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In Remembrance: Mark Fitzpatrick

Mark Fitzpatrick—"Fitzy" to his friends—was killed during a weapons-destruction operation in Afghanistan’s Parwan province on 20 November 2010. Fitzy, a 34-year-old British deminer, worked with DynCorp International, a global peace and security provider, as part of its weapons removal and abatement team.

"Mark gave his life working to support a safer and more secure Afghanistan," said DynCorp International Chairman and CEO Steve Gaffney. "Thousands of brave men and women put their lives on the line each day to support our operations in remote and hostile areas around the world—their courage and sacrifice cannot be measured. We are deeply saddened by this loss and our hearts go out to all of Mark's family, friends and colleagues."

The Shropshire Star, a paper serving Fitzy’s Telford hometown, quoted his father, Ian Fitzpatrick, as saying, "It's a tragic loss for the family to lose such a loving young man. He has made us immensely proud with the work he did and from the recognition he has had from around the world."

Evidence of Fitzy’s worldwide impact is clear from the messages on his Facebook wall, which is blanketed with congratulations, support, and memories of a true hero.

Fitzy spent about 11 years in the Royal Air Force before leaving it to join DynCorp, where he continued with explosive ordnance disposal in the field. He spent time in Cambodge, Guinea Bissau, Lebanon and Vietnam before his final tour of almost two years in Afghanistan. He is survived by his parents and three other sisters. Mark Fitzpatrick’s funeral was held 6 December 2010, at St John’s Church in Bishops Wood, Staffordshire, UK.

In Remembrance: Mehdi Mohammad Haraz

O n 26 October 2010, fragments of a cluster bomb killed Mehdi Mohammad Haraz, a Lebanese national working for Peace Generation for Demining, while attempting to clear a cluster bomb-infested tobacco field in the village of Yater, South Lebanon. Mehdi was participating in a PGD for three months in an area heavily contaminated by unexploded ordnance. The explosion also injured four others.

Abdel Karim Ali, Hussein Hassan Mansour, Nabil Baabekki and Kamel Ghandour were funded by the Iranian company Ay Kamel Saanaz, the operation was operating 10 kilometers (six miles) outside of Tyre where the Lebanese Army reports that most of the UXO victims are civilians, farmers or children.

The incident contributes to the 50 casualties and 350 injuries that have occurred from local UXO in the past three years.

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3. This refers to a demarcation line (not technically a border) between Israel and Lebanon set up by the United Nations in 2000 in a way to determine whether Israel had fully withdrawn from Lebanon.


