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Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database

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DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

| | |
|--|---|
| Report date: 11/03/2004 | Accident number: 39 |
| Accident time: 09:15 | Accident Date: 17/04/1995 |
| Where it occurred: Sabie, Maputo Province | Country: Mozambique |
| Primary cause: Field control inadequacy (?) | Secondary cause: Management/control inadequacy (?) |
| Class: Missed-mine accident | Date of main report: [No date recorded] |
| ID original source: MC/ADP-2 | Name of source: IND/ADP |
| Organisation: [Name removed] | |
| Mine/device: PMN AP blast | Ground condition: metal fragments |
| Date record created: 22/01/2004 | Date last modified: 22/01/2004 |
| No of victims: 2 | No of documents: 1 |

Map details

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Longitude: | Latitude: |
| Alt. coord. system: | Coordinates fixed by: |
| Map east: | Map north: |
| Map scale: not recorded | Map series: |
| Map edition: | Map sheet: |
| Map name: | |

Accident Notes

inadequate communications (?)
inadequate medical provision (?)
pressure to work quickly (?)
mine/device found in "cleared" area (?)
inadequate investigation (?)
no independent investigation available (?)
inadequate equipment (?)

Accident report

An internal report made by a UN Technical Advisor was made available in November 1998. The following summarises its content.

The mined area was a protective ring about 80km long and 5-10 metres wide containing both blast and fragmentation AP mines.

At 09:15 Victim No.1 was injured by stepping on a mine "in a recently cleared area while engaged in clearance duties....". Victim No.2 was also injured. "Both men were wearing protective clothing – cotton overalls, leather boots and protective eye glasses" [sic]. The men were treated on site and evacuated at 11:24 by air to Maputo airport. (The requested plane landed in the wrong place and lost radio contact: a second plane had to be sent.)

Victim No.1 suffered traumatic amputation of his lower right leg below the knee, complex injury of the genital area, multiple superficial injuries on the face, arms and legs. Victim No.2 suffered multiple superficial injuries on the face and both arms and legs, "superficial injury of the left eye and swelling of the left hand". The casualties were in hospital in Maputo at 12:06.

The investigator believed the mine was missed because there was metal contamination in the area and no mines had been found for 10 days. Also, deminers may have taken shorter breaks than usual to make up for absent (sick) colleagues, and the mine was missed on the last working day before a long weekend.

Recommendations

The investigator [not a medic] made an assessment of the genital injuries such that Victim No.1 would lose one testicle, the tip of the penis and "all sensation in that area". He estimated victim compensation at 36% of 30 x monthly salary (\$110) for his leg and guessed the compensation for genital damage at 20% of 30 x \$110 – which he totalled as \$1848 and recommended it be given. He further recommended that ambulances carry serviceable spare tyres, that SabinAir be given a hand-held radio for communication during emergencies, and that Section Commanders check for metal contamination in cleared areas on a regular basis.

Victim Report

| | |
|---|---|
| Victim number: 56 | Name: [Name removed] |
| Age: | Gender: Male |
| Status: supervisory | Fit for work: yes |
| Compensation: US\$2,475 | Time to hospital: 2 hours 51 minutes |
| Protection issued: Safety spectacles | Protection used: Safety spectacles |

Summary of injuries:

INJURIES

minor Arms

minor Face

minor Legs

severe Genitals

AMPUTATION/LOSS

Leg Below knee

Genital

COMMENT

See medical report.

Medical report

The injuries of the victim were described as "traumatically amputated right foot, complex injury of the scrotal region with venous bleeding, multiple superficial skin injuries on both arms and legs".

Amended compensation criteria had to be devised to include genital injury.

A brief medical report (officially translated and incomplete – reproduced verbatim) recorded:

The victim stayed at Maputo Central Hospital from 17th April 1995 until 21st May 1995. He had suffered:

- traumatic amputation of the R foot
- injuries on the scrotum and penis

He had an emergency operation on 17th April involving:

- surgical cleaning of the glans and scrotum with posterior plastia
- surgical cleaning and below knee amputation L
- skin transplantation with plastia

During the time of his hospitalization he was given the following treatment:

- antibiotic therapy, analgesics, drip and blood transfusion

As an outpatient he has attended for:

- urology and constricture of urethra
- Rx of the lower limb

Face

Shows some light edemy of right hemiface with hiperchronic signs of malarand R nasogenian; two hiperchronic scars on the level of R upper lip

Trunk

He has hiperchronic scars on the R.Hemitorax, hipercondrium and R.Ilic.cav.

Upper limbs

They present multi hiperchronic scars on the R upper limb; L upper limb has hiperchronic scars with multimarks on the face of the hand.

Genital area

Hiperchronic marks on the scrotum, with hiperchronic scar and a partial amputation of R testicle; the L testicle is painful.

In November 2000 the victim was working as a radio operator for the demining group.

Victim Report

| | |
|---|---|
| Victim number: 57 | Name: [Name removed] |
| Age: | Gender: Male |
| Status: deminer | Fit for work: yes |
| Compensation: none | Time to hospital: 2 hours 51 minutes |
| Protection issued: Safety spectacles | Protection used: Safety spectacles |

Summary of injuries:

INJURIES

minor Arms

minor Eyes

minor Face

minor Hand

minor Legs

COMMENT

See medical report.

Medical report

The victim's eyes were cleaned and treated and no serious injury discovered. He was given sick leave for "2-3" weeks. "Superficial injuries" were not compensated so he was not compensated.

Analysis

The primary cause of this accident is listed as a "*Field control inadequacy*" because the field supervisors failed to ensure that the deminers were working properly.

There was also a management failing because the CASEVAC procedures they had devised failed and the victim took longer than necessary to reach hospital.

The investigator's concern about communications with the evacuation service imply failings of communications and medical provision that are not detailed in his report.

Victim No.2's eye injuries may imply that he was not wearing his safety spectacles at the time, although they may have failed.

The "inadequate equipment (?)" noted refers to the issue of industrial safety spectacles as PPE.