

FN-150 Turret update November 2018

The October update finished with this image of the gunner's control system in kit form. Actually, some of these pieces are not from the control system.



In short, the control system comprises of two control handles each of which can activate the hydraulics, rotate the turret, elevate the guns and fire the guns. All this is achieved with rods and levers in the wonderful, pre-electronic age!

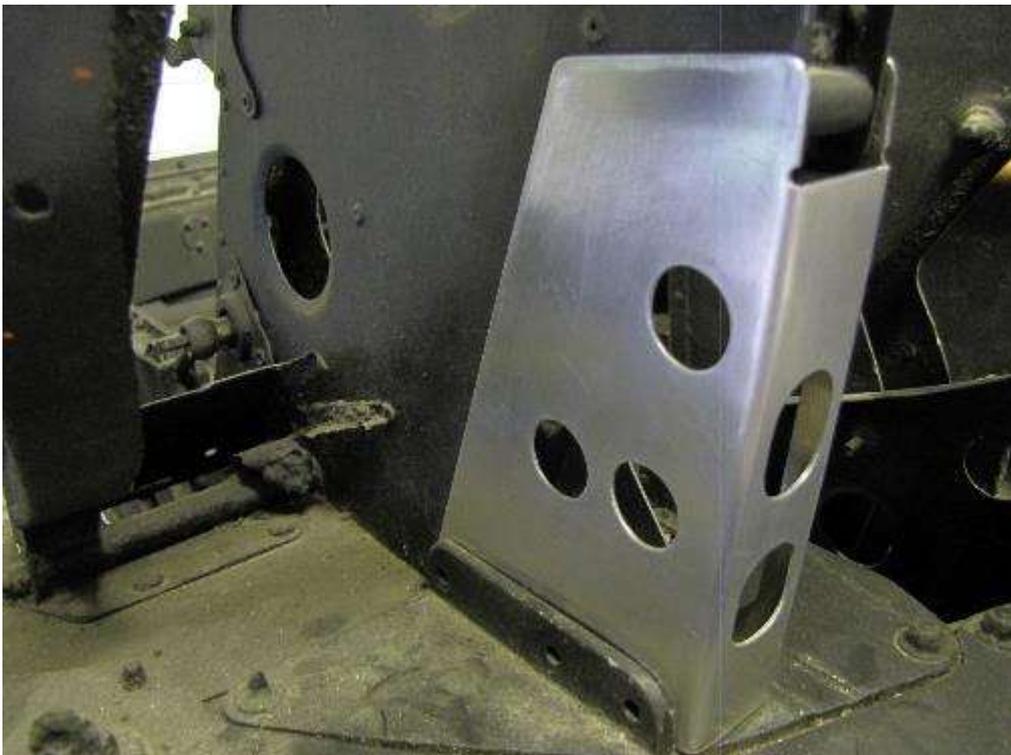
The three control shafts (seen in bits above with the levers attached), are supported on each side of the turret by an alloy wrap round assembly, like the one below.



Whilst the left side support was present, the right side one was conspicuous by its absence. So, the first task was to make this assembly as it was needed to obtain the overall length of the control shafts.



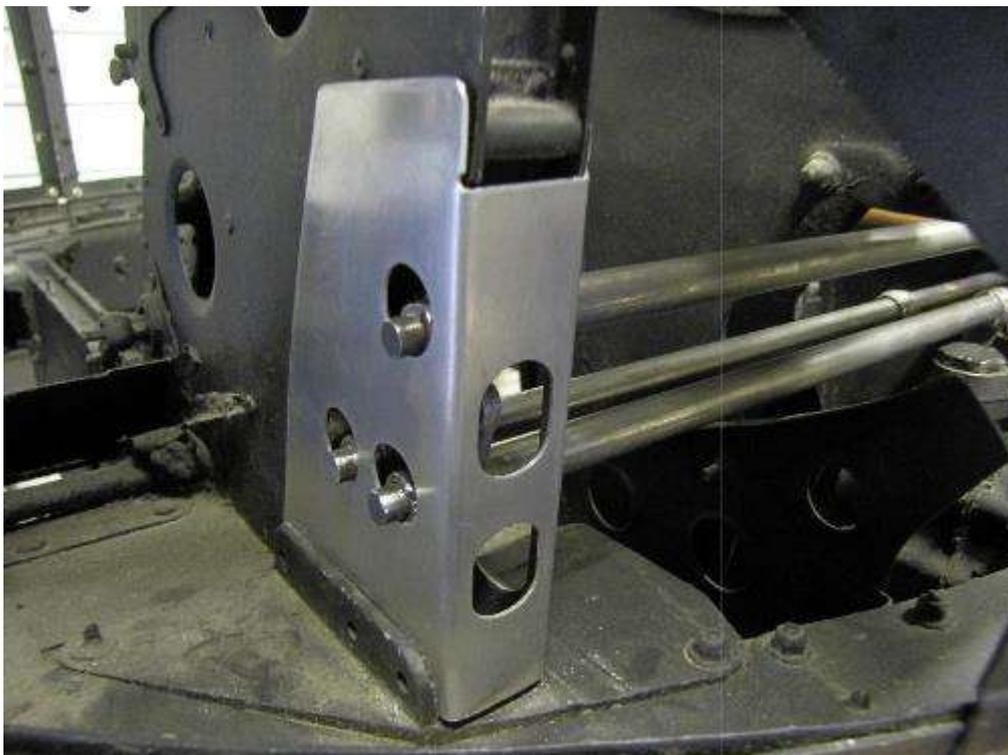
With the support made and loosely assembled it was possible to obtain the overall length of the control shafts.



I tried and failed to recover the original shafts (I like original) and so had to get some ½" OD steel tube. The original levers were then transferred across – they are an inordinately tight interference fit. The sharp eyed will notice that there is a missing lever from the bottom shaft, so if anyone comes across it, I would be glad to hear from them.



Now the shafts can be tried for size in their supports.



These shafts have end fittings that pivot in two black bakelite or possibly paxolin plates. These were also missing, but there are the remains of one on my FN5 turret which was enough to obtain dimensions, corner radii and the such like. So, I made two for each turret whilst I was at it, the one seen below is on the FN5.



The space in front of the valve box already looks tight. However, there is still the shaft centre support (which also mounts the gun fire solenoids), another hydraulic feed line, the valve box links, the front part of each empty case chute and the armour to get into this area.



The left hand control handle was in very good condition and just needed reassembly. It has a small issue with the “squeeze” function – hence the cable tie, but it needs dismantling and re-finishing in any case. That said, the whole lot now needs to be removed, painted and then re-fitted



Next month. Sort out these rods that join the control handles to the control shafts and produce a new shaft centre support and solenoid mount. The centre support and solenoid mount is also missing but, luckily, I have the remains of one from the FN5 to copy.

