CEN Workshop Agreements for Test and Evaluation of Humanitarian Demining Equipment

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The Comité Européen de Normalisation has organised workshops to aid the establishment of standard methodologies for demining. This article discusses the workshops and the agreements reached in those workshops. The author includes a list of contacts for additional information on demining equipment and methods.

by Franciska Borry [International Test and Evaluation Program for Humanitarian Demining Secretariat]
to expand future work to address a number of issues, including appropriate testing of ground-preparation devices and vegetation cutters, enhancement of operator/crew safety testing, enhancement of mobility testing and performance-degradation testing. A series of mechanical equipment trials existed by IETF during 2006 using the CWA 15044 test protocol has further produced some useful experiences which will be taken into account when the CWA 15044 is updated, probably in 2008.

Ongoing CWAs for test and evaluation of humanitarian-demining equipment. A CEN Workshop (CEN WS 26) on a Test Methodology for Personal Protective Equipment for use in humanitarian mine action kicked off in June 2006. The Standardisieringen i Sverige (SIS) and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining are co-chairing this CEN Workshop. The aim is to establish a framework that has to improve safety, quality and efficiency of PPE to participate in the Workshop. Two Working Groups, each tasked with drafting different parts of the document, were established at the kick-off meeting. The first technical meeting was held 3 May 2007.

Points of Contact
The contacts listed below are available to provide advice on the planning and conduct of an evaluation according to the described CEN Workshop Agreements. Please do not hesitate to contact them when considering a trial of demining equipment or demining methods.

- IETF Secretariat: secretariat@iftp.ws
- IETF Working Group on Test and Evaluation of Mechanical Assistance Clearance Equipment: Geoff Coley, geoff.coley@sids-rddc.gc.ca, or Chris Weickert, Chris.Weickert@sids-rddc.gc.ca
- IETF Working Group on Test and Evaluation of Dual (Multi) Sensors: David Lewis, dwlewis@gchnet.com
- GICHED: Erik Tollefsen, e.tollefsen@gichd.ch
- United Nations Mine Action Service: Noel Mulliner, Mulliner@un.org

2007 Marks 10th Anniversary of Mine Action Standards
The International Mine Action Standards are guidelines set by the United Nations to implement mine-action programs safely and effectively. The author discusses the purpose and processes of the IMAS as well as provides various references for those interested in learning more about the IMAS.

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B een in March 1997, the United Nations Mine Action Service issued the first edition of international standards for humanitarian mine clearance. These standards have since been expanded to include the other components of mine action and to reflect changes to operational procedures, practices and norms. The original standards were redeveloped and renamed as International Mine Action Standards with the first edition produced in October 2001. Therefore, 2007 marks the 10th anniversary of the original mine-action standards. The IMAS are standards the United Nations has issued to guide the planning, implementation and management of mine-action programs. They have been developed to improve safety, quality and efficiency in mine action. The IMAS follow the International Mine Action Standards.

Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and draw on the two main instruments of international law that regular landmines—the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and Amended Protocol II and Protocol III of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The IMAS provide general information on existing regulations and conventions that affect mine action, particularly those referring to international humanitarian law, clearance requirements, hazard marking and general safety issues.

The IMAS are a framework to assist the development of National Mine Action Standards that can more accurately reflect specific local situations in a given country. The IMAS can be adapted to national standards where the United Nations, or another international body, temporarily assumes the responsibility of a mine-action authority. IMAS can also provide the framework for legal contracts between donors and implementing organizations. There are currently a number of IMAS covering a wide range of issues from establishing to evaluating mine-action programs. They include not only general guidelines for mine action but also standards for specific field activities such as clearance requirements or marking of hazards in demining operations. New IMAS are produced periodically based on requirements realised either in the field or at the management levels in mine action. The existing IMAS are reviewed every three years and amended or replaced with a new edition as needed.

UNMAS has the mandated responsibility for development and maintenance of the IMAS. The work of preparing, reviewing and revising the IMAS is conducted by technical committees, with the support of international, governmental and non-governmental organisations. The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining coordinates this process at the request of the United Nations. There is a Review Board of the IMAS that is responsible for overseeing the review and