

9-7-1997

## DDASaccident150

Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database  
*AID*

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# DDAS Accident Report

## Accident details

<b>Report date:</b> 16/05/2006	<b>Accident number:</b> 150
<b>Accident time:</b> not recorded	<b>Accident Date:</b> 07/09/1997
<b>Where it occurred:</b> Qalai Muslim, Ward 7, Kabul city	<b>Country:</b> Afghanistan
<b>Primary cause:</b> Field control inadequacy (?)	<b>Secondary cause:</b> Field control inadequacy (?)
<b>Class:</b> Excavation accident	<b>Date of main report:</b> [No date recorded]
<b>ID original source:</b> none	<b>Name of source:</b> MAPA/UNOCHA
<b>Organisation:</b> Name removed	
<b>Mine/device:</b> PMN AP blast	<b>Ground condition:</b> building rubble hard metal scrap residential/urban
<b>Date record created:</b> 13/02/2004	<b>Date last modified:</b> 13/02/2004
<b>No of victims:</b> 1	<b>No of documents:</b> 1

## Map details

<b>Longitude:</b>	<b>Latitude:</b>
<b>Alt. coord. system:</b>	<b>Coordinates fixed by:</b>
<b>Map east:</b>	<b>Map north:</b>
<b>Map scale:</b> not recorded	<b>Map series:</b>
<b>Map edition:</b>	<b>Map sheet:</b>
<b>Map name:</b>	

## Accident Notes

inadequate investigation (?)  
handtool may have increased injury (?)  
partner's failure to "control" (?)  
squatting/kneeling to excavate (?)

## Accident report

At the time of the accident the UN MAC in Afghanistan favoured the use of two-man teams (usually operating a one-man drill). The two would take it in turns for one to work on vegetation cutting, detecting and excavation, while the other both rested and supposedly "controlled" his partner.

An investigation on behalf of the UN MAC was carried out and its report made briefly available. The following summarises its content.

The victim was reported to have been a deminer for one month but also to have last attended a revision course four months previously. It was one day since his last leave. The ground in the area of the accident was described as a "residential area with medium hard ground". The demining group claimed to have found fragments that identified the mine involved as a PMN.

The investigators determined that the victim investigated a signal and found part of the handle of a metal spoon. When checking the spot again, the detector signalled again and the deminer did not re-mark the signal properly because he thought the signal would be from the rest of the spoon. He prodded in a squatting position and initiated the mine with his bayonet – which was "destroyed".

**The Team Commander** said the victim was prodding improperly with his bayonet when the accident occurred.

**The victim's partner** said this the victim treated the reading as if it were "metal instead of a mine".

## Conclusion

The investigators concluded that the deminer made a bad judgement.

## Recommendations

The investigators recommended that all deminers should mark detector readings properly and treat every one as a potential mine; that all detector readings should be prodded at the correct angle and in the correct position; that Section Leaders should have full control of clearance parties; and that the Section Leader in this case should be disciplined.

## Victim Report

<b>Victim number:</b> 192	<b>Name:</b> Name removed
<b>Age:</b>	<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Status:</b> deminer	<b>Fit for work:</b> no
<b>Compensation:</b> 500,000 Rs (100%)	<b>Time to hospital:</b> not recorded
<b>Protection issued:</b> Helmet Thin, short visor	<b>Protection used:</b> Helmet, Thin, short visor

### Summary of injuries:

minor Chest

minor Leg

minor Shoulder

severe Hands

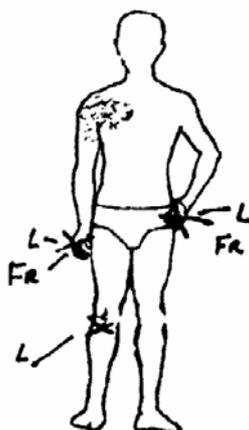
severe Hearing

COMMENT: See medical report.

## Medical report

The victim's injuries were summarised as open fractures in the fingers of both hands, penetrative wounds in his right knee and superficial wounds to his right arm and chest.

A medic's sketch (reproduced below) showed fractures and lacerations to his fingers and chest and a shoulder and knee injury.



The demining group reported that the victim had suffered compound fractures of his right thumb and index finger, left index finger, a penetrating wound to his left knee, and superficial wounds to his right arm and chest.

A claim was forwarded to the insurers on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1997 saying that the victim had total deafness in both ears, stiffness of right thumb and index finger, right knee and left index finger. His hearing loss was assessed as a 75% disability on 27<sup>th</sup> November 1997. His other injuries were assessed as a 30% disability on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1997.

A compensation payment was forwarded on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1998 for 500,000 Rs, being a full 100% disability settlement.

## Analysis

The primary cause of this accident is listed as a "*Field control inadequacy*" because the victim appears to have been working carelessly and his error was not corrected.

No mention is made of his wearing a helmet and visor. His lack of facial injury is taken to imply that he was wearing the visor.

The payment of a total disability settlement may indicate that the victim lost significant use of his hands, so illustrating the danger of using a short tool such as the AK bayonet.

The use of a squatting position to "excavate" was in breach of UN requirements, but not in breach of the demining group's unauthorised variations to those requirements. The failure of the UN MAC to either listen to field feedback and adapt the SOP for local conditions, or enforce their own standards may be seen as a management failing.

The agency that was used to make investigations for the UN MAC (based in Pakistan) at this time was frequently constrained by lack of funds, staff and transport. At times their movement was constrained by safety concerns. As a result, investigations were frequently delayed by weeks, meaning that an assessment of the site at the time of the accident was impossible.