

# DDAS Accident Report

## Accident details

<b>Report date:</b> 17/05/2006	<b>Accident number:</b> 164
<b>Accident time:</b> 08:42	<b>Accident Date:</b> 17/03/1998
<b>Where it occurred:</b> Mok Heoun, Route 502	<b>Country:</b> Cambodia
<b>Primary cause:</b> Unavoidable (?)	<b>Secondary cause:</b> Field control inadequacy (?)
<b>Class:</b> Excavation accident	<b>Date of main report:</b> 20/04/1998
<b>ID original source:</b> NS	<b>Name of source:</b> Various/CMAC
<b>Organisation:</b> Name removed	
<b>Mine/device:</b> Type 72b AP blast	<b>Ground condition:</b> ditch/channel/trench hard route (verge)
<b>Date record created:</b> 14/02/2004	<b>Date last modified:</b> 14/02/2004
<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>
<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

handtool may have increased injury (?)  
inconsistent statements (?)  
inadequate investigation (?)  
no independent investigation available (?)  
safety distances ignored (?)  
squatting/kneeling to excavate (?)

## Accident report

At the time of the accident the demining group operated in a two-man drill whereby one deminer used the detector and marked any signals while the other looked for tripwires, cut undergrowth and excavated any detector readings.

No formal report was on file at the country MAC despite the fact that this accident occurred to one their own demining groups. Some documentation was found attached to a compensation claim. The record of the accident was dated 1<sup>st</sup> March 1998, [obviously in error]. The record identified the mine as a Type 72b in its introduction. The following summarises other relevant content.

The mined area was a road that linked Malay with National Route 5. The victim was working as a prodder man in one of the ditches that ran along both sides of the road. He was squatting at the bottom and working his way up the side. The ground had a very hard crust to a depth of 2cm and was soft underneath. The victim's partner marked a reading and then moved back to allow the victim to investigate. Because the ground was hard, the victim used a "trowel" to break up the surface, but initiated the mine.

The victim was seriously injured on the cheek under his left eye (a wound requiring seven stitches) but his eye escaped unhurt [conflicting with a later claim]. He was also slightly injured on the foot.

The "spade" ("trowel") was destroyed. A photograph showed the handle-sleeve without the blade or inner handle. His safety spectacles were also destroyed - a photograph showed the arms and left lens missing. [It is possible that the blade of the tool separated and struck the deminer in the face as in the accident that occurred in Cambodia on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1998.]

**The victim's partner** stated that he was on his way back to the umbrella [rest-point] when the accident occurred and so did not see what happened. He stated that the ground was soft and that the victim was using the trowel to remove loose earth and stones. He said that the mine was a probably a Type 72b because there were many in the area and the MineLab detector gave a strong signal.

**The victim** said that he tried to use a prodder but the ground was so hard that he had to use a trowel to break up the surface. He denied using excessive force.

**A deminer** in a neighbouring lane 20m away said that the ground was soft.

A photograph showed the victim's safety spectacles with the left lens missing.

## Victim Report

<b>Victim number:</b> 209	<b>Name:</b> Name removed
<b>Age:</b>	<b>Gender:</b> Male
<b>Status:</b> deminer	<b>Fit for work:</b> not known
<b>Compensation:</b> US\$1,500	<b>Time to hospital:</b> 1 hour 18 minutes
<b>Protection issued:</b> Safety spectacles	<b>Protection used:</b> Safety spectacles

### Summary of injuries:

INJURIES

minor Face

minor Leg

severe Eye

COMMENT

See medical report.

## **Medical report**

A medical report recorded that the accident occurred at 08:42 and the victim arrived at Mongkul Borey Hospital at 10:00.

The victim suffered a minor injury on his left cheek and on both legs. [The medical report was incomplete and the pages detailing injuries and the release notes detailing progress and treatment up to discharge were missing.]

The victim's injuries were recorded as: a slight injury to the left hand, fragment injuries to the shins and injuries to the face including a large wound on the left cheek. The prognosis was that the injuries would take a month to heal.

In the pages made available, there was no explanation of why the victim was awarded compensation for loss of sight in his left eye, as recorded on the "compensation" page.

## **Analysis**

The primary cause of this accident is listed as "*Unavoidable*" because it is possible that the victim was working correctly according to his SOPs at the time of accident (with the variation of not lying prone). It is possible that he was using the wrong tool or using excessive force without being corrected, which would be a "*Field control inadequacy*" – as is the fact that safety distances were ignored.

The information from the field and from the initial medical report did not indicate serious eye injury. Selective omissions/removals from the file held by the country MAC give rise to suspicion that the compensation claim may have exaggerated the injury to include loss of use of one eye. A motive for exaggerating injury may have been that the group's internal Compensation scheme did not make payment for injuries that did not result in permanent disability. The photograph of the broken safety spectacles militates against this suspicion but does not remove it entirely.

The investigator did not comment on the victim's position, despite lower leg fragments indicating that he was squatting at the time. Despite the group's published SOPs, their deminers routinely excavated in a kneeling or squatting position, like most other demining groups globally.