

10-5-2000

DDASaccident302

Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database
AID

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DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 19/05/2006	Accident number: 302
Accident time: 12:25	Accident Date: 05/10/2000
Where it occurred: Cordon Sanitaire, Mozambique border	Country: Zimbabwe
Primary cause: Unavoidable (?)	Secondary cause: Inadequate equipment (?)
Class: Other	Date of main report: 05/10/2000
ID original source: JM	Name of source: Mounser/AVS 2001:Z09
Organisation: Name removed	
Mine/device: R2M2 AP blast	Ground condition: woodland (bush)
Date record created: 19/02/2004	Date last modified: 19/02/2004
No of victims: 1	No of documents: 2

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

no independent investigation available (?)

inadequate investigation (?)

mechanical follow-up (?)

Accident report

The following official "accident summary" was made available in January 2001. No other report was made. The summary was compiled by the demining group's site manager. For obscure reasons, the country manager of the programme edited the content of the following before making it available.

The following text has only been further edited when necessary to conceal the identity of individuals and organisations involved.

1. On 5 October at 12:55, [the victim] was carrying out normal demining duties with complete PPE on. He was clearing in the Cordon Sanitaire when a mine suspected to R2M2 model detonated on its own 2,5 metres in front of him. At that particular time [the victim] was in a kneeling position excavating to try and locate another mine. He received no injuries except for an expected complaint that he was not hearing properly.
2. It was concluded that this was another case of an R2M2 going off on its own. Many such cases where the mines go off even quite far away from any cause of interference have already been recorded.
3. The investigation has therefore been closed.

Signed: Operations Manager

Victim Report

Victim number: 382	Name: Name removed
Age:	Gender: Male
Status: deminer	Fit for work: yes
Compensation: not made available	Time to hospital: not applicable
Protection issued: Frontal apron Long visor	Protection used: Frontal apron, Long visor

Summary of injuries:

INJURIES

minor Hearing

COMMENT

No medical report was made available.

Analysis

The primary cause of this accident is classed as "*Unavoidable*" because the victim appears to have been working properly and fallen victim to a spontaneous detonation.

However, it was known by this time that the mechanical preparation on the site left mines exposed and in a dangerous condition (see Related Papers) so the secondary cause is listed as "*Inadequate equipment*". Management revised demolition procedures because of a perceived increased risk, but apparently did not reconsider the manner in which the machines were deployed. This may be seen as a "*Management/control inadequacy*".

The accident investigation is considered inadequate because it was edited prior to being made available.

Related papers

In an exchange with one of the Field Supervisors at the site, the researcher asked the following:

Q) It seems that several accidents involved spontaneous detonations of R2M2s after machines had worked in the area. Is this so?

A) True the R2M2 had a strange habit of detonating without anything directly appearing to cause the mine to function. This did usually occur after a machine had been in the vicinity. Remember that we (the mechanical unit) were operating in advance of the manual follow up using bush-cutting equipment, bulldozers and the MineBuster excavator. I witnessed mines detonating without external influence personally – one went off 35m from my vehicle as I was travelling up the safety road.

This happened only in the R2M2 areas and I suspect that the plastic assembly of the fuse housing was damaged (the plastic distorted) and although the metallic balls of the safety release had released, the distortion of the plastic prevented the firing spring from creeping forward and initiating the mine. When the heat of the day expanded the plastic, the spring was released and the pin forced into the stab-detonator.

The thought of moving R2M2 mines in this condition - putting them into a pit to be destroyed (max 10 in a pit) – was unacceptable. So R2M2s found in areas after the machines had worked were burned in-situ. Other mines were still destroyed in pits.