Assisting Landmine Accident Survivors in the Thai-Burmese Border Region

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a “transition zone.” The transition zone contains desert land, swamps with massive reed beds, and tidal areas—a challenge to any mine and UXO clearance operation. The various channels, streams and reed beds create not only clearance problems but also a variety of additional hazards, such as snakes, leeches and insects, plus rapidly rising tides and waves from passing craft.

Clearance and Cutting of Reed Beds in the Abadan Swamps

In the north, work has involved clearance of construction and wellhead locations, flare pits and pipeline routes, and a range of quality-control and/or clearance tasks in support of seismic exploration. This is generally fairly standard clearance work, requiring clearance to varying depths in areas that will eventually support sites for oil and gas extraction, as well as work in support of 2D and 3D seismic operations, requiring battle area clearance and shot point checks.

QC for Seismic Operations Summary

Over the last few years, the gradual increase in the availability of high-tech equipment and the training of company management has created a firm foundation for future projects. MAI operational staff has also assisted both the army and SEPAH by conducting specialist training on Eibinger’s high-tech equipment. Over the last few years, MAI has conducted Technical Surveys (which are primarily a simple version of the Environmental Impact Assessments, one of the functions of the environmental side of the company), threat assessments, risk analysis, mine and UXO clearance, quality assurance and QC. Mines and UXO will continue to be a factor for some years to come in the western border regions, and in conjunction with the army and SEPAH, MAI hopes to continue working to rid the country of these remnants of war.

See “References and Endnotes,” page 104

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Clear Path International is working with Prosthetic Research Study of Seattle to help Burmese landmine survivors obtain prostheses from afar by using a new fitting process.

by Imbert Matthee | Clear Path International
Many amputees who flee Burma and cross the border avoid the Thai authorities and the refugee camps, from which they cannot leave once accepted inside. They end up getting their prostheses from the prosthesis department at the Mae Tao Clinic, an unofficial medical facility started by Dr. Cynthia Maung, Maung is an ethnic Karen doctor who fled Burma after the 1988 pro-democracy student uprising and has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her tireless medical work on behalf of Karen refugees, whom her clinic sees by the hundreds each day.

Clear Path has been supporting the clinic’s prosthetics department since 2001 with funding for materials, equipment, training, technical assistance and the construction of a new fabrication shop. The department’s director, Maw Kei, himself an amputee who worked as a master prosthetics technician for Handicap International in the camps for many years, introduced Clear Path to Mordecai and his dilemma. That was the inspiration for helping PRS in Seattle with the completion of its Transtibial Alignment System (TTAS).

This system was the closest thing to a silver bullet we could address to the need of a transtibial amputee population in an active conflict zone. PRS, the brandchild of the late Dr. Ernest Burgess, is known for a number of innovations in prosthetics and has done extensive development research for the United States Veterans Affairs Administration.

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Observations on Recent Changes in Northwest Cambodia's Mine/UXO Situation, Simmonds, et al. [from page 24]

1. LSS is an abbreviation for Level One Survey that is commonly used in Cambodia. This is not to be confused with LSS (Landmine Impact Survey), which is commonly used in most other parts of the world.

2. Most work in Iran is for a national client. International clients demand IMAS standards and international quality assurance/quality control practices to inspect work.


4. ISO 9000 is a set of standards for quality management systems that is accepted around the world. For more information about the various quality certifications, visit International Organization for Standardization at http://www.iso.org or Simply Quality’s Frequently Asked Questions about ISO 9000 at http://www.isoexpress.com.


7. USAID’s Perspective: The Importance of Social and Economic Developing Strategies for Humanitarian Mine Action, Feinberg [from page 41]

8. From the 2006 National Declaration by States Parties in the Ottawa Convention


10. From the 2006 National Declaration by States Parties in the Ottawa Convention


12. Information on the Geneva Conventions can be found at http://genevaconventions.org/.


14. Integrated Mine Action: A Rights-Based Approach in Cambodia, Campbell [from page 45]

