

11-9-2000

DDASaccident573

Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database
AID

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DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 13/06/2008	Accident number: 573
Accident time: Not recorded	Accident Date: 09/11/2000
Where it occurred: Dubinje, Sjenica	Country: Serbia
Primary cause: Inadequate training (?)	Secondary cause: Other (?)
Class: Handling accident	Date of main report: 2007
ID original source: None	Name of source: Printed report
Organisation: [Name removed]	
Mine/device: BLU-97 submunition	Ground condition: Not recorded
Date record created:	Date last modified: 13/06/2008
No of victims: 1	No of documents: 1

Map details

Longitude:	Latitude:
Alt. coord. system: Not recorded	Coordinates fixed by:
Map east:	Map north:
Map scale:	Map series:
Map edition:	Map sheet:
Map name:	

Accident Notes

inadequate investigation (?)
no independent investigation available (?)
inadequate training (?)
metal-detector not used (?)

Accident report

No formal accident report was made available. The details of the accident are drawn from a study entitled "The impact of cluster munitions in Serbia and Montenegro" by Jelena Vićentić for Norwegian People's Aid 2007 [date inferred].

<http://www.npaid.org/filestore/YellowKillersNPA.pdf> Text in square brackets [] is editorial.

This record will be revised if more information becomes available.

[The Victim] born 1967, was severely injured during submunition disposal on 8th November 2000: BLU-97. [In different places, the report records the date of the accident as both 8th and 9th November 2000, and the Victim's year of birth as both 1965 and 1967.]

[The victim] was a deminer/EOD operative working for the army during the 1999 conflict. He received special training in cluster-bomb disposal two months prior to the NATO air campaign. During the campaign and for one year after he was working on submunition clearance in almost all the affected areas in the country – Kuršumljija, Kraljevo, Sjenica and Niš.

On 9 November 2000, [The Victim] was accompanying a group of engineers during a routine visit to Dubinje airport in Sjenica. Their job was to assess the damage to airport facilities. Six new submunitions had been reported, having been seen lying on the ground. Not wanting to put off disposal of the duds, [The Victim] went to the marked location.

The first one he approached exploded with terrible force after he ‘barely’ touched it.

He suffered cardiac arrest upon arrival at hospital. Both his arms and legs had to be amputated; he has had more than 20 operations in total. His eyes were damaged by the explosion, leaving him completely blind for five months after the event. He spent four years at a medical facility in rehabilitation. One of his eyes is still seriously damaged and his left ear is not functional.

Today, [The Victim] lives in Belgrade, where he must cope on his own. He was given the status of a civilian war victim, since the accident took place after the war and the current provisions within the army did not provide for him to be awarded the status of war veteran.



[A picture of the Victim in 2007.]

[The Victim said:] “Cluster munitions present a greater danger for the civilian population than for the army or ‘enemy’ installation; they affect wide areas and continue to affect them for many, many years.”

Victim Report

Victim number: 749	Name: [Name removed]
Age: 35	Gender: Male
Status: deminer	Fit for work: no
Compensation: Not recorded	Time to hospital: Not recorded
Protection issued: Not recorded	Protection used: Not recorded

Summary of injuries:

severe Eye

severe Hearing

AMPUTATION/LOSS

Arm Below elbow

Arm Below elbow

Leg Below knee

Leg Above knee

COMMENT

No medical report was made available.

Analysis

The primary cause of this accident is listed as "Inadequate training" because it seems that the Victim had not been trained in the dangers associated with touching and moving the BLU-97. The training was not available at the time, so no criticism is intended. The secondary cause is listed as "Unavoidable" because it is possible that the BLU-97's "all-ways" acting fuze was so sensitive that it would have been initiated by the vibration of his footfalls.

This record will be revised if more information is made available.