

Part II

Strategic Management for Mine Action Operations:

A Case for Government-Industry Partnering

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In March 2000, issue 4.1, The Journal of Mine Action published the first part of this article.

Summary of Part I

Directed mainly at policy makers and leaders in mine-plagued nations and government and non-government mine action planners, the article argues for holistic mine action strategies, coordinated priorities and best management practices. The authors establish the need for nations to take charge of their mine action organizations and present strategic management methodology to implement self-determination concepts. They insist that humanitarian demining must start with the end in mind, an integrated and nationally prioritized requirements analysis of each of the mine action areas—mine awareness, mine field assessment and surveys, mine and UXO clearance, victim assistance and information management. They also suggest that nations should consider reconstruction and development programs as well as mine action when contemplating resource mobilization. With nationally prioritized programs and mine action centers managed by host nation-dedicated general managers, nations can expect to achieve optimum resource allocation and, most importantly, to look after their people as a first priority. The authors recommend that nations look to industry for dedicated, first-tier mine action program managers.

An Application

**The following depicts a fictitious country and a proposed demining scenario.*

Pineland* is a multi-cultural nation with a long history of warfare. During WWII, AT mines were planted after several border disputes and, more recently, AP mines were used during guerrilla insurgencies. Pineland authorities have documentation on a few minefields, but mine casualties typically occur in areas where no mine records exist. In addition, much unexploded ordnance within the battle areas exists to-

day. UNICEF reports consistent casualties of adults and children. Animals also suffer a huge number of casualties.

The eastern districts of Pineland, characterized by mountainous terrain and mineralized soil, are sewn with AP mines and large numbers of unexploded ordnance. The western districts, mainly desert terrain, in contrast, contain several types of mines from WWII and a major border conflict. The central districts are infested with various types of AP mines and unexploded ordnance from guerrilla insurgencies. Several demining equipment vendors are pitching their products to district chiefs who have requested national funding for three types of mine detectors: remote control mine detecting vehicles, mine detecting dogs and flails and tillers. Two NGOs have started victim assistance and mine awareness programs in the central and western districts. Only recently has Pineland observed a government that is willing to tackle its mine-infestation problem on a national scale. The prime minister has requested help from the United Nations, World Bank (for development and reconstruction in mine-plagued regions), the U.S. Government and others' and various NGOs. He has accepted the U.N. Mine Action Center's offer of assistance, and several governments and NGOs have offered different types of assistance to him. The prime minister also formally requested U.S. assistance, which was approved by the U.S. Interagency Working Group.

Setting the Strategy

The prime minister and his team should develop a vision of where he would like to see Pineland and its mine problem in five to seven years in concurrence with selecting an experienced, competent general manager to develop and lead his mine action program. In conjunction with the ongoing requirements analysis, he should study the social and economic ramifications of mines in the districts to help determine his priorities. While considering re-

construction, development and resettlement issues, he should convey his vision and priorities to his management team. He should also establish a civilian-led national demining committee, working with local U.N. officials to form a donor committee within that organization. In our view, close and continuous national leadership involvement in the strategy development stage of mine action is essential.

Implementing the Strategy

With the prime minister's strategy in hand, planning how to achieve that strategy should be Pineland's general manager's first step. While communicating and coordinating with all mine action players, he should begin defining goals, objectives and events for his mine action center to accomplish. Ongoing projects in the districts are presently consuming scarce resources that may be better allocated in relation to national priorities, and new initiatives need to come under the MAC umbrella. Based on the Level 1 Survey and other data, district managers should develop a requirements matrix for each of the five components of mine action for each mine-infested area. This data should be conveyed to the general manager who should aggregate the data in a Pineland mine action plan, recognizing macro socio-economic factors as well as district needs. The important point is that district priorities may differ from Pineland national priorities, and these conflicts must be discussed and coordinated with donors at the beginning. Regard-

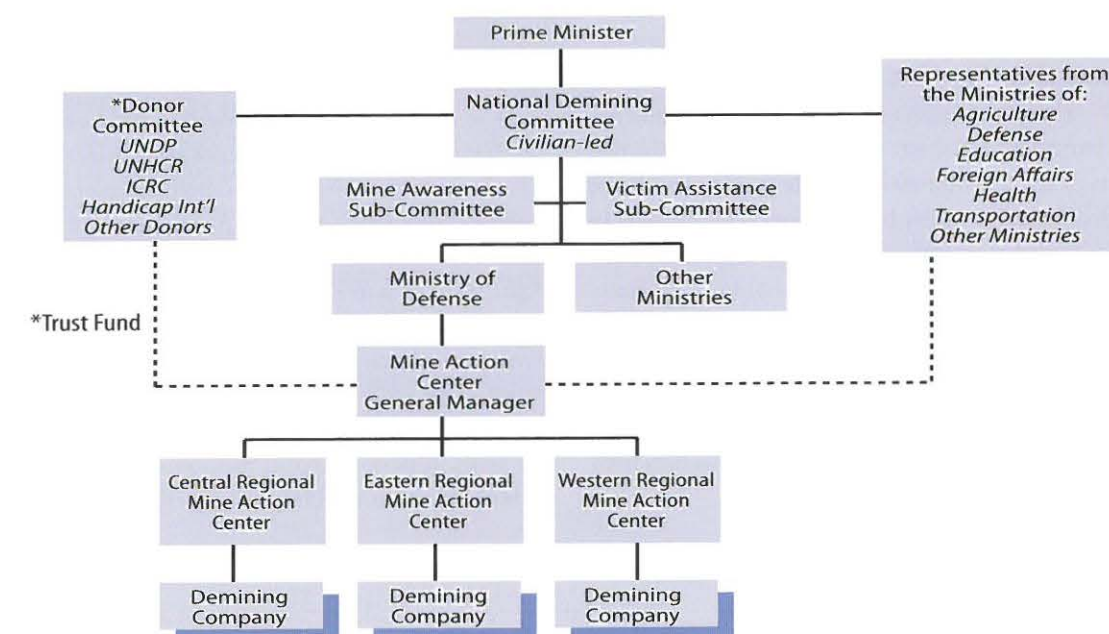
ing resourcing, for example, would mine dogs currently being contracted for the western district desert terrain be better employed in the eastern districts where mineralized soil and mountainous terrain make mine detectors less than fully effective?

At this point, if the general manager is in place, he should help coordinate the policy assessment visit from the United States to assess Pineland's mine problem and determine if he can provide the required personnel to conduct mine actions. Following that visit, he should help the U.S. team coordinate a requirements determination site survey to determine the detailed material necessary to train the Pineland mine action trainers. He should also facilitate other donor visits to begin the donor coordination process.

Organizing the MAC

By establishing the National Mine Action Center (MAC) and regional MACs in the three districts, the general manager should start to coordinate the Level 1 Survey actions inherent in developing the optimum resource mix for Pineland. The general manager should develop an organization that includes all mine action players, in particular the donors, led by one of Pineland's civilian ministers. While employing military deminers for the humanitarian demining mission is certainly reasonable, the international donor community, including the U.N. and World Bank, requires a civilian mine action leader. The organization chart (Figure 1) illustrates an organization that

Pineland Mine Action Organization figure 1



**This organization is separate from defense units. It is mine action mission only.*

should be acceptable to the donor community. The general manager should also document the processes in his organization, recalling that an organization chart is simply a snapshot in time and speaks little to how the organization accomplishes work. A pre-deployment site survey from the U.S. should arrive to fine tune and coordinate final preparation to train and equip the mine action personnel. This site survey should be followed within a few months by a contingent of U.S. mine action trainers with mine action equipment and supplies, which they will donate at the end of the training cycle.

Resourcing the MAC

Resourcing will provide funding and personnel to support the MAC and RMACs. Pineland's mine action managers will be faced with eight types of demining heavy machinery, nine types of mine detectors, mine detecting dogs, several types of protective gear and ground penetrating radar with the choices growing. How do Pineland planners optimize their resource choices? Most of the decisions will flow from the plan accomplished while developing the Pineland mine action strategy up front. Based on Pineland's aggregated and prioritized requirements analysis, the general manager should meet with all actual and potential donors, ideally at one meeting, to outline his requirements from demining equipment to organizational development consulting. The U.S. team will provide mine action equipment and supplies to get the program started and help maintain it. They will count on the general manager to coordinate discussions with other donors to match or complement U.S. donations.

Controlling Pineland Mine Actions

The general manager should coordinate and develop a data collection system to satisfy at least two sets of effectiveness measures. He needs measures of effectiveness to satisfy his superiors as well as data to satisfy the measures of effectiveness system maintained by the U.S. (or other donors) for their internal needs. He should satisfy safety standards by following UNMAS documentation, which establishes international safety standards. However, quality assurance philosophy should compel him to require the highest standards of training and safety practices from his subordinates.

Sustaining the Operation

Managing with the end in mind and the mine-safe nation his prime minister envisions, the general manager must marshal and efficiently deploy his at hand resources and potential resources to achieve that end state. Coordinated and established control systems will be critical to prevent fraud, waste and abuse of Pineland's mine action resources. Lessons from other countries, such as Chad and Cambodia, should be studied. Pineland will need a plan to conserve and distribute mine action resources for the long term, realizing that they will most likely have continuous tugging from regional constituencies for short-term fixes.

Conclusions and Implications

While we suggest that strategic planning for mine action is distinct from management planning, in practice, management leaders generally combine the functions; thus, the strategy should be developed in the planning phase of the management cycle. We made the distinction to emphasize the importance of determining a country's total mine action requirements before contemplating resources, which most countries tend not to do. Our strategic management logic also applies to countries that decide to outsource their mine action operations. Host nations should lead the requirements analysis phase and provide the general manager to lead their mine action centers. Host nations would do well to advertise their general management needs to international management consultant firms. The investment in an exceptional general manager, beholden only to the host nation government, should achieve significant returns on the investment in terms of humanitarian and resource allocation outcomes.

The implications of well-planned and host nation-managed mine action programs are considerable, including serving the host nation's political, economic as well as mine action agendas. Arnold Sierra, a Foreign Service Officer currently engaged at the U.S. Department of State's Humanitarian Demining Program, suggests that host nations consider an umbrella Development Action Center (DAC), which would integrate mine action and national development and reconstruction activities, supporting self-determination goals. A donor support methodology could be established within the DAC to help eliminate waste,

synergize donor support and coordinate activities by the many different donor agencies involved. We note that, as a development agency, the World Bank supports member country programs that help lead to the eradication of poverty and to the promotion of sustainable development. Its support of mine action is based upon the recognition that mine pollution is, for many affected countries, a significant obstacle to the re-establishment of normal development activities. In this context, it shares with UNDP a perspective that views mine pollution as a development problem with long term consequences and, consequently, with long-term solutions that extend far beyond initial humanitarian concerns. Also important is that the World Bank shares responsibility with UNDP for convening donor groups in reconstruction situations and, thus, has a major role in resource mobilization and in setting long term agendas for international support for mine action and other needs. Similar to UNDP mine action policies, land mine clearance in World Bank-financed projects must be carried out under the auspices of civilian authorities, acting as an incentive for civilian-led national mine action committees in addition to setting policy for mine action centers.

Implications for continuous quality assurance, not necessarily quality control, are significant. While quality control at the demining unit level is necessary and important, quality assurance, systematically managed by the general manager, is equally important. Assuring that training and safety systems are well designed, properly taught and rigorously enforced is a function of the general manager, not off-handedly delegated to subordinates. In addition, it is the responsibility of the general manager to establish measures of effectiveness for his mine action center, which tell his boss or the prime minister how the mine action program is progressing. Donors also will need data for their own agendas, which the general manager must accommodate if he expects continuous donor support. Having established its own measures of effectiveness, the U.S. will assist general managers in establishing data collection methods to meet their and other donors' data needs. General managers need to realize the importance of regularly reporting mine action data to donors, helping ensure their long-term support.

Our research and experience indicates that

worldwide mine action remains fragmented and uncoordinated. Holistic national approaches to their mine action problems would appear to help sustain stable and generous donor support. Regarding competition for demining resources, holistic approaches may tend to prioritize donor support to regions enduring the most human suffering, rather than those with the most political influence. ■

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Biography

Lieutenant Colonel Pete Owen is the Program Manager for U.S. Central Command's Humanitarian Demining Program. He is responsible for all U.S. mine action operations in the Middle East and African nations that comprise the Central Command's area of responsibility. Much of this article is based on lessons learned while he was establishing and managing the program.

Dr. Alan Childress, a management consultant for BoozAllen & Hamilton, is currently engaged as the Central Command's humanitarian demining Country Manager for Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti. He specialized in international management while earning his business administration doctorate at Nova Southeastern University.

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