

6-14-2007

DDASaccident736

Humanitarian Demining Accident and Incident Database
AID

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DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 11/07/2011	Accident number: 736
Accident time: Not recorded	Accident Date: 14/06/2007
Where it occurred: CBU 632	Country: Lebanon
Primary cause: Inadequate equipment (?)	Secondary cause: Management/control inadequacy (?)
Class: Missed-mine accident	Date of main report: 15/06/2007
ID original source: OPS/UNOPS/12	Name of source: UN MACC SL
Organisation: [Name removed]	
Mine/device: BLU 63 submunition	Ground condition: agricultural (recent)
Date record created:	Date last modified: 11/07/2011
No of victims: 0	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 equipment (?)
non injurious accident (?)

Accident report

The report of this incident was made available by the UN MACC in 2008. Its conversion into a DDAS file has led to some of the original formatting being lost. Text in square brackets [] is editorial. The only report on record was an Internal report made by the commercial demining company that missed the device during clearance. It is reproduced below, edited for anonymity.

15 June 2007

To: [Name removed], Chief of QA, UN MACC SL, TYRE

RE: INVESTIGATION OF BLU 63 FOUND ON CBU 362 ON 14 JUNE '07

1. As per instructions given, the following Investigation.
2. Attach is the Internal investigation with regards to the BLU 63 found on CBU 362.
3. Contact me if more information is required

Signed [Name removed], Ops Manager, [Demining group] SL, UNOPS contract

File: OPS/UNOPS/12

Internal Investigation and Follow up Action - CBU 362

Overview

On Thursday the 14th of June 2007, a BLU 63 was found on CBU 362. It was discovered by [Demining group] SL EOD Team Leader, [Name removed] and his attached EOD team while doing maintenance on DA marking of suspended / completed sites.

[Demining group] SL Programme Manager and MACC SL Ops / QA were informed by [Demining group] Operational Manager shortly after the discovery of the BLU 63 and members of [Demining group] SL and MACC SL met on the site.

The Task site dossier with the clearance sketch was brought to the site and this confirmed that the BLU 63 was found in a previously cleared area.

The site and item was photographed by MACC QA and it was recommended that an area of 25m x 25m to the centre of the item should be visually searched.

Background

The surrounding area are all olive groves, which was unattended by the owner(s) until clearance was done.

This part of the area where the item was found is a flat area with a fair amount of vegetation and was identified to be BAC instrumentally searched area (Schonstedt locator), sub surface to a depth of 20cm.

Over 700 x BLU 63 where located on this site.

Present situation

After clearance was completed, the owner(s) have ploughed and raked their fields. Compost had also been worked into the ploughed area.

The work (ploughing, raking & working in of compost) was not done recently, as signs of weeds and grass appeared in some places of the site.

It can not be concluded in which direction and to what depth the area was ploughed and raked.

The BLU 63 located was partially buried with about one third protruding from the surface.



[The BLU63 in situ]

Action taken

[Name removed] and his EOD team was instructed to do a visual surface search of the area (25m x 25m box) surrounding the BLU 63.

No further BLU 63 were located within this area. The BLU 63 was destroyed in situ.

Conclusion

Because the area was recently worked on (ploughed) and thus the lack of evidence, it cannot be confirmed that the BLU 63 was missed during clearance, its original depth or previous location and possible migration / importation with the compost.

Signed: [Name removed], [Demining group] SL QA Officer, UNOPS contract, [Demining group], [Address removed].

Analysis

The primary cause of this incident is listed as *Inadequate equipment* because of the metal-detector that was in use at the site. The secondary cause is listed as a *Management Control Inadequacy* for reasons given below. It is recognised that the failing may have been a *Field Control Inadequacy* if detection procedures were not conducted correctly.

The failure of the UN MACC to conduct an independent investigation and require corrective action in this instance is unexplained, and is a serious *Management Control Inadequacy*. If the MACC could not investigate a serious failing, it is possible that they failed to control the work of the commercial demining organisation in other ways.

The area had been originally searched using the Schonstedt locator. This is a stick-detector designed for locating ferrous pipelines. Its limited search area and capabilities mean that its use for area clearance is questionable, but was approved by the UN MACC SL despite misgivings. After the device was found, the demining group made a visual search of the area 25 metres around it. If it were missed in the original detector search, correcting the error with a limited visual search was clearly inadequate.

The demining group's suggestion that the submunition was brought in with compost and raked in without being noticed is unconvincing and would require some kind of evidence that this was even possible, never mind probable, before it could be accepted.

The cluster of missed devices in this country at this time raises serious questions about the effectiveness of the search equipment and procedures that were in use.