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Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database

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DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 06/07/2005	Accident number: 413
Accident time: 10:15	Accident Date: 27/06/2004
Where it occurred: Puliyankulam village, Vavuniya District, Vanni	Country: Sri Lanka
Primary cause: Inadequate equipment (?)	Secondary cause: Field control inadequacy (?)
Class: Other	Date of main report: 28/06/2004
ID original source: KS	Name of source: LA
Organisation: Name removed	
Mine/device: P4Mk1 AP blast boosted	Ground condition: grass/grazing area hard
Date record created: 06/07/2005	Date last modified: 06/07/2005
No of victims: 0	No of documents: 2

Map details

Longitude:	Latitude:
Alt. coord. system: See map under "Other documents"	Coordinates fixed by:
Map east:	Map north:
Map scale: MF HDU 089	Map series:
Map edition:	Map sheet:
Map name:	

Accident Notes

non injurious accident (?)
no independent investigation available (?)
inadequate investigation (?)

Accident report

Details were made available by the demining group involved in October 2004. The IMSMA report, the content of which is summarised below, followed by the statements gathered by the internal investigation.

“During the resting time the water tanker came inside of the minefield to water the minefield. When they complete watering they wanted to reverse the tanker and unfortunately the track was the place between bund and Base line.”

“The driver of the water tanker wanted to reverse the tanker and unfortunately he drove in side of uncleared area.”

The tyre of the tanker was damaged when it ran over a PK-Mk4 AP mine “attached to a 60mm mortar”.



[The blast crater left by the device is shown above.]

The accident occurred on what was described as a “hard”, “hillside” with “medium” “grass” cover.

The site had been last QA inspected during the previous month (the IMSMA date field does not require a day, merely a month and year).

The demining group had been working at the site for 3 months, 1 week and three days. Work had been progressing on the day for 5 minutes when the initiation occurred.

The accident was reported to the demining group HQ on 28/06/2004 at 10:00. The IMSMA report was dated “09/06/2004” [clearly an entry unchanged from the previous accident report].

Statements

Statement Of Section Leader [Name excised]

I am the section leader of Team 07 – 2 Southern Group at 10.15 while we all were at rest area on rest suddenly heard an explosion and saw smoke coming from close to bund. At once I went to the site of the explosion of the spot and I found the water tanker was on uncleared area and with no damage or injury. So I instructed to driver reverse the vehicle using the same track. Driver followed me.

Section leaders additional comments: I believe that once three months before one day was very rainy so that date the team leader allowed to reverse the vehicle by using this same land but the driver was regional. But in this time driver was not regional and he didn't ask us anything.

Deminer of Section 2 team 7 [Name excised]

I am the deminer of section 2 of team 07 and have been working in this team for last 7 months. I normally help water tank at the same manner while I was on the top of tanker after completing pouring water the driver managed to reverse on the base line but he couldn't then suddenly I heard an explosion but I didn't step on the floor but the driver was close to the back side wheel then I step on floor.

Statement of Driver [Name excised]

I am [name excised] temporary driver of this water tanker while the regional driver was on leave I was the driver after pouring water to this minefield I wanted to reverse the tanker in the first time I reversed in appropriate place and in this time I used the uncleared area and I heard an explosion then I realized there was an mine accident for my vehicle.

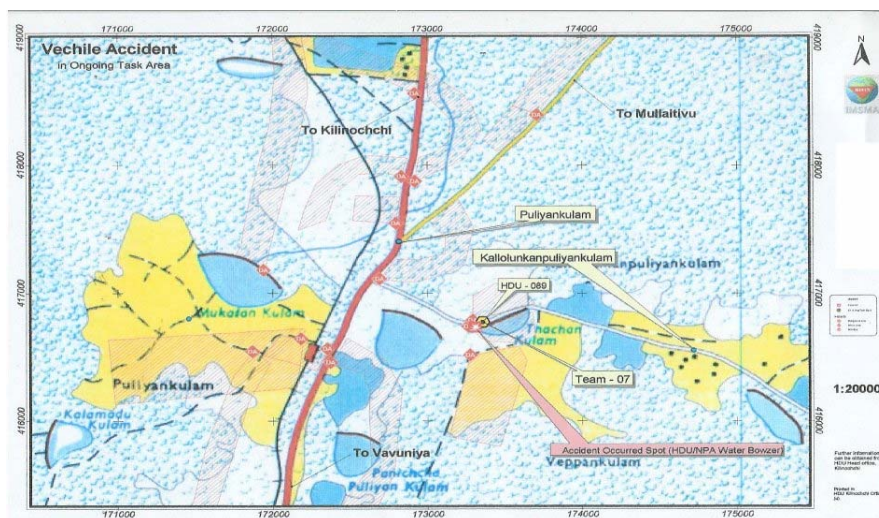
Normally the driver used the base line and safety path to transport. When I trying to reverse the vehicle the cleaner said that we can reverse here and I followed.

Cleaner of water tanker [Name excised]

I am the cleaner and helper of this water tanker. I have been working here for last three months. To day the regional driver wasn't with us so we replaced a new driver. We watered two times on this day and when we trying to get back out of mine field we should reversed. But the room wasn't enough so I mentioned once we used the uncleared area that was happened three months before with Team leader's permission but this time we didn't ask them.

MAPS

A map of the accident area is shown below.



Analysis

The primary cause of this accident is listed as *“Inadequate equipment”* because the water bowser used was too big to be safely manoeuvred inside the mined area. It had been unable to turn without using the uncleared area on a previous occasion and the driver had been instructed to use the uncleared area. The instruction to use an uncleared area for vehicle turning is the reason that the secondary cause of the accident is listed as a *“Field control inadequacy”*. The field supervisors could have ordered areas close to the bund to be cleared so that the vehicle could manoeuvre on cleared land, but did not do so.

The accident investigation is listed under *“Notes”* as inadequate because it includes no conclusions or recommendations. The statements gathered included contradictions and did not explain how the device was identified. The AP blast mine might be expected to have punctured a tyre, but the 60mm mortar attached apparently did no damage, which seems strange.

The demining group involved developed a Safe-lane water bowser capable of moving inside 2 metre wide lanes and reversing along them during 2005.