



In 1967, the U.S. Army ordered approximately 100 J100 Panel Delivery Jeeps. Built with Army-specified modifications, these special Jeeps were deployed to units specializing in psychological warfare.

# A Special-Order Jeep

## Used for psychological warfare

By Jeff Rowsam, MVPA #10263

In 2024, an interesting historic military vehicle was advertised for sale: a “1967 Military Jeep Model J100.” Unusual. I could not identify what Army branch it came from or what its purpose was. The data plates proved it was ex-U.S. military, but it was not in any of the standard vehicle catalogs or MV collector books. This truck was different. There had to be history here. Discovering the story became part of a project.

After contacting the seller, my assistant driver/wife, Wendy, and I decided that I should make the trip for a close inspection and possible purchase.

The military truck I inspected looked very much like

a civilian Wagoneer. When I examined further, I found all the expected military data plates in the cab. These confirmed the truck’s military service.

It was clean, solid, straight, started easily, and ran well. A 30-mile test drive at highway speeds confirmed it was road worthy. The sale was completed. With a clear title in hand, arrangements were made to have it transported home to Wisconsin.

### **BUT WHAT WAS IT?**

In the 1950s, Willys produced a line of rugged, boxy, 4x4 station wagons and similar, small pickup trucks. These

were the first jeeps to have real doors, roofs, and roll-up windows. The 1947 Jeep Station Wagon remained in production until 1962 and changed very little.

The Jeep trucks produced after WWII included a lesser-known Panel Delivery version, built from 1947 to 1962. Intended for commercial use by contractors, utility crews, and grocery stores, the Panel Delivery model featured a two-door body, no rear side windows, no rear seat, and no tailgate. It did have an open rear cargo space and two distinctive, wide, swing-out rear doors for cargo loading.

Then, in 1962, Kaiser Jeep introduced the all-new, bigger, and sportier Wagoneer series. The civilian Wagoneer models came in different configurations: two-door, four-door, 2- or 4-wheel drive, 6- or V-8 power, as well as sporty colors and trim packages. Production of the new Wagoneer line in 1963 included a Panel Delivery model. It retained a similar layout to the previous flat-fender Panel Delivery model of the 1950s.

Tagged as the “J100,” the Panel Delivery model was sold in smaller numbers than the popular Wagoneer SUV. Today, civilian Jeep collectors refer to Wagoneers as the “FSJs” or “full-size Jeeps,” so not to confuse them with the iconic, flat-fender CJs (Willys-overland designation for “civilian jeep”).

The unusual U.S. Army vehicle that now sat in the yard of my Wisconsin home was obviously a Panel Delivery model – with extra military modifications.

## THE MILITARY VERSION

The military J100 truck has a distinctive heavy-duty steel deck-top platform. The empty cargo compartment showed evidence that equipment had been secured to the floor. The interior retained the original factory military paint from 1967.

A small mention in an online post by an FSJ collector about an ex-Army Wagoneer “Psyops truck” sent me looking for a Psychological Operations (“PSYOP”) connection. I learned that J100 Panel Delivery trucks were used by the U.S. Army in designated Psychological Warfare (PSYWAR) units.

Psychological warfare is as old as human conflict. Changing people’s minds to change their behavior is the foundation of what is today, a well-developed military special mission. It uses many different tactics with specialized equipment.

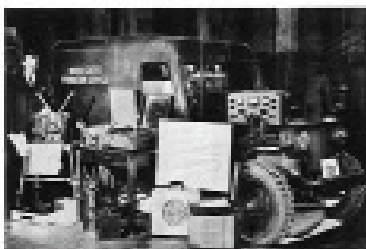
In September 1949, a small announcement appeared in *Popular Science* magazine: The U.S. Information Service would order 65 special-contained audio visual (AV) Jeeps for worldwide use. The Henry Spen Company in New York would assemble them on the CJ2A chassis.



An advertisement seen in 2024 listed a “1967 Military Jeep Model J100.” At the time, we could not find any information about this type of truck in any of the standard military vehicle collector books.

**WILLYS  
INDUSTRIAL  
EQUIPMENT  
ROOM**

**MOVIE TRUCK**



SPEN

SELF-SUSTAINING  
MOTION PICTURE  
UNIT

The New Addition to Education on Wheels

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Willys Industrial Jeep converted into the most modern means of communication and education. Used by Ministries and Education to teach people in backward areas to read and write as well as health education and the principles of sanitation through the medium of motion pictures. At present this unit is being used by the Department of State to carry the "Voice of America" into otherwise inaccessible areas, making it a most powerful weapon against the enemies of the free thinking and free speaking peoples of the world today.

**OCCUPANT**

- Generator
- Projector & Speaker (1000 watt)
- Projector Stand
- Screen (30" x 70")
- Slide Projector
- Reel-to-Reel
- Photograph Based Transmitter
- Sound Recording/Tape
- Radio with Speaker and Antenna

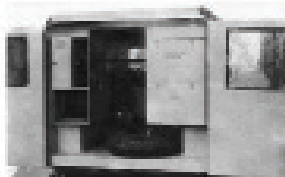
In long cables enables the unit to set up the small motion picture projector inside buildings and run in the power from the Jeep outside.

**SPECIAL FEATURES**

This Jeep unit is designed to be completely self-sustaining over long periods of time as it contains an 80 gallon fuel tank and spare tank with 1000 watt generator. It comes equipped with hot points, hot lead battery, containers to carry 10 gallons of fresh water, and six milk cans. Ideal for use in small isolated areas as well as in backward areas. It can go anywhere a Jeep can go.

Body is constructed with separate compartments, each compartment clearly marked, making storage of equipment simple and compact, and easily accessible.

Price and additional information upon request. Modifications can be made to suit individual needs.



**HENRY SPEN AND COMPANY, INC.**

Circle 178 MOTOR CITY

100 WALL STREET, NEW YORK 7, N.Y. (212) 685-1100

During the the late 1940s, Willys-Overland produced a line of rugged, 4x4 station wagons and similar, small pickup trucks. The Brooklyn-based firm, Henry Spen and Company, Inc., advertised special “self-sustaining motion picture” conversions of Jeeps that were being used by the Department of State to carry the “Voice of America” into “otherwise inaccessible areas.” The ad declared the specialized vehicles constituted a “most powerful weapon against the enemies of the free-thinking and free-speaking peoples of the world.”





The first Jeep Panel Delivery Audio Visual Trucks were specially-built on the standard Jeep four-wheel drive Panel Delivery chassis. Each truck was equipped with heavy-duty springs and adapted to carry audio visual equipment. The roof of each truck was reinforced and equipped with a projection platform surrounded by a safety guard rail.

These new Jeeps would be equipped for “education on wheels” with a 16 mm movie projector, audio speakers, magnetic tape player, a PTO-driven AC power generator, projection screens, a projector table, and a phonograph player.

In the 1950s, after the larger Panel Delivery Jeep was introduced, a more developed, special AV truck was built. The U.S. Army acquired the improved AV version, followed by the later model based on the Wagoneer Panel Delivery in 1967.

Photos of U.S. Army Jeep AV trucks built on the flat-fender Panel Delivery model operating in Southeast Asia confirm military deployment before the 1967 Wagoneer-style J100 Panel Delivery trucks were acquired. These earlier trucks were equipped with AV equipment including the distinctive roof rack with loudspeakers.

The Army J100 AV trucks built for psychological operations retained many of the civilian Wagoneer parts and systems. A commercial AMC valve-in-head 232-cubic-inch, inline, six-cylinder gasoline engine coupled with a three-speed manual transmission (with shifter on the steering column) powered the vehicle. The four-wheel drive trans-



Though the resolution is minimal, this very scarce photo of a U.S. Army Jeep Panel Delivery Audio Visual Truck was taken early in the Vietnam War. A South Vietnamese flag decal is present on the cowl. There is battle damage with several bullet holes through the passenger window and door frame.

fer case was engaged through a manual floor shift lever. Dana commercial front and rear axles provided four-wheel drive. The vehicle electrical system utilized conventional civilian 12-volt DC components. Power steering made it very drivable. The dash gauge cluster and heater, vent, and



Assigned to the 4th PSYOP Group, 6th PSYOP Battalion, this AN/MSQ-85 equipped M37 was photographed in Vietnam in 1969.



A 6th PSYOP J100 Panel Delivery Audio-Visual Aid truck in Vietnam.

defroster controls were standard civilian Wagoneer components. A comfortable, vinyl-covered split-bench seat with factory safety belts completed the cab arrangement.

There were, however, special factory modifications required before the military AV equipment could be installed. The AV equipment required 120-volt AC, 60 Hz electric power when local, on-site electric power was not available. To provide power in those circumstances, a belt-driven auxiliary AC generator was mounted in the engine compartment on the right side.

An oversize gas tank mounted lengthwise between the frame rails provided extra travel range. Because operations could require the engine to run the AC generator for hours with the vehicle stationary, an additional 20-gallon gas tank was mounted inside the cargo space above the regular tank at the left rear. The unique, external filler neck filled both tanks. It was located above the unused standard lower tank fill location that was blocked off. That fuel fill modification makes a former Army AV Panel Delivery truck easy to spot.

The upper deck was made from diamond plate steel. Flood lights and AC power outlets were wired through the grab rails around the outside of the deck and included three weatherproof 120-volt outlets. Two large outdoor horn-style speakers were mounted on rotating adjustable



In 1962, Kaiser Jeep introduced the all-new, redesigned, bigger, and better sporty Wagoneer series. Production of the new Wagoneer line included the "All New, All Jeep Panel Delivery." This was the basis of the Audio-Visual Aid Truck, Model SV-102-H.



A leaflet printed by the 246th Psychological Operations Company while deployed at Bien Hoa, Republic of Vietnam, shows a J100 Panel Delivery Audio-Visual Aid truck. Active in Vietnam from 1965-1967, the unit supported III Corps with propaganda leaflets and loudspeaker missions. It later becoming the 6th PSYOP Battalion.





After purchasing the vehicle, the work to restore it to its deployed appearance began. The project involved as much research as restoration. While road worthy, this has become a true “work in progress.”

brackets at each end. The speakers were removable and were stored in racks inside during travel.

A special folding ladder mounted to the right side of the truck provided access to the deck. A small folding table could be set up and the movie or slide or filmstrip projector could be run from the top deck toward one of two sizes of portable folding projection screens.

### AUDIO VISUAL TRUCKS IN VIETNAM

PSYOP units in battalion and company organizations were spread over the length of South Vietnam. These

units worked in conjunction with combat units and participated in all the major field campaign operations.

An online discovery confirmed that a number of the Jeep J100 AV units produced in 1967 did deploy to Vietnam. The cover illustration of a PSYOP Special Warfare material catalog produced by the 246<sup>th</sup> PSYOP Company (part of the 6<sup>th</sup> PSYOP Battalion at a U.S. base in Bien Hoa) bears the distinctive image of a 1967 J100 AV Jeep.

In one report from 1967, the 4<sup>th</sup> PSYOP Group, specifically confirmed ground teams employed their “Jeepsters” to support combat operations.

Another operations report from the 7<sup>th</sup> PSYOP Battalion for the period ending 31 Jan 1968, confirmed, “Ground Loudspeaker Broadcasts were 2284 hours, motion picture shown 423 hours, and the number of movies shown was 966.”

The small number of specially ordered Jeep J100s were never fully integrated into the military maintenance and support systems.

In 1969, the U.S. Army developed and deployed a redesigned vehicle for psychological and audio-visual missions in Southeast Asia. The AN/MSQ-85 was based on the M37 ¾-ton tactical truck with a PSYOP-specific enclosed rear shelter that included improved AV equipment. A ¼-ton M416 trailer carried a small generator set and extra equipment.



A folding ladder provided access to the roof platform.



Loud speakers could be affixed at one of the special mounting points located on the roof platform.



A PTO-driven, 120-volt generator provided AC-power to operate the vehicle's 16 mm movie projector, audio speakers, magnetic tape player, and phonograph.



Roof electrical connections and lights were mounted on the guard rail surrounding the roof platform.

The AN/MSQ-85 improved vehicle support and maintainability over the earlier, special-order Panel Delivery J100 Jeeps with a more standardized tactical PSYOP AV delivery vehicle.

### TRUCK NO. 200598

Documenting the military history of the small number of J100 Jeep AV units in operations is extremely difficult. My truck bears serial number 200598. After government disposal, it passed through the hands of several owners. Any documentation of its military history was long gone, though the recent military restoration paint and markings were well done.

Twelve other J100 Panel Delivery AV units have been reported or observed, with six different serial numbers confirmed. None of the other trucks, however, are complete or



Basically a converted civilian vehicle, the Jeep J100 AV was delivered to the Army with a complete, civilian interior.

have received any restoration to the military's configuration.

Knowledgeable civilian FSJ history collectors estimate that the first J100 Panel Delivery AV trucks were produced for the Army in June 1967, starting at serial number 200585. The last unit in the 1967 model year is believed to be 200653. However, two trucks have been reported with serial numbers outside of that range: 200693 and 200695. Factory production was estimated to be about 35 units per month. The estimated production of special order J100 trucks for the U.S. Army is about 100.

Of the dozen existing Army AV trucks, two others have original readable Army registration numbers on the doors. Based on these, the serial numbers and registration numbers on my restored truck are likely the original numbers. Because my truck registers just under 20,000 original miles, it was likely assigned to an Army Reserve unit



The vehicle that we found in 2024 was built by Kaiser Jeep Corporation. After traveling to inspect the vehicle, we found it had data plates that confirmed its military heritage. The brass plate affixed to the right of the glove box designated the Kaiser Jeep-built J100 as "164 PANEL-DELV-AUDIO-VISUAL" with a date of delivery of 1967.



Additional, factory-applied plates further identify the vehicle as "Jeep Model #SV-102H" and "Special Sales Order No. GS-5173."



Second fuel tank and modified filler location are distinctive, identifying attributes of a specialized J100 Panel Delivery AV truck.

where it received little operational use. In the era following the Vietnam War, nearly three-quarters of all PSYOP units in the continental U.S. have been either U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) or Civil Affairs units.

In the 1990s, PSYOP units were redesignated and received “300” series unit numbering. The unit designation on my restored truck is “GA351.” “GA” indicates it belonged to the Publications Operations Team



Today, PSYOP units continue to use audio-visual equipment to carry out their missions. It is not unusual to see current audio visual platforms and speakers mounted on variants of the M998 HMMWV series.

of the 351<sup>st</sup> PSYOP Company (Fort Totten, New York) under the 11th Psychological Operations Battalion, USAR in Maryland. 🚩

*A special thank you to SGM Herbert Friedman (U.S. Army, Ret.) and [www.psywarrior.com](http://www.psywarrior.com) for providing historic images and information from his PSYOP collection for portions of this article.*



Our J100 Jeep drove with the MVPA's 2024 Jefferson Highway Convoy from the Minnesota/Canadian border, south to Texas, and back to Wisconsin in 2024. We plan to drive the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery Convoy in 2026. A few vehicle crew comforts help on long road trips.