

# DDAS Accident Report

## Accident details

<b>Report date:</b> 15/05/2006	<b>Accident number:</b> 204
<b>Accident time:</b> not recorded	<b>Accident Date:</b> 31/01/1993
<b>Where it occurred:</b> Phumi Tnaot, Sisiphon, Battambang Province	<b>Country:</b> Cambodia
<b>Primary cause:</b> Management/control inadequacy (?)	<b>Secondary cause:</b> Inadequate training (?)
<b>Class:</b> Missed-mine accident (survey)	<b>Date of main report:</b> [No date recorded]
<b>ID original source:</b> none	<b>Name of source:</b> Witness
<b>Organisation:</b> Name removed	
<b>Mine/device:</b> PMN-2 AP blast	<b>Ground condition:</b> bushes/scrub route (verge)
<b>Date record created:</b> 15/02/2004	<b>Date last modified:</b> 21/02/2004
<b>No of victims:</b> 2	<b>No of documents:</b> 1

## Map details

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

## Accident Notes

no independent investigation available (?)  
inadequate investigation (?)  
inadequate communications (?)  
inadequate equipment (?)  
inadequate training (?)  
inadequate medical provision (?)  
inadequate area marking (?)  
safety distances ignored (?)

## Accident report

The date of this accident is an approximation.

No record of this accident was held by the country MAC. The country MAC did not formally exist when the accident occurred and any records have been lost. Details of this report were given by a member of the French Foreign Legion (FFL) scheduled to replace one of the victims. He visited one of the victims in hospital in Paris and heard the story at first hand. He has subsequently left the Legion and was working in Cambodia as Technical Advisor to a well known demining NGO when interviewed in January 1999. The following summarises his verbal report.

The French Foreign Legion were in control of demining in the region. A three-man team comprising the two victims and a Lieutenant went to area to carry out a reconnaissance prior to deploying deminers. The suspected mined area was alongside a road. Following the drills at the time, the officer stood by the vehicle while the two sergeants took a detector in one hand and a prodder in the other and started making exploratory lanes away from the road and at right angles to it. No markings were used. It is very likely that the two were working close together. They worked in to a depth of approximately 20-25m and then turned around and worked their way back to the road with their paths describing an elongated "U".

Victim No,1 was working with Victim No.2 to his right when he saw a bush with a pile of PMN-2 mines beneath it. He crouched to peer under the bush, suspecting the cache might be booby trapped. Having seen no sign of a trap he stepped back and initiated a buried PMN-2 with his right heel.

Victim No.2 was "less than ten metres away". He received fragment injuries to his arm and fragments of molten plastic in his leg which cut his tendons.

The Lieutenant had no trauma kit and was not a medic. He also had no means to safely evacuate the victims. He was not in radio contact with base. He drove away for help and returned about an hour later by helicopter. The helicopter landed in the suspect area alongside the victims and they were evacuated.

## Victim Report

<b>Victim number:</b> 261	<b>Name:</b> Name removed
<b>Age:</b>	<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Status:</b> supervisory	<b>Fit for work:</b> not known
<b>Compensation:</b> not made available	<b>Time to hospital:</b> Not recorded
<b>Protection issued:</b> Not recorded	<b>Protection used:</b> Not recorded

### Summary of injuries:

AMPUTATION/LOSS

Leg Above knee

COMMENT

No medical report was made available.

## Victim Report

<b>Victim number:</b> 262	<b>Name:</b> Name removed
<b>Age:</b>	<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Status:</b> supervisory	<b>Fit for work:</b> presumed
<b>Compensation:</b> not made available	<b>Time to hospital:</b> Not recorded
<b>Protection issued:</b> Not recorded	<b>Protection used:</b> Not recorded

### Summary of injuries:

#### INJURIES

severe Arm

severe Leg

#### COMMENT

See medical report.

### Medical report

No formal medical report was made available.

Both victims were taken to France for treatment. Victim No.2 was visited in hospital while receiving plastic surgery by the reporter of the accident.

### Analysis

The primary cause of this accident is listed as a "*Management/control inadequacy*" because the management of the operation had failed to put in place very basic operating procedures that would have made the accident less likely to have occurred and would have made a hasty evacuation possible.

This accident illustrates the need for established radio contact, medical support and Medevac set-up before working in a suspect area. It also shows how vague the terms "reconnaissance" and "survey" are. The failures to mark cleared areas or maintain a safe working distance exacerbated the accident by hampering recovery. The landing of the helicopter in the suspect area was also unnecessarily risky.

The general lack of preparation, safety drills and equipment make it unlikely that safety equipment (which is not mentioned) was worn. It also seems unlikely that the Victims were appropriately trained to carry out the task in hand safely. The secondary cause is listed as "*Inadequate training*".

The mine was a PMN-2, which is usually easy to locate and should not have been missed if the victims had been working appropriately (the detector in use was not known).