DDASaccident196

Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database

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DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 18/05/2006
Accident time: 10:10
Where it occurred: Phum Sdau, Banan District, Battambang Province
Primary cause: Field control inadequacy (?)
Class: Handling accident
ID original source: NS [date inferred]
Organisation: Name removed
Mine/device: PMN-2 AP blast
Date record created: 14/02/2004
No of victims: 2

Accident number: 196
Accident Date: 24/11/1993
Country: Cambodia
Secondary cause: Inadequate training (?)
Name of source: MAG
Ground condition: rocks/stones trees
Date last modified: 14/02/2004
No of documents: 1

Map details

Longitude: 
Latitude: 
Alt. coord. system: GR: 80042587
Coordinates fixed by:
Map east: 
Map north:
Map scale: 
Map series: 48PUV
Map edition: 
Map sheet: 5534-1
Map name:

Accident Notes

inadequate training (?)
no independent investigation available (?)
inadequate medical provision (?)
incomplete detonation (?)
protective equipment not worn (?)
**Accident report**

An internal accident report was written by an expatriate specialist, but not dated. It was made available by the demining group and the following summarises its content.

The investigation took place on the day following the accident. The report was made up of statements. The events surrounding the accident have been reconstructed in the summary that follows.

The two victims found the bottom of a burnt PMN-2 while working but did not report it because it did not contain TNT. It was lying on top of the grass. They moved it to the safe lane. After a rest break the two victims did not return to work immediately but took the mine under a tree where Victim No.2 tried to removed a screw from it. He then gave it to Victim No.1 who put it upside down on a stone and hit it three times with a prodder.

Victim No.1 was sitting with his legs splayed leaning forward, holding the mine with his left hand when the booster charge detonated. He lost a finger, the top of two others and part of the thumb on his left hand, and was also injured above the eye. Victim No.2 suffered superficial injuries "to his hand and head" [from which it seems likely that both deminers had a hand on or near the device when it detonated].

Their supervisor reported that the victim's bodies were not injured because they were wearing their frag-jackets but the victims were not wearing helmets ("goggles" or visors). The "sub-supervisor" stated that he "saw the prodder had been blown from his hand and a pair of goggles" a meter from Victim No.1.

The casualties were taken to S'dau district hospital and then to Battambang Provincial Hospital. Initially, no medical assistance was found at Battambang and the victims were taken to the "World Vision" doctors instead. Sometime later they returned to the hospital where they were treated.

**Conclusion**

The investigator concluded that SOPs were broken and the deminers were not aware of the danger they were in.

**Recommendation**

The investigator recommended that the victims should be given a "warning" and everybody should be briefed about the danger from burnt mines.

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**Victim Report**

*Victim number:* 249  
*Name:* Name removed  
*Gender:* Male

*Age:*  
*Status:* deminer

*Compensation:* not made available  
*Protection issued:* Frag jacket

*Protection used:* Frag jacket, Helmet, Short visor

*Fit for work:* not known  
*Time to hospital:* not recorded

**Summary of injuries:**

INJURIES
minor Face
severe Leg
AMPUTATION/LOSS
Fingers
COMMENT
See medical report.

Medical report
An initial medical assessment of Victim No.1 was dated 2nd December 1993. It stated:
"He had a large open wound to the left frontal area above his left eye, the eye itself was
closed due to swelling there was evidence of imbedded particles of the mine in the lacrimal,
zygoma, maxilla areas of his face. His left hand was redressed over the original bandages in
place. He had a large haematoma to the inside of his left thigh with particles of the mine
embedded. Further examination revealed a large open and deep wound to the inside of his
lower left leg with a large piece of stone, approx 6 to 8mm embedded."

Victim Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victim number: 250</th>
<th>Name: Name removed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>Gender: Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status: deminer</td>
<td>Fit for work: presumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation: not made available</td>
<td>Time to hospital: not recorded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection issued: Frag jacket</td>
<td>Protection used: Frag jacket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helmet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short visor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of injuries:
INJURIES
minor Face
minor Hand
COMMENT
No medical report was made available.

Analysis
The primary cause of this accident is listed as a "Field control inadequacy" because the
victims were in breach of SOPs and went uncorrected.

The demining NGO's "goggles" were in fact safety spectacles designed for industrial use.

It is not clear how the mine was burnt. Did the demining group burn off the area prior to
starting clearance, had there been a "brush fire"? – not common in Cambodia but they do
occur – or was the mine “destroyed" by burning after its discovery during demining?
The ignorance of the victims about the mechanism of the most common mine in Cambodia implies incomplete training (80% of all mines found in Cambodia were PMN-2s according to the country MAC in January 1999) which is a serious management failing. The secondary cause is listed as “Inadequate training”.

See also the accident that occurred in Cambodia on 23rd December 1996.