Special Weapons Branch brought thirteen JB-2s to Wendover Army Air Field, Utah, to test and evaluate them. This example crashed a short distance from the launch facility. Special thanks to Craig Fuller and Dave Trojan for help with locating this crash site. Site visited on 3/21/24.



A general view of the crash site



The warhead section is in the center, with the rear fuselage to the right and fuel tank above



The intake of the pulse-jet engine, with intake shutters and fuel injectors missing



The tailpipe of the pulse-jet engine, which bent in half on impact



The rudder attachment point on the engine



An example of the welded steel construction of the fuselage



A good view of the interior construction of the missile



Large exterior bolts held the warhead to the fuel tank section



Interior of the fuel tank, with filler cap at top



This piece has large holes to reduce weight



The aviation-type fasteners in this wood mean it was part of a wing



A JB-2 being readied for launch at Wendover in 1944 (USAAF photo)



A JB-2 on display at Hill Aerospace Museum, Utah (Courtesy of Hill Aerospace Museum)