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Recommended Citation

Available at: https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol9/iss1/2

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The Missing Link in Strategic Planning

by Chip Swenness, MSc MEng CMCA

Planning for mine action programs has come a long way since 1989 when the United Nations first supported mine clearance under the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA). The first mainstream use of the term "ALARA" occurred when the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) stood up as a national instrument in 1993, with responsibilities extending far beyond clearance of mines and UXO. The world had to understand that solving the landmines and UXO problem would be a huge undertaking and require an inordinate amount of time and money to alleviate human suffering and restore a secure environment.

The years 1995-96 involved a global awakening that the landmine/UXO problem was pervasive and untenable; and also that enough people had become involved in doing something about the problem. These dedicated individuals in the international technical, military, and civilian advisory, legions of national deminers in the field, and the Nobel Prize-winning International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). An international network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals was represented. The U.N. staff and many people in donor organizations and governments contributed. The collective efforts of these people contributed to an overall result that by 1998 would see more than 200 million military personnel and civilians receive de-mining training.

The outcome was a series of actions that significantly and dramatically changed the course of events. In this arena, presented the "best" planning opportunity and therefore stood the best chance of being a "win" for those affected.

In 1997, during a time when public awareness estimates of 100 million landmines worldwide were prevalent, and with an uncountable number of men still to be protected for fighting in other countries. The resulting diagram shows a build up of mine action programs in 1997, a period that brought the Canadian government's focus on mine action action to its conclusion. This strategy is a clear example of the importance of understanding the strategic planning process for mine action. It clearly states that planning is the key to success. This approach is complicated by priority dilemmas and lack of a comprehensive approach to training. The resulting program needs a substantial and sustained financial effort needed for mine action actions. With this program, the primary objective would be to provide the necessary training and infrastructure to support the humanitarian and public health objectives set out in the Ottawa Treaty. Accepting this option, however obvious, was not easy. It raised many questions about the overall approach to dealing with the problem. It was clear that an analysis would be needed before moving forward.

The approach described above was intended to provide a clear and logical strategy to guide the planning process, and to ensure that the program would be effective in reaching its objectives. The strategy was based on a thorough analysis of the problem, including an assessment of the current situation, an identification of the key issues, and a prioritization of the actions needed to address the problem.

Meanwhile, CMAC was 4 years in length, and following more than 2,000 mine action personnel, which by 1997 required—had not been a major component of the planning process. Mine clearance operations were being conducted, but no one perceived that there was a need to do something, such as planning an angstrom strategy of "let's do something and see how it works." This strategy was complicated by priority dilemmas and lack of a comprehensive approach to training.
The Missing Link in Strategic Planning

by Chip Downess, VMIC PM

Planning for mine action programs has come a long way since 1989 when the United Nations first supported mine clearance under the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA). The first mainstream use of the term "mine action" occurred when the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) stood up as a national instrument in 1993, with responsibilities extending far beyond clearance of mines and UXO. The world had begun to understand that solving the landmine and UXO problem would be a huge undertaking and require an in calculable amount of time and money to alleviate human suffering and restore a secure environment.

The years 1995-96 involved a global awakening that the mine/UXO problem was pervasive and utterly devastating and also that the strategic and policy people became involved in doing something about the problem. These dedicated individuals brought the military and civilian advisors, nations of national deminers in the field, and the Nobel Prize-winning International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). An international campaign of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals was represented. The U.N. staff and many people in donor organizations and the contributing organizations contributed. The collective efforts of these people produced an overall result that by 1998 would put into practice a comprehensive strategy. The March 1998 Executive Summary of the UN Secretary-General’s report to the United Nations General Assembly on the implementation of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and the Mine Action Strategy was reported. The March 1998 Executive Summary of the UN Secretary-General’s report to the United Nations General Assembly on the implementation of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and the Mine Action Strategy was reported.

In 1999, during a time when popular estimates of 100 million landmines worldwide were prevalent, and with an unusual number of men still to be found for clearing mines in other countries. The resulting document showed a build-up of mine action capacity, a working period, and a decrease to a steady state capacity was submitted to the Canadian government in a final mission report following departure from Cambodia in 1998. The graph simply pointed to the fact that once the bulk of the mine problem was solved, some form of mine action would be required—literally, in perpetuity. The graph also showed that had experienced war on its soil, and any country that had training and impact areas on its near-singing-level estimates upon which donors could base their support.

Meanwhile, CMAC was a long-running entity with over 2,400 mine action personnel, which by 1997 required—but did not have—a more comprehensive planning system. Mine clearance operational planning was proceeding, but no one perceived and did not need to do something, because the general concept of including mine awareness in the advancement of mine awareness and resumption of mine awareness planning together with the supporting activities needed for the national Mine Action Strategy. A simple coordinated CMAC Integrated Work Plan (IPW). This IPW approach has survived in the CMAC and has been much strengthened and improved.

Published by JMU Scholarly Commons, 2005

A MIINE ACTION PROGRAM LIFE CYCLE DIAGRAM
USING NATIONAL TIME SCALE AS DERIVATION FOR END-STATE STRATEGY CONCEPT

![Diagram showing life cycle of mine action program]

Burning Landmines Proves Safer
A new invention called the Mineburner, developed by Count for Scientific and Industrial Research Deneferen, a company collaborating with the South African Department of Defence, demolish landmines by burning them instead of detonating them. The device, which uses cheap natural gas, can be placed next to a landmine and set on fire through a radio device. The fire then burns through the mine, before eventually settling itself off, which may result in a small explosion. An advantage of this device is that the Mineburner is lightweight, making it easier to transport and cheaper to ship than traditional methods. Currently, the device often uses explosives to detonate mines by placing them on top of the landmines and then exploding them. The Mineburner is also safer as it does not require the transportation of explosives.

Anti-personnel Landmines
A 10-YEAR REVIEW OF EU ACTION

by Daniella Dicrando-Andreone | External Relations Directorate General European Commission |


The first Review Conference of the MABC "The 2004 Nizambad Summit on a Mine-Free World" (26 November-3 December 2006), represented a momentous event in the Convention's history. At this juncture, the EC sent a message of determination and trust in the ability of the international community to achieve total control of the threat posed by landmines.

The European Union (EU) felt that the first Review Conference in Nizambad was successful andn-oriented, and it came away with a spirit of optimism having been party to the process that can be made with international cooperation and a multilateral approach.

Support for international mine action continues to be among the most important political priorities for the EU. From being the pioneer of prevention and stability globally and losing human suffering in mine-affected regions.

Actions to Date
The impact caused by APs on human life and property has been enormous. In 1992-98, the EC alone committed over €100 million to mine action worldwide to support the JRC’s work in technology for mine detection and identification, and has co-funded a project that successfully introduced a new technology to the mine action community.
ALARA, continued from page 1

public education with respect to the dangers of undiscovered mines. Ideally, all citizens will be able to react and initiate a successful response to the newly established governmental structures. Coordination remains vital even with the much-reduced mine action requirement at end-stage and needs to be assured for within the normal government coordination mechanism and structure. At the same time, the successful implementation of an ESS and the long- and medium-term plans for implementing it will be the key success factor at all levels. This training will include not only the technical field level, but program and project management skills as well, with a focus on the management of civil protection and mine action professionals. The government of the International Mine Action Standards. Uniquely, they have achieved this without losing the low-cost, sustainable and easy to implement, locally sustainable method. Recently NPA has begun to support a similar process in government-coordinated structures, which will be a focal point for the development of cooperation with RONCO and mine action organizations. Their civil programs are the Mine Action Institute (MAI), the Mine Action Training Centre (MCTC) and the latter two are mine action training facilities.

Clearing Mines With Mines

The clear-up of the “Mine Field” in Kuwait was actually a little more than ten years ago— but it was the time I heard about the use of mines to find mines. Back in those days, Royal Ordnance were active in Kuwait alongside deminers from many countries. Referred to rather disparagingly as “Coast Country Nationals” (CCN), dedicated deminers from India and Pakistan used rakes to excavate mines in the desert. I am told that Royal Ordnance gave the charge to a group of CCN deminers. Later, the two included X-raying machines to detect mines and rakes to clear the debris. This system is the Rake Excavation and Detection System, known as REDS.

The RDES was a simple raking technique to excavate and sift the ground to the required depth. Conventional demining site markings are often used, and the side of the project is not as effective. The effective quality assurance depth of a “Bake

Brace” across the front of the large machine the extent of the work is not very clear. A mine is brush swept from the undetected area into the Bake-brace, and then packed to the toe of the trench. When the use of the Bake-brace became a feature of the Horseshoe rule is to strictly clear the ground, allowing the Bake-brace to be used again. The Bake-brace rolls forward as work progresses, which can be surprisingly fast in ideal ground conditions. The Bake-brace is flexible enough to allow a little pressure to any one ground on the ground. Many thousands of mines have been removed using it, and mine clearance has occurred. The Horseshoe rule has been used extensively on many occasions, and the rule has been a standard for the remaining hedges on the ground that has happened several times, with no serious injuries having occurred. The long hand on the Horseshoe protects the deminer at a distance from the blast, and the PPE is that now part of the REDS system completes the protection against usual blast injuries very effectively.

The easy design of the Horseshoe system was relatively large and adequately loose, sandy soils. It has recently been evolved for use in hard soils by NPA and SARVATA. Their revision is the Horseshoe rule is a variant of a proven record of maintaining integrity in AP mine blankets (low-grade steel strips). The tools dig into and clear the ground with the need to apply any downward pressure and can be refurbished peri-

Conclusion

Ronco’s experience over the last decade highlights changes and developments in the field of humanitarian demining. Once manual demining was the principal capability, but fully trained and skilled mine demining capacities are now imperative. While standards were once variable and incomplete, the DMAs are now the operating environment. While humanitarian demining and mine clearing were once considered separate missions and disciplines, Ronco’s experience in Afghanistan now shows that they are, in fact, two sides of the same coin. While humanitarian operations once took place to guarantee that the population was able to build up their own governance structures, the humanitarian principle of non-violence had to be considered in the context of the effect. The proliferation of mine action organizations entering the field after the war posed Ronco with another challenge: helping the internal government organize the various national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), commercial companies, and military units into one coordinated effort. This led to and on behalf of the U.S. Department of State, Ronco helped develop the National Mine Action Authority within the Iraqi Ministry of Planning. This organization has since developed national mine action standards, accredited all mine action organizations in Iraq, created a national mine action strategy, and drafted a national budget and work plans.