10-28-2009

DDASaccident708

Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database

AID

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DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 07/07/2011  Accident number: 708
Accident time: 08:00  Accident Date: 28/10/2009
Where it occurred: Geri, Nr Nicosia  Country: Cyprus
Primary cause: Other (?)  Secondary cause: Other (?)
Class: Excavation accident  Date of main report: 28/10/2009
ID original source:  Name of source: Press
Organisation: [Name removed]  Ground condition: not recorded
Mine/device: AT (unrecorded)  Date last modified: 07/07/2011
Date record created:  No of documents: 2
No of victims: 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 (?)

Accident report

The only reports of this accident made available to date are press reports. Their conversion into a DDAS file has led to some of the original formatting being lost. Text in square brackets [ ] is editorial. This record will be revised as more information becomes available.

The reports are reproduced below, edited for anonymity.

Cyprus: UN deminer killed in accidental bomb blast

28 October 2009 – A United Nations bomb disposal expert died today in an accidental explosion while clearing landmines in Cyprus' buffer zone separating the Greek and Turkish Cypriot sides of the Mediterranean island.
[The victim], from Mozambique, was killed in a minefield south east of the UN protected area of Nicosia, the first demining accident in the country in five years, according to the UN peacekeeping mission in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Mr. [The victim] was a member of the UN Mine Action Centre Cyprus (MACC) which was formed in November 2004 to clear the 180 kilometre-long buffer zone, covering around three per cent of the surface area of the divided island.

In a message conveying his condolences to Mr. [The victim]'s family on behalf of the UN team in country, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Cyprus [Name removed] said he was saddened and shocked to learn of the accident.

Mr. [Name removed], who also heads UNFICYP, added that Mr. [The victim]'s death was a tragic reminder of the dangers landmines still pose in the country.

Since 2004, the MACC team has removed and destroyed more than 14,000 mines, and cleared a total of 57 minefields to date, covering more than 6.5 million square metres of land.

Cyprus' minefields were laid during an outbreak of violence in 1974, and current records show a total of 101 mined, suspected and booby-trapped areas.

28th October 2009

Deminer dies in accident

A member of the Mine Action Centre Cyprus (MACC) was killed today in a demining accident, the group's first fatality in five years of work on the island.

[The victim], a MACC member from Mozambique, died in an explosion at approximately 8 this morning in a minefield near Geri, some 10 kilometres south east of Nicosia.

The Mine Action Centre Cyprus is a project of the United Nations Development Programme’s Partnership for the Future. The MACC has removed and destroyed more than 14,000 mines since 2004, with the support of UNFICYP. A total of 57 minefields have been cleared to date, covering more than 6.5 million square metres of land.

http://www.unficyp.org/media/SG%20Reports/N0961815.pdf

11. On 28 October, a civilian contractor of the Mine Action Centre was killed in a demining accident, the demining group’s first fatality in five years of operation on the island. The tragic accident happened in the buffer zone, some 10 kilometres south-east of Nicosia.
A MEMBER of the Mine Action Centre Cyprus (MACC) was killed yesterday in a demining accident in the buffer zone, the group’s first fatality in five years of work on the island.

The 39-year-old [the Victim], a MACC member from Mozambique, died after an anti-tank mine exploded at approximately 8am yesterday in a minefield near Yeri, some 10 kilometres south-east of Nicosia.

According to AFP, nine people, including deminers and civilians, were injured by mines in the buffer zone last year.

[The Victim worked for a commercial demining company contracted to the UN MACC, so was not formally employed by the UN.]

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**Victim Report**

- **Victim number:** 894
- **Name:** [Name removed]
- **Age:**
- **Gender:** Male
- **Status:** supervisory
- **Compensation:** Not made available
- **Fit for work:** DECEASED
- **Time to hospital:** Not made available
- **Protection issued:** Not recorded
- **Protection used:** Frontal apron; Long visor

**Summary of injuries:**
FATAL

**COMMENT:** No Medical report was made available.

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**Other documents**

January 21, 2011


The UN Mine Action Center in Cyprus (UNMACC) marked “six years of successful work” on the island, having cleared more than 27,000 landmines once strewn along the 180-kilometer-long buffer zone, a UN spokesman said here Thursday.
"The deminers, who are contracted by the UN, will shut down their current operations next month," [Name removed], the UN spokesman, said at a daily news briefing.

They have "dedicated years of their lives far away from their own homes to make Cyprus -- your home -- a safer place," said [Name removed], who heads the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Most of the deminers are from Mozambique and Zimbabwe. One deminer lost his leg in an accident, and a team leader from Mozambique died a year ago.

**Analysis**

The primary and secondary causes of this accident are listed as Other because there is not enough information to ascertain any causes. Given that the device was an AT blast mine (with a high operating pressure), it is likely that the Victim was defusing it when the accident happened.

The "Inadequate investigation" listed under notes refers to the absence of a full accident report. The UN supported MACC in Cyprus failed to make accident records available after 2008 in contravention of the requirements of the IMAS.