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Security Devices (PVT) Limited

Security Devices (PVT) Limited has expanded its manufacture of metal detectors to include an entire range of personal protective equipment (PPE) and manual demining hand-tools.

by Trevor Thomsen, *Director, Security Devices (PVT) Limited*

Our Company

Security Devices was established in Harare, Zimbabwe, 15 years ago. The local manufacture of metal detectors was the core of its business at the time.

In 1997, Andy Smith of the Development Technology Workshop (DTW) of Warrick University in England approached us to assess our interest in participating in a program to establish the production of polycarbonate demining visors in Zimbabwe—a country centered in one of the most heavily mined regions of the world. The project was successful, and we have produced visors and accessories ever since, in numbers reaching tens of thousands. These have been supplied to demining groups and governments all over the world.

In June 1999, under contract to the U.S. Humanitarian Demining Program (HDP—now the Humanitarian Mine Action Program) research program, Andy Smith returned to Zimbabwe and worked with us to refine the range of body armour that we had begun to manufacture to complement the visors, and to develop a range of purpose-designed demining hand-tools. The project was successful, and blast tests against a full range of PPE and tools were conducted in Afghanistan, Angola and Mozambique.

Recently, our equipment has been tested in several African countries by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to assess not only their level of protection but also their applicability to the field working conditions found in southern Africa.

Equipment made by Security Devices has been involved in over 20 real demining incidents and has performed to specification in all cases. A selection of PPE and hand-tools was exhibited in New York in June 2000 at the International Aid and Trade Conference.

Our Products

Our range of products includes:

- Visors (full and half face)
- Visor scratch protectors
- Visor head-frames and fittings
- Several styles of protective aprons and jackets
- Arm and leg protectors
- Knee and shin pads

- Elbow pads
- Individual tools (such as prodders)
- Complete tool kits
- Fold-up mine markers
- Excavation tools
- Foliage cutting tools
- Explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) pulling kits

Every product is designed to enhance safety, efficiency, comfort and durability. Comfort and safety are of paramount importance. For example, we manufacture a head-frame to support our visors. It is made of soft but tough ballistic materials and has a washable sweatband. The open design makes the visor more comfortable and cooler to wear.

Security Devices has its own testing laboratory, including a firing rig, enabling our products to be tested in accordance with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Standardization Agreement (StanAg) 2920. Being situated in the middle of a very heavily mined part of the world also gives us easy access to field tests. These include blast tests with real mines and user comfort trials. It also makes user feedback readily accessible and fuels our ongoing research and development (R&D) program. Our products, however, are aimed exclusively at the demining profession. We do not make bomb suits or bullet-resistant vests.

Our People

Security Devices employs 25 people. Among these are some original founding members and also a retired deminer. Point Mashanda was wearing our PPE when he had an accident with an R2M2 AP mine. This occurred when he was working as a deminer in the Zimbabwe eastern-border minefield. He is an invaluable source of information as a once end-user and has contributed much to our product development program.

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