

1-26-2007

DDASaccident539

Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database
AID

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DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

| | |
|---|---|
| Report date: 30/01/2008 | Accident number: 539 |
| Accident time: 12:25 | Accident Date: 26/01/2007 |
| Where it occurred: MF LK 23B, Navatkuli, Thenmaradchchi District, Jaffna Province | Country: Sri Lanka |
| Primary cause: Unavoidable (?) | Secondary cause: Unavoidable (?) |
| Class: Excavation accident | Date of main report: 22/02/2007 |
| ID original source: None | Name of source: [Name removed] |
| Organisation: [Name removed] | |
| Mine/device: P2Mk2 P4Mk1 AP blast | Ground condition: agricultural (abandoned) rocks/stones trees |
| Date record created: | Date last modified: 30/01/2008 |
| No of victims: 1 | No of documents: 1 |

Map details

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Longitude: | Latitude: |
| Alt. coord. system: | Coordinates fixed by: Resection |
| Map east: E 124.351.89 | Map north: N 493.898.43 |
| Map scale: Chavakachcheri | Map series: ABMP |
| Map edition: 01 | Map sheet: 04 |
| Map name: 1:50,000 | |

Accident Notes

inadequate investigation (?)
metal-detector not used (?)
no independent investigation available (?)
non injurious accident (?)
standing to excavate (?)
use of rake (?)

Accident report

The report of this accident was made available in January 2008 as an IMSMA file. Its conversion to a text file has led to the formatting being lost. The substance of the report is reproduced below, edited for anonymity. The original PDF file is held on record. Text in [] is editorial.

From IMSMA report

Report date: 22. 02. 2007

Accident date: 26.01.2007, 12:25

Accident place: Less than 500m from Navatkuli, Thenmaradchchi District, Jaffna Province.

GR: E 124.351.89; N 493.898.43; Resection

Alt system: SL grid

Map edition: 01

Map sheet: 04

Map scale 1:50,000

Map series: ABMP

Map name: Chavakachcheri

The accident happened in a “field” and “forest” near residential buildings and on a path.

Accident description

The 26th of January 2007, approx 12.25 (local time SL), the HQ in Jaffna was called up by the Team leader of Team 5, working in a heavy dense (P4s) minefield, LK-23B. The message he gave was that one of his deminers had set one mine of in his lane while conducting mine clearance. The mentioned deminer was taken out of work for the rest of the day. The minefield consists of rocky ground with both loose rock and solid/fixed rock.

Conclusion after interview and seeing the lane: I think the deminer used too much force, in order to move one of the rock in the lane or he thought he was clearing on top of solid rock and that there was a mine just adjacent to that piece of rock. Either the rock (while moved by the rake) or the rake itself pressurized the mine with enough weight to set it of. The deminer escaped the incident without any visible injuries at all. (Some smaller fragmentation was found in his PPE.) The deminer was sent to a medical check-up the 28th of January.

The MD examining the deminer states that he was –“physically and mentally healthy” and that he have full seeing and hearing. This medical examin[ation] report is filed with the deminers personal file at [Demining group] HQ Jaffna. The deminer was back to normal work in minefield LK-23B the 29th of January. The DMAO officer, [Name removed] in charge for the DMAO office was informed within one hour after the incident, as well was the [Other demining group] programme manager.

Victim Report

| | |
|---|---|
| Victim number: 712 | Name: [Name removed] |
| Age: 27 | Gender: Male |
| Status: deminer | Fit for work: yes |
| Compensation: Not appropriate | Time to hospital: Two days |
| Protection issued: Frontal apron Long visor | Protection used: Frontal apronn, Long visor |

Summary of injuries:

COMMENT: Non-injurious accident.

Analysis

The primary and secondary causes of this accident are listed as "Unavoidable" because the Victim was probably working as trained. The accident report lacks any real detail, so it is not possible to judge whether the investigator was being objective when he blamed the deminer.

The demining group had put in place the use of a long tool (rake) that kept the Victim far enough away from a blast to avoid injury, and his PPE was effective at protecting him from any risk remaining at that distance. Had he been using conventional short hand-tools, some injury would have been expected.

Stand-off (distance from the detonation) is the most effective PPE and the Rake Excavation system makes use of this. It is possible that the extreme length of the tool makes initiation of small AP blast mines with the Heavy rake more likely, but any increased risk of initiation is generally offset by the reduced chance of that initiation resulting in injury. This accident is a good example of balancing an effective demining process and PPE to result in a very low risk of injury.

It is unfortunate that the national manager of this demining group made a decision not to report non-injurious accidents, and so after a spate of accidents in 2004, there were suddenly none for years. This accident may only have been reported because the condition of the Victim led to him eventually being taken to hospital. The need to identify safer processes means that it is as important to record accidents in which there is no injury as it is to record those when injury occurs.