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Geneva Diary: Report from the GICHD

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Geneva Diary: Report from the GICHD

by Ian Mansfield, *Operations Director, GICHD*

A Study of Mechanical Application in Demining

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) recently released a major publication titled *A Study of Mechanical Application in Demining*. The last 15 years have seen the evolution of machines used in demining. At the beginning of the 1990s, the few machines on the market tended to be large and heavy. Today, there is a much greater array of machines of varying size and armour protection to suit the different physical environments and threat levels found in mine-affected regions of the world (see *GICHD Mechanical Demining Equipment Catalogue 2004*).

Certain trends have emerged such as the development of multi-tool systems for multiple tasks, the design and manufacture of machines in mine-affected countries using indigenous materials and skills, and the adaptation of commercial earth-moving vehicles for mine-clearance purposes. Nevertheless, machines in demining remain underused and the market for them is relatively small. The study argues that machines have a vast potential to make demining more efficient and faster, either independently or when combined with other clearance methodologies, i.e., manual and dog-assisted demining. A more detailed article on the results of this study is contained in this edition of the *Journal of Mine Action* (see "[Machines Get the Job Done Faster](#)" by A. Griffiths).

A Guide to Insurance for Mine Action Operators

The business of humanitarian demining in particular, and of mine action in general, is a relatively new business, starting in the late 1980s. Since then, it has experienced rapid growth to become a multi-million dollar sector of the relief and development community. Operating as it does in a labour-intensive and high-risk environment, insurance for mine action is fundamental to the management of risk.

The International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) state that employers should "ensure that adequate insurance cover exists for all employees against death, disablement and injury." While most mine action operators have some sort of insurance coverage, up until now there has been little published guidance available as to how the level and types of insurance should be chosen.

The *Guide to Insurance for Mine Action Operators* aims to inform national mine action authorities, programme managers, organisational directors, consultants and individuals in

programmes about the issues involved in acquiring and maintaining insurance cover for mine action operations and programmes. The Guide covers four areas:

- Personal accident insurance
- Public liability insurance
- Issue of residual liability
- Renewal of an insurance policy

The Guide is not an operational handbook, nor does it provide advice on which insurance company or policy should be used. Rather, it is an information resource on mine action-related insurance that should assist in decision making, programme planning, and research. Both these recent publications can be ordered online or can be viewed on our website at www.gichd.ch.

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