

DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 19/04/2006	Accident number: 83
Accident time: not recorded	Accident Date: 16/07/1997
Where it occurred: Kichkeen, Shakardarah, Kabul	Country: Afghanistan
Primary cause: Field control inadequacy (?)	Secondary cause: Inadequate equipment (?)
Class: Vegetation removal accident	Date of main report: [No date recorded]
ID original source: none	Name of source: MAPA/UNOCHA
Organisation: [Name removed]	
Mine/device: PMN AP blast	Ground condition: bushes/scrub hard
Date record created: 23/01/2004	Date last modified: 29/02/2004
No of victims: 1	No of documents: 1

Map details

Longitude:	Latitude:
Alt. coord. system:	Coordinates fixed by:
Map east:	Map north:
Map scale: not recorded	Map series:
Map edition:	Map sheet:
Map name:	

Accident Notes

inappropriate vegetation cutting tool (?)
partner's failure to "control" (?)
inadequate investigation (?)
vegetation clearance problem (?)
victim squatting and stepped on mine (?)
visor not worn or worn raised (?)

Accident report

At the time of the accident the UN MAC in Afghanistan favoured the use of two-man teams (usually operating a one-man drill). The two would take it in turns for one to work on vegetation cutting, detecting and excavation, while the other both rested and supposedly "controlled" his partner.

An investigation on behalf of the UN MAC was carried out and its report made briefly available. The following summarises its content.

The victim had been a deminer for three years. It was two months since he had last attended a revision course and seven days since his last leave. The area being cleared was described as "hard and bushy". The investigators decided that the mine involved was a PMN and that either the victim was cutting bushes without sweeping/detecting the area in front of him, or the deminer lost his balance while squatting to cut bush and stepped sideways onto a mine. His helmet was reported to have been damaged in the blast.

The victim's partner said the victim was working cutting bushes when he lost his balance and stepped into an unsafe area. He stated that another means of cutting bush (rather than sickles) would be safer.

The Section Leader stated that the victim was cutting bushes while in a squatting position. The bushes were "hard" and so he lost his balance.

Conclusion

The investigators concluded that the accident occurred when the victim was cutting bushes in an area he had not checked by detector.

Recommendations

The investigators recommended that all deminers must check the area with the detector before cutting bushes, and that Section Leaders should enforce this. Also that the deminer's partner should control the working deminer.

Victim Report

Victim number: 114	Name: [Name removed]
Age:	Gender: Male
Status: deminer	Fit for work: DECEASED
Compensation: 500,000 Rs (100%)	Time to hospital: not recorded
Protection issued: Helmet	Protection used: helmet
Thin, short visor	

Summary of injuries:

INJURIES

minor Eyes

minor Face

minor Head

severe Chest

severe Hand

severe Neck

FATAL

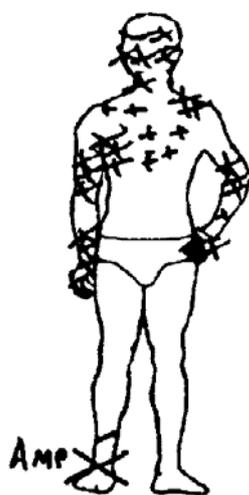
COMMENT

Victim was evacuated to hospital "where he died". See medical report.

Medical report

The victim's injuries were summarised as: right leg amputated below knee, internal bleeding to neck, right chest, deep injury to neck, abrasions/frag to head, face, eyes: also as "chest and upper body scattered injuries, including face". No injuries to his lower body, thighs and knees were shown on the sketch (shown below). The victim was evacuated to hospital where he died.

A medic's sketch of his injuries is reproduced below.



The demining group reported that the victim suffered deep lacerated wounds to the right side of his neck and laceration of the carotid artery; amputation of his left leg; lacerated wound right axilla; chest and right hand, and that he died in Kabul hospital due to cardio-respiratory arrest as a result of internal bleeding (arterial damage), shock.

A photograph in the insurance claim showed extensive injury to the right side of the chest.

Compensation of 500,000 Rs (100%) was forwarded to the demining group on 30th October 1997.

Analysis

The primary cause of this accident is listed as a "*Field control inadequacy*" because the victim appears to have not checked the area with his detector before cutting undergrowth, and this error went uncorrected. It is also likely that he was working with his visor raised (as was observed to be common when cutting undergrowth).

The victim's injuries suggest that the right leg was extended with the upper body over the foot when the mine was initiated, perhaps a position indicative of having "slipped"? The victim's foot may then have caused the fatal neck and chest damage. The face and eye injuries imply that the blast got under the visor, which indicates that it was worn raised.

The provision of a "sickle" to cut all vegetation including the tough, fibrous Afghan bush may be seen as a management failing because the selection of tools issued was determined by senior programme managers. The secondary cause is listed as "*Inadequate equipment*".

The agency that was used to make investigations for the UN MAC (based in Pakistan) at this time was frequently constrained by lack of funds, staff and transport. At times their movement was constrained by safety concerns. As a result, investigations were frequently delayed by weeks, meaning that an assessment of the site at the time of the accident was impossible.