

# DDAS Accident Report

## Accident details

<b>Report date:</b> 29/01/2008	<b>Accident number:</b> 537
<b>Accident time:</b> 07:10	<b>Accident Date:</b> 20/11/2004
<b>Where it occurred:</b> Erlalai, Nr Mallakam, Valikamam South, Jaffna District, Northern Province	<b>Country:</b> Sri Lanka
<b>Primary cause:</b> Other (?)	<b>Secondary cause:</b> Other (?)
<b>Class:</b> Hostile action	<b>Date of main report:</b> 20/11/2004
<b>ID original source:</b> None	<b>Name of source:</b> [Name removed]
<b>Organisation:</b> [Name removed]	
<b>Mine/device:</b> P2Mk2 P4Mk1 AP blast	<b>Ground condition:</b> agricultural (abandoned)  building rubble  residential/urban
<b>Date record created:</b>	<b>Date last modified:</b> 29/01/2008
<b>No of victims:</b> 1	<b>No of documents:</b> 1

## Map details

<b>Longitude:</b>	<b>Latitude:</b>
<b>Alt. coord. system:</b>	<b>Coordinates fixed by:</b> GPS
<b>Map east:</b> Easting/ Long.: 0121579	<b>Map north:</b> Northing/ Lat.: 0505569
<b>Map scale:</b> Kuppilan, Erlalai	<b>Map series:</b> IMSMA
<b>Map edition:</b> 20.11.2004	<b>Map sheet:</b> GIS Arc Explorer 4.0
<b>Map name:</b> 1 : 10000	

## Accident Notes

mine/device found in "cleared" area (?)

## Accident report

The report of this accident was made available in January 2008 as an IMSMA file. Its conversion to a text file has led to the formatting being lost. The substance of the report is reproduced below, edited for anonymity. The original file is held on record. Text in [ ] is editorial.

## **From IMSMA file**

Date of accident: 20.11.2004

Date of report: 20.11.2004

Place: Erlalai, Nr Mallakam, Valikamam South, Jaffna District, Northern Province

GR: Easting/ Long.: 0121579; Northing/ Lat.: 0505569; GPS

Map edition: 20.11.2004

Map sheet: GIS Arc Explorer 4.0

Map scale: 1 : 10000

Map series: IMSMA

Map name: Kuppilan, Erlalai

Less than 500m from nearest town.

City [urban]

**Demining accident coordinates description:** Navigation: Take B71 road 13 kilometers from Jaffna towards Palaly Airport. Stop 300 meters before big junction (left- Erlalai right- Atchuvely) Find a gas station in the right and continue straight forward. You will find a junction within 300 meters; turn left towards Erlalai. Continue for 800 meters until next junction, in junction turn left. Continue narrow road and You will find part of old defence bund line. Stop.

## **Demining accident description**

Mine clearance started after deminers' stand down period 20.11.2004 06:30 am in minefield LK-225, Punnalaikadduwan. The spot was cleared 9 days earlier, before stand down period. Deminers came into their working lanes in the morning 06:50 – 06:55 am, corrected minefield markings, visually checked the minefield surroundings, laid tools and were starting mine-clearance.

Deminer [the Victim] started demining in his lane no. 47. He set off a P4 MK1 antipersonnel mine with his right foot by stepping on it 07:10 am. Explosion occurred 2 meters from the end of the 27 meter long cleared lane in already cleared area.

Deminer fell down to his front. He was not injured except for small scratch in his little finger due to falling. His boots did not suffer any damage.

The AP-mine was hidden on top of surface, underneath a big concrete brick, deminer stepping on the brick. It was laid there during deminers' stand down period on purpose.

Section leader and paramedic came to spot in two minutes and found deminer mentally shaken, but otherwise ok. Nevertheless, he was taken to Jaffna Teaching Hospital in 10 minutes, arriving there 07:35 am.

Team Leader stopped all demining, evacuated personnel to rest area, counted them, informed incident by satellite phone to Operation Manager and came to incident spot in four minutes. OM informed Mine Action Office.

So far, there are approximately 900 pieces of P4 MK1 antipersonnel mines removed from minefield LK-225, Punnalaikadduwan. Minefield is intensively populated housing and

agricultural area. Clearance is conducted by rake method removing all soil to depth of 15 centimetres. During the investigation of incident, another AP-mine was found from the same lane on top of the surface, concealed partially under a piece of asbestos sheet.

Interviews in nearby households revealed that during deminers' stand down period there was a funeral next to the minefield in a household 15.11.2004. After the funeral ceremonies in the same evening, young boys under an influence of alcohol, walked to the minefield and started fighting with each other. They pulled minefield marking sticks off the ground and were noisy.

An empty bottle of arrack was found from lane 44 (30 meters from incident lane no. 47) before clearance started 20.11.2004. Section Leader [Name removed] noticed before incident, that from uncleared area next to lane 44, where there were 8 visible AP-mines on the surface before deminers' stand down period, only 4 of them were visible anymore. Those AP-mines were probably ones laid in incident lane no. 47.



[The accident site.]



[The place where the second mine was found.]

Investigation team consisted of [Demining group] Operation Manager, [Name removed] (GS) [Name removed] (Kuppilan, Erlalai), Demining Team Leader [Name removed] and Section Leader [Name removed]. House owners of nearby households are [Names removed].

## Victim Report

<b>Victim number:</b> 710	<b>Name:</b> [Name removed]
<b>Age:</b>	<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Status:</b> deminer	<b>Fit for work:</b> yes
<b>Compensation:</b> Not appropriate	<b>Time to hospital:</b> Not appropriate
<b>Protection issued:</b> Not recorded	<b>Protection used:</b> Not recorded

### Summary of injuries:

INJURIES: minor Finger

COMMENT: Victim was "shaken". No Medical report was made available.

### Analysis

This accident is classed as a "Hostile action" event because it seems that the deminers were deliberately targeted by members of the public who placed mines in their cleared lanes. There can be no doubt that the mines were placed after clearance because of their partial concealment in the lanes.

The primary and secondary causes of this accident are listed as "Other" because it seems that the mines were deliberately placed in the working lanes during a break from demining. This may have been intended by drunken youths to be "funny", but could have been a deliberate attempt to drive the deminers away. The behaviour of deminers can have an adverse effect on people living close by, but nothing is known about this.