

DDAS Accident Report

Accident details

Report date: 08/07/2005	Accident number: 416
Accident time: 10:32	Accident Date: 09/09/2004
Where it occurred: Punnalaikadduwan village, Valikamam South, Jaffna Province	Country: Sri Lanka
Primary cause: Unavoidable (?)	Secondary cause: Unavoidable (?)
Class: Excavation accident	Date of main report: 10/09/2004
ID original source: JA-132 / LK-225 SP	Name of source: SP
Organisation: Name removed	
Mine/device: P4Mk2 P4Mk1 AP blast	Ground condition: bushes/scrub hard hidden root mat
Date record created: 08/07/2005	Date last modified: 08/07/2005
No of victims: 1	No of documents: 1

Map details

Longitude:	Latitude:
Alt. coord. system: Sri Lankan Grid	Coordinates fixed by: GPS
Map east: 0122205	Map north: 0505419
Map scale: Punnalaikadduwan	Map series: IMSMA
Map edition: 09.09.2004	Map sheet: GIS Arc Explorer 4.0
Map name: 1 : 10000	

Accident Notes

no independent investigation available (?)
long handtool may have reduced injury (?)
use of rake (?)
inadequate investigation (?)

Accident report

The demining group involved made available its accident report during October 2004. The report was compiled in IMSMA format and is summarised below.

“Clearance” was in progress during what was recorded as a “Technical survey”. Confusion over the distinction between survey and clearance was apparent at the time.

“Navigation: Take B71 road 10 kilometres from Jaffna towards Palaly Airport. Stop 300 metres before big junction (left- Erlalai right-Atchuvely) and find a gas station in the right. In the spot, minefield LK-225 is in left side of the road, starting 50 metres away. Accident spot is 70 metres to Northeast from gas station.

“Mine clearance was on-going in minefield LK-225, Punnalaikadduwan, when blast occurred at 10:32 am.

“Incident spot terrain is hard, red clay type soil with vegetation. Soil is softened before raking by moisturizing it with plenty of water. Antipersonnel mine was situated in a clear clay spot without rocks and partly surrounded by approximately 5 year old tree. There were not disturbing objects around.



[The picture above shows the accident site with the small crater alongside the stumps of a small tree.]

“Section leader and paramedic came to spot and found deminer ok. Nevertheless, against deminer’s will, he was sent to Jaffna Teaching hospital to have a medical check done. Later on the hospital doctor found deminer being in great condition.

“Team leader conducted medevac routines according to Standard Operative Procedure, stopping all the demining in the minefield, evacuating team to admin area, counting personnel and closing the incident lane to remain untouched. Furthermore, he informed [Demining group] Jaffna administrator, technical advisor and the headquarters.

“There is no definite explanation for how the incident happened. According to deminer, he used his tools slowly and correctly letting the rake to come towards himself by its own weight while pulling. Visual appearance of the incident lane supports this claim. Deminer’s raking tracks are visible, 50 cm in length and symmetrical.

“Shape of the explosion crater is small 30 cm x 30 cm x 15 cm and perfectly round shaped, which slightly leads to a conclusion that P4 was laid in normal horizontal (pressure plate upwards) position. It is possible, that P4 was damaged and missing parts of its pressure plate and therefore more sensitive.”

Photographs showed the victim wearing a long [extended apron] and long visor. They also recorded a small upper right arm abrasion. [Deminers with this group wear T shirts and have exposed arms.]



[The picture of the damaged rake shown above is of an SOP approved 2-tine rake. The tines appear worn so that they do not “hook” as shown in the group’s SOPs, but this may have been caused by the blast. The tines have been splayed by the blast.]

Victim Report

Victim number: 543	Name: Name removed
Age:	Gender: Male
Status: deminer	Fit for work: yes
Compensation: Not appropriate	Time to hospital: Not recorded
Protection issued: Frontal apron Long visor	Protection used: Frontal apron, Long visor

Summary of injuries:

INJURIES

minor Arm

COMMENT

No medical report was made available.

Analysis

The primary and secondary cause of this accident are listed as “*Unavoidable*” because it seems likely that the deminer was working as directed to approved SOPs when the initiation occurred. It is possible that the rake tines were worn and misshapen, but this may have occurred in the blast.

The accident investigation is listed as “*Inadequate*” under “Notes” because statements were not taken and the investigator failed to record the Victim’s name or light arm injury. The use of extended PPE and long visor may have helped prevent injury, but no damage to the PPE was recorded. The provision of arm-cover (long sleeves were an IMAS requirement in 2004) might have prevented the only injury sustained.



The picture above shows the PPE in use at the time of the accident.