

DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 18/05/2006	Accident number: 277
Accident time: not recorded	Accident Date: 12/06/1991
Where it occurred: not made available	Country: Kuwait
Primary cause: Management/control inadequacy (?)	Secondary cause: Inadequate equipment (?)
Class: Demolition accident	Date of main report: [No date recorded]
ID original source: KMOD 15/SER 2	Name of source: Various/AVS 2001:K1
Organisation: Name removed	
Mine/device: PMN AP blast	Ground condition: demolition site (explosives)
Date record created: 19/02/2004	Date last modified: 19/02/2004
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

no independent investigation available (?)

inadequate investigation (?)

visor not worn or worn raised (?)

Accident report

The details of Kuwait Boards of Inquiry are considered 'Commercial in Confidence'. The following summary is gathered from various documentary and anecdotal evidence made available during the research. All anecdotal evidence is drawn from sources who were in Kuwait at the time of the accident.

The victim arrived in Kuwait on 13th May 1991, so had only been working there for a month.

The accident occurred in a "mine dump" where the victim had been tasked to find a way to destroy mines using flares because the company he worked for had no explosives. The mines

in the dump were believed to be unfuzed so should have been safe. The victim was finding PMN AP blast mines (or the Chinese copy – Type 58) to try the flares with. Because he did not know the mines were fuzed, he worked incautiously and was dressed in T shirt, flip-flop sandals and shorts.

In order to gain access to the PMN mines the victim had to climb over a pile of VS 1.6 (scatterable anti-tank mines). When he jumped down from the tank mines, he landed on three PMNs. This was inferred because three craters were found afterwards. It is thought extremely unlikely that PMNs would sympathetically detonate, so the victim's colleagues thought it most likely that he landed with some of his weight on all three.

The victim suffered severe eye injury resulting in total blindness, one leg was amputated below the knee and his face was scarred by multiple fragmentation. [The victim was not interviewed for legal reasons, so may have also suffered other injury.]

This accident was the subject of a lengthy court case involving the commercial company and their injured employee. The victim claimed that inadequate protective equipment was supplied. The company claimed that the victim should not have taken the risks that he did and should not have operated without his own blast goggles (British army issue) which he had lent to another operative on that day. The case has been settled with the commercial company admitting 75% liability and the victim admitting 25%. The value of the settlement was publicly reported to amount to millions of pounds sterling.

Victim Report

Victim number: 352	Name: Name removed
Age:	Gender: Male
Status: supervisory	Fit for work: no
Compensation: £Millions	Time to hospital: not made available
Protection issued: None	Protection used: none

Summary of injuries:

INJURIES

minor Face

AMPUTATION/LOSS

Eyes

Leg Below knee

COMMENT

No medical report was made available.

Analysis

The primary cause of this accident is listed as a "*Management/control inadequacy*" because the courts of law determined that the management of the commercial company were 75% responsible for the accident. Acknowledging that the analysis is made without full access to the evidence, it seems that the victim was tasked to undertake a job that he had reason to believe was without risk, when in fact it was highly dangerous. It also seems that the management provided him with no protective equipment.

If the demining company had sourced adequate supplies of explosives with which to carry out demolitions, the circumstances of the accident would never have arisen. So the secondary cause is listed as *"Inadequate equipment"*.

There is a paucity of reliable data for many of the accidents that occurred in Kuwait. If any reader has additional detail, please send it for inclusion