

**EVALUATION
OF THE
MINE CLEARANCE PROGRAMME
IN AFGHANISTAN**

Report submitted by Col. Brian Florence (retired), Royal Australian Engineers,
and Professor James Freedman, University of Western Ontario, to the Office for the
Co-ordination of United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance
Programmes relating to Afghanistan

July 1991

NOTE

This report, prepared by two independent experts at the request of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, contains the conclusions reached by the experts. The opinions expressed are those of the authors of the report.

17 July, 1991

Mr. Benon Sevan
Personal Representative of the
Secretary General
UNOCA
Sector H-8, Box 1809
Islamabad, Pakistan

Dear Mr. Sevan,

On behalf of Colonel Florence and myself, I am pleased to submit to the Office for the Co-ordination of United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes to Afghanistan this evaluation of The Mine Clearance Programme.

We have greatly benefited from the generous assistance of your staff in Geneva, Islamabad, Peshawar and Quetta and for this we are grateful.

Our investigation, however, has been strictly an independent one. As independent evaluators, external to the programme, we have sought to appraise the programme critically and objectively. The substance of the report and its recommendations are exclusively our own.

Yours,

Colonel B. Florence
Professor J. Freedman
(signed)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
PREFACE	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
SECTION 1: THE RATIONALE	14
SECTION 2: THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING	25
SECTION 3: COORDINATION, COMMAND AND CONTROL	3
SECTION 4: RECONNAISSANCE AND PLANNING	46
SECTION 5: DEMINING FIELD OPERATIONS	56
SECTION 6: SPECIALIST SUPPORT TO FIELD OPERATIONS	81
SECTION 7: POSTSCRIPT: INTO AFGHANISTAN	86

PREFACE

The Mine Clearance Evaluation Team began work in Islamabad on June 7 and has concluded its task on July 10.

The evaluation team, consisting of two persons, has attempted to review all aspects of the programme. The demining programme involves a large number of organizations, each with their own history and aspirations. Its institutional setting is complex, situated as it is within UNOCA, an office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. And the geographical dispersal of its various components is vast.

The team has met with officials, directors and staff in all of the component organizations associated with the administration and implementation of the demining programme. It has met with UNOCA directors and staff in four UNOCA office locations, Islamabad, Peshawar, Quetta and Kabul. It has met with directors and staff in each of the implementing NGOs, which carry out mine awareness or mine clearance activity under the sponsorship of UNOCA. It has consulted with independent NGOs working on related projects in Afghanistan. The team has met with UN officials, donor country representatives and has consulted with UN sister organizations such as UNDP and UNHCR to obtain a broader picture of the impact of the demining programme and the reaction to its impact by donor countries. It has met with spokesmen for the Afghan Government and spokesmen for mujahideen groups, with local shuras in Afghanistan and with villagers and farmers in Afghanistan. It has travelled with the demining agencies into Afghanistan - Qandahar and Kunar - to observe demining operations at their sites.

The evaluation exercise has been a long and rich journey.

At every juncture, the team has met with gracious hospitality and cooperation. A few individuals have extended themselves particularly and shared their insights about the demining programme with great sensitivity. We only hope that this review of their programme does justice to the insights that they have shared with us. Martin

Barber, Chief of Mission in UNOCA, Jan Haugland, Programme Manager, and Lieutenant Colonel S. Heaton, Technical Advisor at UNOCA Islamabad have taken every occasion to advise and guide without interfering. Antonio Denini and Chantal Lobato at UNOCA Kabul have done likewise. Chantal Lobato's in-depth understanding of past and present Afghanistan has been particularly helpful. Colonel Kefayatullah, director of ATC, and Engineer Pushtun, director of SWAAD, have guided us into Afghanistan, from site to site, from mine field to mine field. And finally, it was our good fortune to have Major Hans Birkeland provide us with excellent logistical support as well as his excellent company.

To these individuals and to all those others too numerous to mention who have helped us along the way, we express our deepest appreciation.

Colonel B. Florence

Professor J. Freedman

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation team has been asked to consider the following broad questions in its review of the mine clearance programme:

- (1) What has been the impact of the programme?
- (2) Is the management of the programme appropriate and cost effective?
- (3) Is the programme technically appropriate?

Section 1 of this report addresses the first question. Sections 2, 3 and 4 deal with matters raised by the second question. Sections 5 and 6 deal with issues raised by the third question.

It is the opinion of the evaluation team that a programme of mine eradication and education is absolutely essential for the rehabilitation of Afghanistan. For this reason, the team strongly recommends that the programme continue and that it continue at the present level of funding.

The team, however, does not recommend an increase in funding. The team strongly feels that changes in focus and organization are urgently needed and that if these changes are successfully implemented, this will result in a much greater output for the level of funding that it presently receives. If, on the other hand, these changes are not made and successfully implemented, the demining programme will continue to operate at an inappropriate level of inefficiency. Failure to make these changes would seriously jeopardize the long term effectiveness of this programme. For this reason, the evaluation team recommends that a follow up review be conducted in a year's time to review the changes which have been effected within the organization and, at the same time, review more seriously whether the level of funding is justified.

The changes which the evaluation team feels are urgently required fall in four broad categories:

- (1) The demining programme should change its rationale/objective from one that seeks to encourage repatriation to one that focuses principally on the rehabilitation of existing villages and clusters of villages inside Afghanistan. The change in rationale/objective should be reflected at every level of operation.
- (2) The demining programme needs a new institutional setting. Its present setting within UNOCA, does not provide the direct contact with donors that such a programme needs, nor does it provide a funding environment that makes long term planning possible. It is proposed that the demining programme be administered through a special section within UNDP on the condition that the political neutrality of such a special section can be guaranteed.
- (3) The organization requires a radical centralization of command and control. The present organization, constituted of multiple semi-autonomous organizations, lacks the ability to coordinate efforts and utilize resources in an efficient manner. Authority needs to be centralized at demining headquarters. Control of the semi-autonomous organizations needs to be brought directly under the authority of demining headquarters.
- (4) A drastic improvement is needed in the way in which information is gathered, analyzed, used, stored and disseminated. A planning cell should be created within demining headquarters with the mandate to radically improve these crucial functions.
- (5) Plans should be made immediately for shifting the administration of the demining organization to Afghanistan. The evaluation team fully recognizes the obstacles of implementing this transition. But a plan should be prepared immediately, options explored and preliminary arrangements be undertaken.

The following is a list of the recommendations which appear at the conclusion of each section:

- 1.1 A shift in rationale should be incorporated into the design of the demining programme. Although slight, and although the programme has made strides in this direction, this shift entails significant consequences. An emphasis on village level rehabilitation and economic development should replace the previous emphasis on refugee repatriation. Meeting the demands of this new rationale will require considerable changes in structure and operation that are discussed in later sections of this report.
- 2.1 The demining programme needs an institutional mechanism for more direct interaction with donors. It also needs a more stable funding environment in order to facilitate long term planning. Since UNOCA does not appear able to provide such an environment, an effort must be made to find a new institutional home for the demining programme.
- 2.2 Locating an institutional home needs to consider two crucial factors: (1) The demining programme must continue to work under the umbrella of neutrality that the United Nations is able to provide. (2) It must have the freedom to operate independently of the Afghan government. The UNDP seems a logical choice. Its advantage is that UNDP is able to offer the demining programme this umbrella of UN neutrality. Its disadvantage is that through its Resident Representative, the UNDP is inevitably affiliated with a host government. For this reason, it is recommended that the demining programme be administered by the UNDP but in a section especially designated for demining operations, under an understanding that such a special section has the freedom to operate with strict political neutrality, i.e. with no obligation of allegiance to the Afghan government.
- 3.1 Demining programme headquarters should be moved to a location more centrally placed and should, ideally, be detached from UNOCA. This central headquarters should incorporate the functions of programme management,

technical planning, logistics, and most particularly managing reconnaissance, analysis of information, planning operations, setting priorities, monitoring and evaluating the efficiency of operations.

- 3.2 The Mine Clearance Planning Agency need no longer exist as a separate entity. Survey teams should be deployed with the logistical support of the demining agencies. The information gathering, planning and monitoring functions should be subsumed under demining headquarters.
- 3.3 The Organization for Mine Awareness should continue with its independent programme of mine awareness training, exclusively in Afghanistan, for a limited period of time. This independent phase of the programme should expect to terminate within 18 months. Following this, OMA mine awareness training expertise should be deployed by the planning cell at demining headquarters to design and administer particular training programmes tailored to the needs of individual villages or groups of villages. This training programme should provide a village strategy for avoiding mines and fencing mine areas. This village-level programme of mine awareness should incorporate the patterns of movement of women and children in grazing, fuel and water gathering activities in an attempt to establish alternative routes or alternative means of satisfying basic needs.
- 3.4 There are presently steering committees at nearly every level of operations. In place of these separate steering committees, one steering committee should be established to guide and advise the activities of demining headquarters. Every political and power group must be represented on this one steering committee and its members should be appointed by the programme manager.
- 3.5 The planning cell at demining headquarters should coordinate the activities of all mine clearance and education services in their design and administration for each village or set of villages.

- 3.6 Demining headquarters should seek to incorporate innovative approaches to village-level demining. Some of these are discussed in the following section. One possible approach would be to assign two instructors with team leader experience to a single village to train a demining team among village members which will then clear mines from village areas. Demining headquarters would, in this case, supply only the required equipment and the salaries of the two instructors.
- 3.7 Plans for demining operations should be discussed with other development organizations prior to implementation. Every attempt should be made to coordinate demining activities with an overall assessment of village needs. Once canals or karezes are cleared of mines, a canal clearing project might be undertaken. Once fields are cleared that have been out of cultivation for some years, herbicides may be provided to tackle the weed problems.
- 3.8 The evaluation strongly supports the present move to close Baleli camp. It also recommends the closing of Risalpur training camp as soon as is feasible. Training programmes should be administered on site, in Afghanistan, where students can receive hands-on experience in mine fields. This may mean a considerable reduction in the number of expatriates required.
- 3.9 The demining agencies should seek to make their field sites as mobile as possible. Since communication and transport is so difficult, field sites should be placed as close as possible to task areas. This means the creation of more sites with fewer teams per site.
- 3.10 The demining operation must undertake to incorporate Kabul-based activities fully. The existing demining expert should be replaced with someone who is capable of accepting and carrying out a much wider mandate of responsibilities. This person should work closely with Halo Trust and create a much closer working relationship between Halo Trust and demining headquarters than exists at present. The selection of sites and the monitoring of operations by Halo Trust should be submitted to the same rigorous review as the activities of other

demining agencies. Even more importantly, however, the demining representative should spearhead a shift of demining headquarters to Afghanistan (see section 7). This is a complex task which will require considerable management and diplomatic skills. A plan for this shift should be developed within the next six months.

- 4.1 A planning cell should be established within demining headquarters which will take over all responsibilities for supervising the gathering of information, planning on the basis of this information, keeping records and monitoring programme performance.
- 4.2 This planning cell would perform many of the functions now performed by MCPA. It is envisioned that the survey teams would report directly to the planning cell. It is also envisioned that the planning cell should design and schedule the tasks for which demining agency teams are deployed. MCPA should therefore be discontinued as a separate institution. The resources presently at its disposal should be placed at the disposal of the planning cell within demining headquarters.
- 4.3 A key function of the planning cell should be to devise a mix of mine eradication and education services to a given village or cluster of villages. This mix of services will differ in each case. On the basis of each individual plan, the planning cell will deploy the appropriate selection of mine clearing operations, education and mine avoidance operations, as well as the deployment of innovative techniques in mine eradication such as operationalizing Village Demining Teams.
- 4.4 A pilot project should be initiated to form and deploy Village Demining Teams. These are teams formed by villagers from local villages who, under the guidance of two trained Afghan instructors and one expatriate, are trained and then employed in demining activities in their own area. If the pilot project is successful, then a plan for applying this approach on a wide scale should be developed.

- 4.5 Completion report formats should be revised to provide considerably more detailed information.
- 4.6 The planning cell should engage continually in a monitoring exercise and continually devise ways of improving the demining programme on the basis of this monitoring activity.
- 4.7 Every effort should be made through the highest political channels to procure Soviet and Afghan Government mine field records.
- 5.1 A National sergeant should be placed on the staff of ATC and SWAAD to screen Minefield Completion Report Data.
- 5.2 Explosives and detonators should be separately stored and bulk explosives should not be stored in close vicinity to village living areas. Separate lockable boxes should be used for the storage of team and site office explosive lots.
- 5.3 Examine the need for a modification to the lead of the Philips mine detector to prevent short circuits.
- 5.4 Establish a central procurement cell at demining headquarters for the purchase of equipment.
- 5.5 Standardise mine detection holdings along suggested lines.
- 5.6 Do not issue the Soviet mine detector currently held.
- 5.7 No test equipment for detectors should be issued to the two NGOs until trained technicians and facilities are available.
- 5.8 Make no further purchase of White detector spares and gradually phase them out. Cannibalize where necessary to keep other Whites serviceable.

- 5.9 Reallocate training camp detectors to ATC and SWAAD.
- 5.10 Examine whether more Philips detectors may need to be bought to equip village teams.
- 5.11 Train one Afghan EOD team for ATC and SWAAD using National instructors.
- 5.12 Use the National Warrant Officer Class 1 who is a plant specialist, to assist in the proposed review of flail operations and future planning of their use.
- 5.13 Replan on job training and monitoring using Afghan and National Instructors inside Afghanistan.
- 5.14 Use National Staff senior officers in the planning cells of both ATC and SWAAD.
- 5.15 Request a 1 year turnaround of National attachments with a four week overlap incountry for handover. In addition review the need to phase Nationals right out of the programme within the next 2 years.
- 5.16 Standardise compasses and schedule recalibration.
- 5.17 Introduce voice procedure and driver/operator on-job training.
- 5.18 Demining Headquarters should accept responsibility to control the radio net of demining organisations.
- 5.19 Try to gain dedicated radio frequencies for mine clearing nets. Five frequencies are required.
- 5.20 Start planning now for future use of an administrative net inside Afghanistan.
- 5.21 Review vehicle holdings based on the proposed outline plan.

- 5.22 Use white paint to mark safe lanes inside rocky area minefields.
- 5.23 Observe safety distances when destroying in situ mines. Use main line charges where possible.
- 5.24 Ruthlessly apply safety rules in every situation and at all levels.
- 5.25 Exercise firmer control of passing teams inside a minefield.
- 5.26 Prodder men must be forced to obey safety rules.
- 5.27 Adopt the proposed outline medical plan.
- 5.28 Deploy nursing-aides on field hygiene duties and water supply testing. Program frequent inspection of their performance by medical officers.
- 5.29 That medical inspection of deminers take place before they are taken into service and that annual medical reviews be programmed on set standards.
- 5.30 That use be made of refrigeration forward at site offices for the storage of blood plasma, snake bite serum and other temperature sensitive medical supplies.
- 5.31 That the standard of hygiene and cleanliness of site office store rooms, kitchens and ablution areas be improved and inspected.
- 5.32 That bulk bagged supplies be palletized.
- 5.33 Review vehicle holdings against the proposed plans and distribution. Try and standardise vehicle types.
- 5.34 Recommend transfer of funds from UNILOG to the mine clearance programme together with acceptance of the proposed Soviet contribution.

- 5.35 The current MCPA survey team should be reorganised to meet its new role in support of Demining NGOs and Demining Headquarters.
- 5.36 The demining unit should be restructured to decrease the span of command and increase the level of control within the minefield. Other adjustments in vehicles and detectors.
- 5.37 ATC should work in 3 and 4 team groups. SWAAD should remain in 2 team groups.
- 5.38 No site office should be more than 30 minutes' travel from a work site.
- 5.39 Daily work programmes need to be reorganised to produce more productive working hours. Work at the minefield should be done in 2 shifts totalling 7 hours in the field.
- 5.40 Individual/Group Training be carried out at site offices for all on site employment codes.
- 6.1 Mine Dog training and deployment should be taken over by Headquarters Demining within the next 2 years. A review of the number of dogs and handlers who need to be trained should take into account our recommended numbers. In the meantime we should provide assistance in dog training using existing specialists and requesting some assistance from donor countries for a period of 6 months. TC6 mines need to be purchased as dog training aids.
- 6.2 The Flail operation should cease immediately once the Urgan task is finalised. Replace Clearway team with a specialist national group from a donor country such as Sweden/Norway. Both have had extensive experience in flail operations in Lebanon. The flails should not be phased out of service. They should be returned to Peshawar, overhauled and serviced then held for a period of at least 12 months whilst further Afghan training and more effective future planning can take place. Both a technical and planning review should start

immediately using the services of the NZ Warrant Officer who is a qualified plant supervisor.

- 7.1 A comprehensive plan for shifting the administration of the demining programme to Afghanistan should begin immediately. It should be prepared by the demining expert resident in Kabul. The final report should be submitted within six months.

1. THE RATIONALE

INTRODUCTION

The rationale of the demining programme has focused principally on the safe return of refugees from Pakistan to rural areas of Afghanistan. The programme has, in large measure, been designed in response to this rationale. An emphasis has been placed on educating refugees about the dangers of mines. Likewise, within Afghanistan, the demining programme has worked in areas where refugees are likely to return or where mine concentrations are heavy. Within this prevailing rationale, demining teams may justifiably devote their efforts to areas lacking village populations but which may expect to have a village population sometime in the future. Demining operations may justifiably work in areas where the existing population is minimal. The task has been so far to locate and work in mine fields, and not necessarily to locate and work with villages which require relief from the presence of mines.

The difference may appear slight at first. But a slight change in rationale does in fact entail a significant change in orientation, and this orientation has consequences for operations. The demining programme has in fact gone some way toward making this shift in orientation. But it needs to go further. Focusing on the specific needs of existing villages, instead of on mines and potential habitation areas, leads to developing a demining strategy which solves the problems that mines pose to specific people in specific villages.

One important practical consequence entailed by this shift in orientation is that the demining programme should do more than simply clear mines. It may do so, but in an extremely discriminating manner. Mine clearance must be justified carefully by the economic return it will provide to an existing village. The practical consequence of this slight shift in rationale is that such a programme cannot proceed without highly reliable data gathering and analysis; it cannot proceed without a highly coordinated and discriminating use of resources. This shift in rationale therefore has consequences. It means that the process of gathering and utilizing data must be refined and that the delivery of a range of demining services to a particular village must be coordinated.

This slight shift in orientation would entail substantial changes in the existing organization.

THE SETTING

Many of the topics and concerns raised in this evaluation report have emerged from the experience, by the evaluation team, of observing and living with demining teams in the field. To begin, let us momentarily observe the operation underway in the Province of Qandahar, the District of Arghastan.

Two teams from the South West Afghanistan Agency for Demining (SWAAD) work in a sloping riverbed between two ranges of hills. It is close to the Pakistan border. The riverbed served as a supply route for the mujahideen. Government forces established a military post to the east on top of the ridge above and planted rows of protective mines at the base of the post, flanking the riverbed route. Anti-tank mines were reportedly placed in the riverbed as well. None of the anti-tank mines have been found but two protective rows of anti-personnel mines have been located during the two and a half weeks that two twenty-seven man teams of deminers have worked in the area.

A team leader walks along a row of red flags where earlier in the day, demining units located mines. Splintered animal bones litter the ground where livestock have been killed by mine explosions. The team leader picks a piece of cloth from a shrub and tells a story of a shepherd who lost his leg here and who lives in a village below.

There are five villages surrounding the valley within a radius of ten kilometers, none of them nearer than two kilometers. Irrigation is not possible here, but the land around the riverbed could be used to grow dry land winter wheat. It is also used for grazing animals and, according to a village leader, people pass through this area as a short cut to the cities of Maruf and Argandab.

All of the households in the villages left during the conflict as refugees in Pakistan and all returned well before demining operations began.

In addition to the two demining teams and their support staff, including medical teams with ambulance, there were two survey teams from the Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA) also working along the riverbed producing additional maps for demining teams to work farther up the hillsides. They had two vehicles, and added to our own vehicle, the five demining team vehicles and the ambulance, that made eight vehicles in the little riverbed. There were nearly seventy men at work in the small valley. At a cost of nearly US\$ 3200 per week, the expenditures on the SWAAD teams' work in the small valley for the five team weeks has already come to nearly US\$ 16,000. The total may exceed US\$ 25,000.

This evaluation of the UN Mine Clearance Programme for Afghanistan has attempted to come to terms with scenes such as this one set among Afghanistan's small valleys. How can one justify such a programme that expends large sums on men and materials, that presently requires overcoming complex logistical obstacles and that, given the size of Afghanistan, promises to carry on for a very long time? On what basis does one pretend to undertake mine eradication in Afghanistan after 12 years of conflicts, conflicts that have abated but that still continue?

REPATRIATION

The Office for the Coordination of UN Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes relating to Afghanistan has seen the programme, from its inception through a number of important changes, as one that serves the process of repatriation.

At the inception of the programme in early 1989, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan led to the anticipation that there would be a large-scale return of Afghans who had taken refuge outside of the country or in the cities of Afghanistan. One assumed most of these refugees to be rural farmers. Anticipating their return, and

with a concern for their safety along the roads, in villages and fields, a programme was developed to (1) increase the level of awareness among Afghan refugees about the dangers of mines and (2) expose a large number of men to very basic techniques of clearing mines. The implicit objective of this programme was to diminish the number of accidents likely to occur as a result of encountering mines in the course of refugee repatriation.

The programme has trained a large number of Afghan refugees resident in Pakistan. Up to the end of 1990, slightly over 402,000 persons of which approximately 20% were women had received six-hour training sessions in a number of camps in Pakistan. Since then, assuming that the Organization for Mine Awareness (OMA) has kept to its proposed schedule, another 325,000 persons have been trained of which approximately 35% are women. New training programmes will be held in Iran and within Afghanistan.

In addition, somewhat more than 13,500 Afghan personnel, selected principally from refugee camps in Pakistan, have received a two-week course in mine clearance in camps located near Quetta and Peshawar.

A year after the inception of the programme, however, it became clear that large numbers of refugees would not return and that fighting in parts of Afghanistan would continue. In early 1990, the demining programme radically changed course. Instead of training in mine awareness and basic mine clearance, the programme undertook to deploy teams of deminers, selected from the two-week training programmes, for manual demining operations inside Afghanistan. The objectives changed to match the change in programme. Originally, the objective was to protect the refugees expected to return. More recently the objective has been to encourage the return of refugees by attempting to guarantee the security of their return.

The mine awareness courses continue and expenditures for this activity constitute 20% of the total proposed budget for 1991. But the principal activity, accounting for nearly four-fifths of the budget is mine removal. And the implicit objective is to remove the obstacles and hazards which discourage the return of

refugees to their original rural homes and fields.

In short, the objectives of the programme as they have been elaborated over time, focus the programming on demining rural areas, roads, village and agricultural lands in areas where refugees are expected to return in order primarily to promote repatriation.

For a variety of reasons, this focus on repatriation should be reconsidered.

- (1) The first reason is a very practical one. The presence of mines is probably not the principal deterrent to the return of refugees. One study has shown that, for women at least, the presence of mines is a relatively low priority among the factors which deter their return; of much higher priority are matters of security. It is also clear that, from studies on farming problems throughout Afghanistan, a diversity of farming problems deters individuals from returning to their rural homes, but the question of 'war effects' which includes the presence of mines is not given a high priority.

As one might expect, therefore, mine clearance has not always been followed by large scale repatriation. There are two reasonably reliable data sources which provide information on this matter.

The first comes from a project conducted by UNHCR, Data Collection on Afghan Refugees (DCAR). Presently, DCAR collects and assembles data month by month based on examination of a regular inflow of information from NGOs working in various districts, information from the encashment programme, information collected regularly from border officials, monitoring of indicators of departures and information coming from the peace guest house programme in 19 centres in Afghanistan. DCAR data which comes out as the Monthly Repatriation Digest covers nine provinces intensively.

The second reliable though limited data source is UNIDATA compiled out of

UNDP Peshawar. It contains similar information obtained from trained investigators in the field relevant to population movements in seven provinces.

The UNHCR Monthly Repatriation Digest keeps up to date reports on Paktia, Nangarhar, Logar, Kunar, Qandahar, Helmand, Kabul, Kunduz, and Baghlan. In each of these, there has been a similar pattern. An original repatriation flow occurred in August, September and October, 1990. There had been no demining activities at that time. Then for all the provinces, there was a drastic drop in repatriation flow. In some provinces, such as Paktia and Nangarhar, there has been an upward trend in March and April, 1991. In Kunar, however, the downward trend has continued in spite of extensive demining activities in that area. In these figures, one can detect no significant impact of the demining programme on refugee repatriation. Some of the highest return figures come from Nangarhar and Kunduz where virtually no demining operations have occurred. And in Kunar, where extensive demining has taken place, the original flow of returnees has now dropped to a trickle and shows no obvious impact of demining on repatriation.

Finally, in each of the seven villages of Qandahar and Kunar visited by the evaluation team, large numbers of refugees had returned prior to the beginning of demining activities.

- (2) In certain areas, repatriation appears to be premature and to encourage it may be ill-advised. Returnees have reported returning to find commanders demanding large portions of their crops or individuals who have bought or claimed their lands under illegal pretenses. In addition, in many areas, there is no infrastructure, very little security and returnees take considerable risks returning to their home areas.
- (3) When repatriation guides the selection of areas for mine clearance, one tends to justify area selection on the basis of potential population and not the present population. This is inappropriate. Mine clearance should serve those villages and households that have taken the risk to stay or return and who urgently require mine removal to support and safeguard their families. It would be far

better to rehabilitate families and villagers presently living in Afghanistan than to serve the interests of potential returnees who may in fact never return. The demining programme must become substantially more discriminating in selecting areas for mine clearance. Shifting from a repatriation to a rehabilitation focus is an important step in this direction.

The focus on repatriation has to some extent limited the principal efforts of the demining programme to three provinces: Qandahar, Paktia and Kunar. The programme must plan to broaden its geographical scope beyond this small belt which serves only one ethnic group: the Pathans.

But more important, focusing on repatriation harnesses demining to a limited and inappropriate objective. The programme should instead begin to see its mandate as part of a plan of restoration and economic development at the village level within Afghanistan.

- (4) As the process of reconciliation continues for Afghanistan, the matter of repatriation has become a politically charged issue. Fundamentalist commanders in Peshawar have actively discouraged repatriation. Others inside have followed suit in order not to risk disfavour of these powerful Peshawar-based commanders. More moderate commanders encourage repatriation, such as those in the South-West region. As the reconciliation process continues, repatriation will no doubt take on different meanings. Meanwhile, it is important to keep in mind that one of the great achievements of the mine clearance programme has been its ability to operate under neutrality, and in many cases, even create neutrality. The continued success of the programme depends on its ability to continue to create neutralities and every step should be taken to make this possible.

FRIGHTENING FIGURES

Linking demining to existing village restoration and development gives the programme a different slant. It suggests an approach that integrates demining with the general process of village level development. This effectively reduces the scope of the programme to include only those areas where settlement has already taken place. One might further limit operations to areas and facilities which serve production on irrigated lands.

But the question still remains: Is this feasible? Demining is expensive and logistically complex and Afghanistan's villages are far-flung and numerous. Can it be done?

No one has yet tried to answer this question sensibly. The amount of area which one would have to clear has often been exaggerated. Some exaggerations are used to prove the futility of the task; others to argue for a large scale prolonged mine clearance programme. Both are based on the same exaggerations. Neither contributes to dispassionately coming up with an area which a demining programme should aspire to clear.

A reasonable estimate must recall that there is no reliable data on how much area has been affected by mines. It must also recall that while government and Soviet laid mines are often still in place, those placed by mujahideen were frequently retrieved and are often no longer in place. Furthermore, except for areas subjected to "aerial denial" most mines were placed to accomplish military objectives, i.e. protect military posts, frequently hillsides. These may be irrigated farmland, but not necessarily. Indeed, this is rare. And irrigated farm land constitutes only 8% of total area. In short, one should not be frightened away from a demining programme when one hears that the completion date of such a project may be well into the next century or even millenium. Irresponsible figures can be frightening. Twenty per cent of the country - a figure that one author has used as a minimum - cannot be cleared; not even a fraction of this amount can be cleared. If one assumes that the manual

demining programme could clear 30 sq. km a year, to clear 20% of Afghanistan would take over 4300 years.

The fact is that in spite of such figures something can be done. The challenge then is to decide what this is, and the demining programme must meet this challenge by utilizing its resources in more sparing and innovative ways.

Handwritten:
Afghanistan 1990/1991

DEMINING AND VILLAGE LEVEL DEVELOPMENT

Instead of designing a demining programme that focuses on areas that are mined or areas that could potentially be inhabited, one might consider a programme that focuses on people. Villagers to be more precise. And for each village where mines are a threat to safety and livelihood, instead of thinking exclusively of manual demining, one could think of a combination of solutions only one of which might be the deployment of demining teams. In this way, instead of removing mines, one could aspire at least partially to assisting people to live with them, or at least, to avoid them. Manual demining is too expensive and complex to be the backbone of a demining programme. The management of a demining programme must therefore, when assisting a village, use manual deminers sparingly. The key to this approach - one that assists villages in a practical and cost-effective way - is for the managers of such a programme to be able to acquire, utilize and act on information effectively.

The demining organization developed under the authority of UNOCA has accomplished many things in a short space of time. It has set up an extensive training programme for mine awareness and for manual demining. It has made possible the creation of professional Afghan demining agencies. Extremely competent - even gifted - individuals manage the demining agencies. The demining agencies clear mine fields in Afghanistan under extremely difficult weather and logistical conditions. They save lives. For all these, UNOCA and its implementing NGOs deserve considerable acclaim.

But the complex of organizations does not gather information effectively, and it does not at present have the organizational capability for analyzing and utilizing information reliably. This evaluation therefore has sought to discover, given the existing structure, how this capability could be achieved. If the deployment of large numbers of demining teams were not such a cumbersome and costly task, the judicious use of these teams would not be such a pressing necessity. But their deployment is cumbersome and it is costly and for that reason, they must use them in the most judicious way possible. And for this, they must acquire information and

programme can selectively solve the problem of mines within villages in ways that are appropriate to each village and in ways that will be able to reach as many villages as possible given increasingly limited resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 A new rationale should be incorporated into the design of the demining programme. Although slight, and although the programme has made strides in this direction, this shift entails significant consequences. An emphasis on village level rehabilitation and economic development should replace the previous emphasis on refugee repatriation. Meeting the demands of this new rationale will require considerable changes in structure and operation that are outlined in later sections of this report.

2. THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

INTRODUCTION

The UNOCA sponsored mine clearance and awareness programmes for Afghanistan have emerged during an era of political volatility, an era when donor commitments to the reconstruction of Afghanistan have changed rapidly. This has plagued the planning process in the development of the demining programme. Institutions which have emerged to support programmes have emerged as temporary organizations or organizations without firm and established infrastructures. This has produced a number of anomalies. But the most striking anomaly, which in a general way, covers many others is this: the demining programme has emerged as a large, complex, potentially long-term and expensive programme and yet it is funded and administered within an organization which is perceived as temporary, which has no governing body and which, like relief agencies, is funded year by year. In short, the institutional environment is in many ways inappropriate for the long-term planning, engagement and training of personnel, institution building and budgetary stability required for carrying out a demining programme.

UNOCA, as an office within the office of the Secretary-General, has served successfully as an appropriate medium for coordinating the activities of other organizations and for overseeing their security. But it is not itself autonomous and as such it is a questionable base from which to build other institutions.

Unlike the relief agencies or development agencies of the United Nations, UNOCA has no governing body. It does not regularly expose its programmes to donor scrutiny as do other agencies which have governing bodies that meet and provide direction to their respective agencies. Operating independently of a governing body has the value of facilitating the coordination of a diversity of tasks. But the demining programme as part of UNOCA rarely has the opportunity to expose its views. Its activities rarely reach the attention of the General Assembly, and there is no institutional medium for maintaining close contact with donor countries.

THE PROBLEM OF DONOR DEPENDENCE

This is a liability for the demining programme which depends heavily on donor largesse. Without sustained and regular contact with donors, long term planning is impossible. The demining programme needs more autonomy to plan its operation and for this it needs a more regularized basis for communicating directly with its ultimate constituency and source of support: donor countries.

It is also important to recognize that the demining programme is, to some extent, controversial. The programme handles armaments and in a country at war, handling armaments is controversial under the best of circumstances. While the demining programme admirably seeks (and achieves) neutrality, its actions risk being perceived by donors as benefiting one or the other party in a conflict. It is no surprise that donor countries must make an effort not to view demining in a politicized context.

A demining programme is controversial also because it is very difficult to measure its cost effectiveness. Large efforts and relatively large sums of money are expended to assist what may appear to be a restricted area.

The consequence of all this is that the demining programme is a programme which is notably donor dependent. The perceived controversial nature of the programme adds to this dependency. Sustained contact with donor countries is absolutely critical for its survival. The demining programme must be constantly aware of the mood of donor countries, to correct perceptions, to convey its accomplishments effectively, and to be in immediate contact with changes in donor countries' positions.

And yet the institutional links with donors are substantially weaker than those of relief or development agencies.

Suffice to point out an example. We understood from the US representatives in Islamabad that they may be seriously questioning their continued support of the demining programme. They seem inclined to view the programme within their own

political objectives for Afghanistan, and at present, these objectives have largely been fulfilled. For the same reason, they may be also seriously considering a curtailment of their funding of support for demining in mujahideen areas in the future.

A change in demining's institutional setting is needed in order to improve communication between demining and donor countries, to facilitate links with the donor countries and to stress the considerable humanitarian and economic benefits which the programme can yield to Afghanistan.

Such a change would serve two purposes: 1. to ensure better communication with donor countries and 2. to facilitate planning for the demining programme. This latter purpose is of such importance that it merits some elaboration.

FUNDING, MANAGEMENT AND LONG-TERM PLANNING

At present, the demining programme is funded largely on the model of a relief agency. A budget is established for each fiscal year and the expenditure of funds throughout the year depends on the donor countries' response to funding appeals. This means:

1. that budgets are established on a year to year basis, and
2. that within any given year, the funds available are never certain. Yearly planning is difficult and long-term, multi-year planning is impossible. At the time of this report, a budget of US\$ 18.4 million has been proposed and only US\$ 8.6 million is on hand.

What is the impact of insecure funding within this setting?

1. Key personnel are hired for short-term assignments since funding cannot be guaranteed and positions cannot be guaranteed for more than one year at a time. The demining programme has had four senior programme managers in a year and a half. Each of these has provided his own personal vision. General

Bekin had his own vision which emphasized training. Colonel Lythgo had doubts about the efficacy of utilizing trained Afghan deminers in the context of Afghan NGOs and preferred the creation of a UN Blue Beret force. Rae McGrath's vision allowed for the incorporation of Afghan NGOs but under close expatriate direction; he likewise favoured heavy emphasis on flails. Jan Haugland has emphasized heavy reliance on Afghan deminers under the direction of Afghan NGOs and continued support of the flail/mechanical demining programme. The continuity of the programme suffers.

2. The instability of funding negatively affects the management style. Because funds must be juggled constantly, programme management devotes considerable time to allocating funds here and there. One can only hope that it is done wisely. Since funding decisions are not made in a regular way supported by broad based approvals, allocations are often made on an ad hoc basis. Unless this is done with great diplomacy, the responsibility this imposes on upper management leaves room for abuse and even if abuse does not occur, can lead to internal conflict.
3. Major decisions are made by individual programme managers frequently without the scrutiny of a regular planning process. The purchase of the flails is a case in point. Flails are of limited value in much of the Afghanistan terrain, and yet the two flails were purchased. This purchase occurred with the best of intentions but without the benefit of an approved, long-term plan.

It is important to state here that the present manager, Jan Haugland, is exceptionally adept at juggling funds and at building institutions within an unsure funding environment. But he is the first to admit that this poses considerable difficulties for a programme manager.

4. Finally, short-term funding compromises long-term planning. And the demining programme clearly needs, at this time, to undertake a process of long-term planning. The programme needs to plan and implement changes which will improve the coordination of the overall demining programme. It needs to

reorganize the programme with a view to building in greatly improved information gathering, planning, reporting and monitoring. It needs to adopt a plan for shifting the entire operation from Islamabad to Peshawar, and eventually from Peshawar to a variety of sites in Afghanistan. This involves institution building, merging some institutions with others and building certain institutions that are key to the success of the programme. As long as funding is volatile, planning will be ad hoc. A programme as complex as demining cannot operate effectively in such an environment.

In short, the demining programme needs an institutional setting which is capable of providing more regular links with donors and longer term funding in order to facilitate long-term planning. Unless the mandate of UNOCA changes, it does not appear that UNOCA can offer this setting.

RELOCATING THE DEMINING PROGRAMME

This raises the question: What is an appropriate institutional home for demining? It is clear that the organization needs to have: (1) the capability of providing a secure funding environment in order to facilitate long-term planning; (2) the ability to attract and retain reliable expertise; (3) a link with donors through an established governing body and (4) association with an institution that will continue to enhance the political neutrality of the programme.

At the present time, the UNDP appears to be a likely candidate. As a home of demining, it could provide many of these requirements, and perhaps more. Here are some points which favour this association:

1. UNDP, acting as a development agency, operates with fixed yearly budgets and would offer to some degree the capability for long term planning.

2. UNDP could provide direct links with donors through its governing body.
3. Association with a development programme would emphasize the rehabilitation and reconstruction aspects of demining. This notion is developed elsewhere in the report but it is worth stating briefly here. Demining should be seen in the context of village level economic development. It should distance itself from the politically charged focus on repatriation. In this way, demining could be more effectively depoliticized and its programme designed to view demining as only one of a variety of strategies required for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.
4. It would encourage and perhaps help in the planning of the inevitable shift to an operation whose work would be carried out largely inside Afghanistan. UNDP has a significant presence in Afghanistan and at present carries out extensive cross-line work. At present, 30% of UNDP work is carried out in mujahideen-controlled areas. UNDP would greatly benefit from the considerable diplomatic talents of the two directors of the demining agencies to extend its presence in mujahideen territory and reciprocally, the demining teams would benefit from the increasingly cross-line strategy of UNDP.
5. Placed within a permanent institution, the lessons of demining within Afghanistan could be kept in the corporate memory of the United Nations. This would greatly facilitate the design of demining projects as they are needed in other parts of the world. It would provide a documentation and an experience in policy and procedures which would be helpful in future similar endeavours.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The demining programme needs an institutional mechanism for more direct interaction with donors. It also needs a more stable funding environment in order to facilitate long-term planning. Since UNOCA does not appear able to

provide such an environment, an effort must be made to find a new institutional home for the demining programme.

- 2.2 Locating an institutional home needs to consider two crucial factors: (1) The demining programme must continue to work under the umbrella of neutrality that the United Nations is able to provide. (2) It must have the freedom to operate independently of the Kabul government. The UNDP seems a logical choice. Its advantage is that UNDP is able to offer the demining programme this umbrella of UN neutrality. Its disadvantage is that through its Resident Representative, the UNDP is inevitably affiliated with the host government. For this reason, it is recommended that the demining programme be administered by the UNDP but in a section especially designated for demining operations, under an understanding that such a special section has the freedom to operate with strict political neutrality, i.e. with no obligation of allegiance to the Afghan Government.

3. COORDINATION, COMMAND AND CONTROL

INTRODUCTION

As the demining programme has changed directions, from Phase I to Phase II, from mine education programmes to mine eradication programmes, the beneficiaries of the programmes have changed and multiplied. In tandem with these developments, the organizations established to service this multiplicity of beneficiaries have likewise multiplied. In the first phase, the beneficiaries included potential returnees who received six-hour courses on the dangers of mines. Additionally, the men who received mine clearance training in special training camps were targeted to do basic demining upon returning to the villages. The second phase targeted new beneficiaries. The work of demining agencies would service populations in Afghanistan. These demining agencies needed the services of a survey organization to prepare plans for operations. A training centre to provide mine detecting dogs has been established to assist the demining teams.

The result is that a great variety of institutions has accumulated. And now, instead of a single body deploying the services of sub-branches, there exists a plethora of autonomous bodies many of which have their own steering committees, offices in Peshawar and Quetta, their own aspirations for growth, and a tendency to consider themselves as distinct and separate entities.

It is important to recognize that the multiplication of autonomous organizations has served important purposes in the past.

- (1) The tasks undertaken were quite distinct. One could not expect soldiers to train women and children in the camps. There had to be separate training centres for training men in basic demining, while quite different teams of experts would train men, women and children in refugee camps.

- (2) The funding of manual demining involved large sums of money. Since it was agreed that the programme should be carried out by Afghan NGOs, it was more palatable to the United Nations to disperse the funds to a number of organizations rather than transfer a large sum to one NGO.
- (3) Since the South West Afghanistan Agency for Demining (SWAAD) and Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC) were expected to work in very different areas, separate organizations staffed by individuals from these different areas seemed a sensible strategy.

But now the reasons for having multiple organizations no longer apply. The programme has undergone changes and should undergo even more. It must now focus its efforts and centralize authority. The loose confederation of semi-autonomous institutions can no longer provide an appropriate structure for efficiently administering a complex of services requiring coordination and planning.

THE DEMINING CONFEDERATION OF ORGANIZATIONS

A brief description and commentary about each of the institutions within the demining programme is provided below.

1. Organization of Mine Awareness (OMA) - Offices in Peshawar and Quetta

OMA has replaced the Mine Awareness Programme, a programme that was designed and administered primarily by expatriates. The change of name from Mine Awareness Programme to Organization for Mine Awareness signals three important changes of direction. First, the newly constituted OMA is staffed and administered entirely by Afghans. Secondly, OMA has begun to provide special courses for women. Thirdly, unlike its predecessor, OMA seeks to work principally in Afghanistan. Previously, courses were given exclusively in refugee camps. Presently, OMA teams administer programmes of mine education at five different projects in four different

They seek to reach a large number of persons by sending a limited number of master trainers who begin the training programme in an area by training local instructors. These instructors then undertake to give themselves, the courses they have learned to provide.

At present, OMA is seeking to expand the number of its courses and the variety of courses. A diversity of courses is provided to women and children adapted to their requirements. In addition, OMA is seeking to launch its own "Quarterly Journal" printed in both Pushto and English, with intentions to expand it into a monthly magazine.

The OMA establishes its own schedule of activities, its own priorities and establishes on its own, the places where it will deliver its programme. There is no attempt, at present, to coordinate its activities with training with manual demining operations.

2. Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA)- Offices in Peshawar and Quetta

This separate NGO was established to provide the demining agencies with two services: (1) To provide information for planning operations, conducting surveys in areas where operations will take place. This survey administers a questionnaire to local landowners and informed people, and largely on the basis of these interviews establishes a map of the area which the demining agencies are to demine. (2) To monitor the activities of the demining agencies. MCPA monitors are presumed to be on site at some point in the demining operations to check on the functions, MCPA deploys ten two member teams in different parts of Afghanistan.

In addition to providing these two services of mapping and monitoring, MCPA provides a general mapping service: it also employs a social and cultural officer who is responsible for obtaining updates and is supposed to put out a magazine detailing

this information. It maintains a computer section which keeps a data base on areas surveyed.

Demining operations of both demining agencies proceed according to the maps provided by MCPA. The evaluation team has found that these maps are inadequate in a number of regards (see Section 4). They often cover areas which are much larger than the actual areas affected by mines. They rarely attempt to show patterns. Maps are drawn on the basis of insufficient information. It has also been found that MCPA does not carry out the monitoring function in a regular and effective manner. In spite of the best of intentions, completion reports of the demining agencies are not effectively recorded by MCPA. In short, the very critical coordination between MCPA, headquarters and the demining agencies falls well short of what is required.

Meanwhile, MCPA has requested extra funding to carry out a country-wide General Survey of Mines in Afghanistan.

3. Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC) - Office in Peshawar

ATC is one of two demining agencies. Both of the demining agencies are organized on the same lines. Each deploys 27-man teams from site to site, and carries out demining operations in areas defined by MCPA. ATC at present has 18 teams deployed at six different sites. Each site is managed by a site supervisor, and each site is a living and administrative unit for the teams assigned there.

The separate agencies organize their sites and motivate their teams quite differently. ATC employs a paramilitary strategy, disciplines its teams and employs military-trained site supervisors.

ATC prefers to lodge three to four teams at single sites, reducing the number of sites. This means, in ATC's case, that each team has farther to travel when going to its mine field.

4. South West Afghanistan Agency for Demining (SWAAD) - Office in Quetta

Like ATC, SWAAD deploys demining teams from site to site as they move from task to task. There are, however, three principal differences. (1) SWAAD is substantially smaller, deploying only 12 teams. (2) SWAAD has chosen to lodge the teams in sites with a maximum of two teams and attempts to establish sites closer to the task areas. This means a duplication of sites but less travelling time to task areas. (3) SWAAD employs less of a military organization and instead attempts to motivate its team members by encouraging them to participate in the running of the sites and teams. Instead of a paramilitary organization, each site has a governing body. There are clearly differences, and the evaluation team, while respecting SWAAD's approach, suspected that ATC's paramilitary organization was more appropriate for demining operations.

In both agencies, the programme managers are charismatic and effective managers. Both managers capably seek to work in an atmosphere of neutrality. This is often difficult as power frequently changes hands in the areas where they work. They nevertheless carry out their mission of neutrality effectively. It is impossible to ignore this indirect consequence of their presence, acting in a strictly non-partisan manner providing a humanitarian service.

They do, however, operate strictly independently. They rarely compare their styles of management, even though each would benefit from the other. And neither places a strong emphasis on maintaining a high standard of record-keeping. Some completion reports are better than others. And completion reports are not always forwarded to MCPA or Headquarters in Peshawar.

There is a final issue. The programme managers of both ATC and SWAAD regularly receive requests from local shuras - local governing bodies - villagers and leaders requesting the demining agencies to clear mined areas. These requests are not forwarded to headquarters. They may be forwarded to MCPA who will, in time, initiate a survey. But there is no formal procedure for processing requests. There should be. The selection of areas for demining operations should be done after

extremely careful scrutiny and should, at all costs, be free from any suggestion of political influence.

5. Training Centres

Up until this month, two training centres have trained men in mine clearance skills. One has been at Baleli near Quetta and the other at Risalpur near Peshawar. Pakistan's army has provided the facilities and some instructors. The Baleli training centre is presently being closed and the Risalpur site will soon offer only a limited number of courses.

Five different courses have been offered at the training centres: (1) basic mine clearance, (2) instructors course, (3) team leaders course, (4) predeployment course, (5) mine survey, mapping and monitoring. The courses have been designed to offer training for each of the functions required in demining operations.

Nine governments have made demining experts available at each of the camps to supervise the training.

The original intention of the training programme was to provide basic demining skills to a variety of Afghan refugees selected by their respective parties. The training was not deliberately tailored to train men who would work for one of the two demining agencies. There is very little coordination between the activities of the demining teams and the training programmes. Only recently have expatriate expert supervisors at the training camps gone into Afghanistan to review the performance of the demining teams in action.

It is clear that this aspect of the demining programme has nearly outlived its usefulness. More than 13,500 Afghans have been trained, all in Pakistan. Hardly more than 500 trainees are now employed by the demining agencies. The rest have disappeared. The demining agencies are unlikely to expand and the turnover of deminers in the agencies is not high. Furthermore, any further training, such as instructors' courses, team leaders' courses and even additional basic demining courses

would best be done at the demining sites themselves where skills are acquired along with on-site experience.

How then could one utilise expatriate advisors? Undoubtedly some could work with the demining agencies observing, training and monitoring in the field. However, once the training camps close and demining instruction becomes incorporated with on-site work in the field, the expatriate presence could be substantially reduced.

6. **Halo Trust: Office in Kabul and site location at Pol-i-Khumri, Afghanistan**

Halo Trust is an independent organization based in Kabul which has carried out demining and reconstruction projects in Afghanistan for three years.

It differs dramatically from the ATC and SWAAD, the two demining agencies carrying out cross-border operations. Halo Trust management and training staff are expatriates. Halo works from within government-controlled areas and because of this, it receives assistance from the Afghan Government. Two of the trainers who train deminers are employed by the government Demining Corps. Because of their close association with government, they are able to obtain maps of mine fields in government possession. Using government resources and personnel, however, has not restricted them from working with militia or mujahideen groups; indeed they train deminers sent to them from mujahideen groups. This is a noteworthy accomplishment.

Halo has received two contracts from UNOCA, one in August, 1990, and a second in March, 1991. The latter contract provides for training five teams recruited from four different provinces, the provinces being Parwan, Baghlan, Samangan and Balkh, a string of provinces connecting Kabul to the northern border with the Soviet Union. Their approach is unique. They train one team at a time at their training centre in Pol-i-khumri. The teams are recruited from four sources: government or militia commanders; mujahideen commanders; civilians solicited by radio advertisements; and government ministry employees. The training follows the training programme established by the Pakistan training centres, except, in addition to the training, the participants undertake to demine an actual mine field. The programme

devised by Halo Trust accomplishes two purposes: it trains deminers and at the same time accomplishes demining activities. Following the training the trained deminers return to their home areas, ministries or commanders. They are presumed capable themselves of then carrying out very limited demining activities. Halo Trust maintains contact with their trainees to monitor their activities and to receive from them suggestions for areas requiring mine clearance operation. Halo Trust retains two teams of deminers on a permanent basis to carry out tasks that are brought to them from a variety of sources.

The programme is small scale. But it is conceptually innovative. There are benefits and risks. The first benefit is that it brings government and opposition groups together in a common enterprise. Secondly, it returns trained deminers to home agencies, areas or commanders, and by keeping in contact with them can assist them in carrying out small scale demining projects. By recruiting trainees from a wide gamut of organizations, it brings minimal demining expertise to a large number of areas inexpensively. The risk, however, is clear: unless close contact is maintained with the trainees, there is no guarantee that their expertise will be used for strictly humanitarian purposes.

Like other organizations in the UNOCA demining confederation, Halo Trust has very little to do with a centrally coordinated effort. It has virtually no contact with UNOCA headquarters based in Islamabad. They do not utilize the information resources and the accumulated experiences acquired by UNOCA Islamabad. There is a UNOCA demining representative resident in Kabul, but the UNOCA representative has made virtually no effort to maintain contact with Halo Trust. There even seems to be some strained relations between them. In effect, Halo Trust works entirely independently of the demining programme. Conversely, UNOCA Islamabad appears little inclined to incorporate some of the innovative approaches which Halo Trust puts into practice.

7. USAID-funded training of mine detection dogs: Office in Pabbi

The Global Training Academy, under contract to Ronco and USAID, provides dog training expertise with the objective of training a total of 38 dog teams to be deployed in specific areas. Dogs are particularly useful in areas where there are plastic anti-tank mines, or where areas are littered with metal fragments. Since their usefulness is quite specialized, it is important to have detailed information about an area as a basis for judging the advisability of deploying dog teams. Although there are plans for UN funding of the dog detection teams, at present they are funded by USAID.

8. UNOCA: Offices in Islamabad, Peshawar, Quetta and Kabul

The headquarters for the demining confederation of organizations is in UNOCA Islamabad. Contact is maintained here by radio with all organizations. Representatives gather in Islamabad monthly to discuss matters regarding demining operations. The offices of the programme manager and technical advisor are located in Islamabad, along with procurement officers and other support staff. But there are no records kept here. There are no completion reports. There is no map that records all areas completed no plan for tasks that are scheduled to begin. There is no record for the tasks completed, of the number of teams deployed, the cost of the tasks, the number of devices destroyed or areas demined. With none of this basic information, there is no effort at analysis and no monitoring of the separate organizations. In effect, at demining headquarters, there is no planning, analysis or monitoring; these functions are left to the responsibility of the separate organizations.

The Peshawar and Quetta UNOCA offices serve demining by providing logistic support, obtaining route permits, assisting in helping to transfer equipment and provisions across the border.

A demining expert represents the Islamabad UNOCA demining programme in Kabul and has four functions: (1) maintain liaison with the Colonel directing the government Demining Corps; (2) maintain liaison with Halo Trust; (3) assist in

obtaining equipment and supplies from the Soviet Union to be used for demining; and (4) work with the Afghan Red Crescent Society in establishing a mine awareness programme. In fact, most of the efforts of the resident expert have gone toward procuring Soviet equipment and very little has gone toward incorporating activities in Kabul into the overall demining programme.

There would seem to be a larger task that the demining expert resident in Kabul should pursue: planning for the eventual location of the demining programme in Kabul. No efforts, however, are apparently being made in this direction.

CENTRALIZATION OF AUTHORITY

The demining programme confederation has, up till now, included eight different organizations. Two of these organizations have two separate offices. The training centres have kept two centres going, and there are four UNOCA offices, each one participating in some way in the demining programme. This is a total of 14 different sites, each of which has separate responsibilities in the demining programme. This is an unwieldy number. It is particularly unwieldy when one considers the absence of any central coordination.

To some extent, the absence of central organization is deliberate, and this must be respected. Afghan NGOs have been given the liberty and autonomy to grow, make their own mistakes and run their own endeavours. UNOCA Islamabad has avoided interfering. In the process, the demining programme has grown horizontally.

This may have been ideal in a climate of unlimited resources, but for reasons discussed elsewhere, resources are becoming increasingly limited. Donor countries must be convinced that the demining programme is making the best use of the resources they provide. And the demining programme, for its part, must recognize that demining teams must be used in areas and for tasks that will yield optimal results. This places a great premium on planning, on setting priorities, and on designing operations

carefully. To this end, coordination is essential. The programme has developed horizontally up to now. Now it must gain some vertical sophistication. This means a radical centralization of the demining programme.

In Section 1 the report attempts to articulate a way of conceptualizing the demining operations that would simultaneously make the best use of resources, direct the focus of the programme away from Peshawar and onto Afghanistan, go the furthest to operate as a mission of neutrality and encourage the incorporation of innovative and alternative approaches to demining. This view urges thinking of demining as a village-level development programme. It means evaluating the needs of one village or cluster of villages at a time, assessing these needs and carefully designing a programme of mine eradication and education that will yield the best results, given the village circumstances.

If this is accepted, it means that for each village, a composite of services could be provided. Manual demining will be used only where it is most urgently required. If deemed appropriate, the use of dog mine-detecting teams may be deployed. Mine awareness programmes should be developed for each village that would include education, strategies for mine avoidance, ways of working around the presence of mines. Areas might be fenced off, roads detoured. Alternative sources of fuel might be provided if the women and children cannot venture to gather wood. Alternative water sources might be found which avoid the risk of mine explosions. But this requires effective gathering of information and the effective coordination of the demining programme resources. For this a radical centralization of authority is required.

To this end, the total control of the demining programme should be vested in one person, the programme manager. All matters relating to demining operations, including purchases, repair, finance and stores should be centralized at the highest level and then delegated to units consistent with the maintenance of control.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Demining programme headquarters should be moved to a location more centrally placed and should, ideally, be detached from UNOCA. This central headquarters should incorporate the functions of programme management, technical planning, logistics, and most particularly managing reconnaissance, analysis of information, planning operations, setting priorities, monitoring and evaluating the efficiency of operations.
- 3.2 The Mine Clearance Planning Agency need no longer exist as a separate entity. Survey teams should be deployed with the logistical support of the demining agencies. The information gathering, planning and monitoring functions should be subsumed under demining headquarters.
- 3.3 The Organization for Mine Awareness should continue with its independent programme of mine awareness training, exclusively in Afghanistan, for a limited period of time. This independent phase of the programme should expect to terminate within 18 months. Following this, OMA mine awareness training expertise should be deployed by the planning cell at demining headquarters to design and administer particular training programmes tailored to the needs of individual villages or groups of villages. This training programme should provide a village strategy for avoiding mines and fencing mine areas. This village-level programme of mine awareness should incorporate the patterns of movement of women and children in grazing, fuel and water gathering activities in an attempt to establish alternative routes or alternative means of satisfying basic needs.
- 3.4 There are presently steering committees at nearly every level of operations. In place of these separate steering committees, one steering committee should be established to guide and advise the activities of demining headquarters. Every political and power group must be represented on this one steering committee and its members should be appointed by the programme manager.

- 3.5 The planning cell at demining headquarters should coordinate the activities of all mine clearance and education services in their design and administration for each village or set of villages.
- 3.6 Demining headquarters should seek to incorporate innovative approaches to village-level demining. Some of these are discussed in the following section. One possible approach would be to assign two instructors with team leader experience to a single village to train a demining team among village members which will then clear mines from village areas. Demining headquarters would, in this case, supply only the required equipment and the salaries of the two instructors.
- 3.7 Plans for demining operations should be discussed with other development organizations prior to implementation. Every attempt should be made to coordinate demining activities with an overall assessment of village needs. Once canals or karezes are cleared of mines, a canal clearing project might be undertaken. Once fields are cleared that have been out of cultivation for some years, herbicides may be provided to tackle the weed problems.
- 3.8 The evaluation strongly supports the present move to close Baleli camp. It also recommends the closing of Risalpur training camp as soon as is feasible. Training programmes should be administered on site in Afghanistan, where students can receive hands-on experience in mine fields. This may mean a considerable reduction in the number of expatriates required.
- 3.9 The demining agencies should seek to make their field sites as mobile as possible. Since communication and transport is so difficult, field sites should be placed as close as possible to task areas. This means the creation of more sites with fewer teams per site.
- 3.10 The demining operation must undertake to incorporate Kabul-based activities fully. The existing demining expert should be replaced with someone who is capable of accepting and carrying out a much wider mandate of responsibilities.

working relationship between Halo Trust and demining headquarters
at present. The selection of sites and the monitoring of operations by Halo
Trust should be submitted to the same rigorous review as the activities of other
demining agencies. Even more importantly, however, the demining
representative should operate in close liaison with the headquarters to Afghanistan
(see Section 7). This is a complex task which will require considerable
management and diplomatic skills. A plan for this shift should be developed
within the next six months

4. RECONNAISSANCE AND PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

The demining programme presently relies exclusively on the Mine Clearance and Planning Agency (MCPA) for collection and analyzing information. MCPA collects information on likely sites for mine eradication by sending teams into various locations. There are ten of these survey teams now under MCPA control. Our examination of the operation of these survey teams has suggested certain inadequacies.

Gathering and utilizing information effectively is a demanding task and MCPA is not held accountable for these inadequacies. Indeed, the task is so demanding and so important that this evaluation has given considerable attention to ways of improving reconnaissance and planning. Two changes are proposed: (1) improving the quality of information obtained and (2) forming a planning cell within demining headquarters with responsibility and authority to receive, review and act on all information provided by the survey teams.

EXISTING INFORMATION SOURCES

There are a number of existing resources that for a variety of reasons are not presently being effectively used.

1. Soviet/Government Forces: Minefield records will have been kept by two different groups both in Soviet and Government forces.
 - 1.a. Engineer Units: Sub-units and units mine laying records would have been kept by the laying organization and also sent to both divisional and formation level headquarters. The type of minefield laid by these engineer organizations would be regular large minefields laid to meet a defensive or tactical plan. They would generally contain a large number of either anti-personnel or anti-tank mines or a combination of both. These fields are laid in regular patterns and are likely to also contain a percentage of anti lift devices and include small areas of irregularly-laid mines. The latter are laid to confuse an enemy as to the pattern laid inside a field. They are generally laid approximately 100 meters on the enemy side of the outer row of regularly laid mines. These are referred to as an irregular outer edge. Both defensive and tactical fields could be laid by hand or mechanical mine layers.
 - 1.b. Other Units: Generally other fighting arms such as infantry, artillery, armour, etc., would be responsible for laying their own protective mine fields. They are normally laid much closer in to their held positions but could still contain a mixed type of both anti-tank and anti-personnel mines. In most instances within the Afghan context priority would have been given to anti-personnel mines. These units would also be responsible for laying nuisance mines along routes and within village complexes to deny free movement of supplies and men to guerilla groups. These nuisance fields could contain both anti-personnel and anti-tank mines. All mines in these groups would be hand-laid with a percentage sensor activated or fitted with anti-lift devices. These nuisance fields would also be recorded and once again held at divisional and formation level.

Aerial dispersal of mines from mortar artillery, rocket and air systems would have been extensively used along river and valley axes and in mountain areas which needed to be denied to mujahideen occupation or movement. The records for such aerial denial operations would register the delivery system type of munitions used and

target locations. However, even if the target area is known, the spread of dispersed mines on the ground cannot be precisely specified. Many of these mines would have been moved by soil erosion during periods of heavy rain or floods. When this occurs over a period of time, mines will shift along natural slopes until they eventually reach a gradient change and become buried by silt.

Soviet and government patterns of water systems also allow us to predict certain regularities. Mines would have been regularly planted on the bed of certain underground channels and these locations are generally well known. These mines remain on the bed of these water courses at a relatively constant level regardless of heavy water flows.

2. Mudjahideen Forces:

Within these forces it is extremely doubtful if any records were ever kept. The accepted practice of mine laying by independent organizations such as Mudjahideen is that mines are laid by small groups during the hours of darkness on known enemy routes typically to counter regular forces' counter attack movement. In addition, they are laid on likely approaches into their own defended positions. When a target is no longer fruitful the mines will be picked up and moved either into a new position or moved into a central cache for further distribution within their own group at a later date. It is an accepted norm that independent groups retain control of their own weapon resources and mines are not recorded except for the purpose of picking them up for re-use.

Records of Soviet Forces are kept in Kabul under the auspices of the Demining Corps. Every effort should be made through the highest channels to obtain these records. Furthermore, a senior officer with at least the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and with a suitable military field engineering background should be positioned at Kabul. This would provide a critical intelligence link.

Mines laid by Mujahideen forces pose a different problem. MCPA presently attempts to gain information mainly by questioning local shura about mine fields in a district or village location. Survey teams pose questions and people answer them. What MCPA however does not do is analyse who these people are and what are their own motives in supplying information at the time. In every instance when information is being gathered from a source, the information has to be validated by further questions and researched to verify fact from hearsay. It is suggested that information received about Mudjahideen fields be treated with some suspicion as many which have or are being treated as mined areas are really only suspected.

This means that survey teams should be asked to verify information inside a stated or suspected mined area. The standard practice in these cases is to clear at selected points safe lanes 2 meters wide from one side of the field to the other. These reconnaissance lanes are an important feature of mine intelligence which must be employed. From our research into the present operation the survey teams are not gaining the maximum intelligence necessary mainly because the functional command and the direction of its activities are not correctly oriented.

THE PLANNING CELL

The establishment of a planning cell within demining headquarters means that MCPA is no longer required as an independent NGO. Two of its survey teams could be deployed with the logistical support of SWAAD and 3 teams with the logistical support of ATC. The five remaining teams could be deployed with their own logistical support directly by the planning cell at demining headquarters.

The planning cell should assume responsibility for four functions that are inadequately fulfilled at the moment: (1) supervision of the gathering and storage of field data as well as monitoring the quality of this data; (2) on the basis of this information, design mine eradication and education programmes for individual villages and village clusters; schedule operations and supervise the deployment of demining

agencies, dog teams as well as mechanical teams as they are required; (3) maintain accurate records of sites completed, sites underway and sites scheduled for operations; and (4) monitor the progress and overall efficiency of the various components of the mine eradication and education programme. Each of these proposed responsibilities is discussed in more detail:

(1) Supervision of data gathering

Data must be obtained from a number of sources. The planning cell must attempt to use every possible data source available. In addition to those mentioned above, i.e. Soviet field records and mujahideen records where available, the planning cell must obtain data from such sources as UNIDATA, reports of the Agricultural Survey of Afghanistan issued by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, UNHCR monthly repatriation reports, the report of the Mines Advisory Group and so on. Every possible data source should be exploited. Close liaison with the library at ACBAR will be necessary.

The quality of the data should likewise be closely monitored. There should be a continual review of the accuracy and usefulness of the data provided by the survey teams.

In general the supervision by the planning cell should guarantee that the survey teams follow these principles:

- a. establish the credibility of the source materials
- b. precisely define the limits, composition and pattern of the mined areas by carrying out test strips at appropriate intervals in the suspected mine fields
- c. separate minefields into three categories:
 - Category A - Minefield, mines laid in a pattern
 - Category B - Mined area, area where the survey has physically proven to be mined.
 - Category C - Mine Suspected Area, survey did not prove mines laid.

An examination of available records has convinced us that there has been too much wasted effort expended on unconfirmed information. This needs to be rectified as a matter of priority. If intelligence gathering and planning is implemented at the demining headquarters a more productive clearance effort is guaranteed.

(2) Planning mine eradication and education programmes

Mine eradication and education programmes must be developed for each area, each village or each cluster of villages. This is of considerable importance if the resources of the demining programme are to be used effectively. Separate packages of services will be designed for each village or cluster of villages. These may include:

- (a) The deployment of demining teams in high priority areas;

Establishing priority locations is particularly difficult. It is necessary to slightly revise the priorities already established by the demining programme. Residential areas should receive highest priority. Irrigated agricultural land as a distinct category should follow. The next priority should be facilities for irrigation, karezes, canals, etc. Following this might come dry-land farming areas and finally, grazing land. One should not deploy demining agency teams except in lands that qualify as one of the first three priorities.

- (b) Design of a mine education programme;

The planning cell may ask OMA to design such a programme, tailored to the needs for each village. An instructor should be sent to the area to conduct either training sessions himself or to train others to do so. It is particularly important to develop training programmes with attention to the movement of women and children engaged in procuring fuel and water.

- (c) Identifying mined areas to be avoided. A programme of identification and avoidance should be developed for each area.

(d) Where necessary, and where conditions permit, some areas may require the specialized services of mechanical demining equipment and dog teams.

(e) The creation of Village Demining Teams: The evaluation team attempted to come up with a number of innovative solutions to the problem of mine eradication, solutions which make the best use of limited resources, and solutions which likewise give the authority and responsibility for demining to local governing bodies, like village leaders and local shuras. One of these innovative plans involves the creation of Village Demining Teams. The modus operandi involves the following:

- A limited number (2) of expert Afghan demining instructors be assigned to a village or a cluster of villages.

- Twelve local villagers (four 3 man squads) be selected by the local shura in consultation with the instructors.

- These selected villagers are given training in basic demining.

- These trainees then carry out mine clearance in their own village under the guidance of the instructors.

- The operation may be supervised by itinerant international experts.

- The instructors are responsible for maintaining careful records, exploding the devices, and ensuring that the operation be carried out in the safest possible way.

- The demining programme provides the salaries of the instructors, the necessary demining equipment and the explosives for disposing of the devices. It may also, after due consideration, contribute a limited sum to insure the locally-trained deminers. It may also, however decide not to insure them making clear the demining programme assumes no responsibility for the consequences of an accident.

Once a mine eradication and education programme is devised for a particular village or village cluster, a schedule for carrying out this programme should be established. This schedule should be rigorously adhered to by the various agencies cooperating in the village design.

(3) Maintenance of records

The planning cell will receive the completion reports and guarantee their quality. There is little point in reporting that an area of 20,000 sq. meters of road has been cleared. What is essential is to report the road length, pavement type and width, whether clearance has included verges, drains, culverts, bridge crossings and fords etc. Battle debris also needs to be stated as a reader can then assess why a particular clearance has been fast or slow. A measurement of sq. meters is meaningless unless it is qualified in terms of grazing area, dry farming or irrigable fields. A village clearance needs to state the number of houses, whether habitable or un-habitable, floor areas, size of communal areas. Clearance of irrigation canals needs to state length, width and depth and the number of fields which could be irrigated from the reopened supply. If the reports contain fact, important technical data can be withdrawn from reports, analysed and disseminated to other UN agencies. This is another reason why the centralized planning cell responsible for maintaining a data base needs to be established at the demining headquarters. The completion report provides the recipient of both mine intelligence and engineer intelligence. This must be the aim of the reporting unit. It is recommended that this be implemented.

(4) Disseminating of information and monitoring of programme progress and efficiency

The demining programme should conduct continual monitoring of its own operation. This involves more than the collection of data. This means the analysis of the data received through the completion reports. The completion reports should be analyzed to determine the number of team weeks required to complete each site in order to evaluate the efficiency of teams, the difficulty of certain areas given particular features. In addition to the completion reports, careful records should be

kept of the entire village or village cluster operation, the performance of the mine education team, the areas fenced or designated for avoidance, the performance of the Village Demining Teams and the efficacy of the package as a whole. These reflections should be the basis for searching for increasingly innovative means of mine eradication and education, to make the best use of limited resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 A planning cell should be established within demining headquarters which will take over all responsibilities for supervising the gathering of information, planning on the basis of this information, keeping records and monitoring programme performance.
- 4.2 MCPA should be discontinued as a separate institution. The resources presently at its disposal should be placed at the disposal of the planning cell within demining headquarters.
- 4.3 A key function of the planning cell should be to devise a mix of mine eradication and education services to a given village or cluster of villages. This mix of services will differ in each case. On the basis of each individual plan, the planning cell will deploy the appropriate selection of mine clearing operations, education and mine avoidance operations, as well as the deployment of innovative techniques in mine eradication such as operationalizing Village Demining Teams.
- 4.4 A pilot project should be initiated to form and deploy Village Demining Teams. These are teams formed by villagers from local villages who, under the guidance of two trained instructors, are trained and then employed in demining activities in their own area. If the pilot project is successful, then a plan for applying this approach on a wide scale should be developed.

- 4.5 Completion report formats should be revised to provide considerably more detailed information.
- 4.6 The planning cell should engage continually in a monitoring exercise and continually devise ways of improving the demining programme on the basis of this monitoring activity.
- 4.7 Every effort should be made through the highest political channels to procure Soviet and government mine field records.

5. DEMINING FIELD OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

As an Evaluation Team we were not prepared to accept the efforts of interviews and readings alone. We had to visit people in the field, see them working at their allotted tasks, watch the interaction between groups, watch their daily routine, feeding, sleeping and praying. We had to get a feel for as many tasks and groups as possible in the shortest possible time. We used the same vehicles, ate the same food, slept in villages or in the open wherever the work site was located and tried to fit into the overall picture as unobtrusively as possible. We visited and inspected 3 sites and 10 ATC demining units in Kunar province and 4 sites and 10 SWAAD units in Qandahar. The vehicle trips into both the northern and southern provinces involved time consuming delays at check points in tribal areas, border crossings and at change over points for guards and escorts. Passage was slow due to steep, rough and narrow tracks and to harsh conditions of travel through hot dusty flat desert plains. Site office locations varied from an ideal site on the banks of the Kunar River to a dirty, dusty site located within the rubble of an uninhabited partially destroyed government post on the edge of a hot desert plain. We observed, as we moved from place to place, discussing points with Directors and staff and in most instances agreeing on issues of contention. The following points emerged and we have outlined them as they occurred without reference to particular locations except where it is needed to illustrate a point.

OPERATION PLANNING

Planning within demining NGOs needs strengthening. The use of a National at Sergeant level would provide the screening capability of Completion Report data which is not being done at the moment. The centralized data base system needs this screening process.

STORAGE OF EXPLOSIVES

In most instances explosives were stored within or in close proximity to inhabited villages and town areas. In one instance the explosives were stored at the local Mudjahideen headquarters. It is appreciated that security is a problem but safety of demining staff and civilian inhabitants must take priority. Dispersal of explosive stores in unit lots in secure locked containers should be attempted. Central accommodation and store areas should be located at field sites rather than in village areas. This will help to overcome most difficulties.

DETONATORS

We found too many instances where detonators were stored with bulk explosives. This is a bad safety breach and needs careful watching. On the other hand we did note that most units separated detonators when they were on the move.

MINE DETECTORS

It was apparent that reasonable care is being taken by deminers in the use of their detectors and attention is being given to field routine maintenance. Without exception, all teams expressed satisfaction with the Philips model of detector over the White and Vallon. We did note that with constant use the connector lead from the control box to the detector arm was causing short circuits. This was brought to our attention at the Jamal Zai village site and other units should note that a modification may be necessary to strengthen the lead.

The variety of detectors in use overall is a problem. To use ATC as an example, they have 83 Whites, 73 Philips and 27 Vallons making a total of 180 detectors. We are also aware that a small quantity of Ebex are also being held. It

would be prudent to stop the purchase of further detectors and standardise to a preferred type. With few exceptions the Philips detector is the preferred choice. The proliferation of equipment throughout the various mine clearance organisations is a direct result of independent supply. To gain control, a central procurement and maintenance cell is needed at Demining Headquarters. In the meantime it is recommended that a standardisation programme should be examined along the following lines.

The current holding of mine detectors is:

AGENCY	WHITE	VALLON	PHILIPS	EBEX	Soviet (3)	TOTAL
HQ (1)		6	-	10	1	17
ATC (2)	80	27	73	-	-	180
SWAAD(2)	28	6	86	-	-	120
MCPA	4	-	16	-	-	20
DTC RISALPUR	20	10	10	-	74	114
DTC BALELI	10	10	10	-	-	30
HALO TRUST		20	-	-	-	20
UNOCA KABUL	-	1	-	1	25	27
IRAN	1	-	-	-	-	1
TOTAL	143	80	195	11	100	529

- NOTE:
- (1) 17 M/Detectors held at HQ are for specialist, emergency missions and display purposes.
 - (2) Mine Detectors for SWAAD and ATC are based on 10 per team as currently used.
 - (3) An instruction has been issued directing that no Soviet mine detectors are to be issued/used by NGOs. Demining HQ and Kabul are holding all stock. The test report on the Soviet Detector was very critical.

Basic testing/calibration equipment has already been received for HQ Islamabad workshop, ATC and SWAAD. No test equipment should be issued to the two NGOs until they have trained technicians and facilities available. Spare parts for only the Philips and Vallons have been ordered, however, the delay in allocation of funds and the focus on Kuwait has delayed the delivery of these spare parts.

In view of the experience gained to date it is recommended that the stock holding of mine detectors be rationalized and focused on the use of one type of mine detector. Philips seems to be preferred.

The Ebex Mine Detector is more sensitive than the Vallons and Philips and as such should remain with HQ for areas that are identified as having mines such as TC6 mines laid at greater depths. The Whites should be phased out through normal attrition. No spare parts should be ordered and as the Whites mine detectors become unserviceable they should be used as spare parts to keep other Whites serviceable.

With the reduction in training the mine detectors currently allocated to the Training Camps should be distributed to ATC and SWAAD. More Philips mine detectors will need to be ordered in due course to equip the proposed village teams.

ATTACHMENT CYCLE OF NATIONAL MEMBERS

Currently both Australia and New Zealand have granted permission for their respective representatives to work inside Afghanistan. This has important ramifications to the mine clearance operations. These are:

- a. Within the groups there are specialist EOD personnel who could be used to train one team of EOD Afghans to work in SWAAD and ATC areas. It is recommended that this be further investigated as the need does exist for future operations.
- b. There is a specialist plant supervisor who could assist immediately in the assessment of Flail operation deficiencies and help propose solutions. This needs follow-up action.
- c. More on site monitoring and on-job training should now be possible and this is recommended.

- d. National staff as well as providing technical advice to the Directors should also form part of the planning cells at ATC, SWAAD and Demining Headquarters.

The current 6 months replacement at Demining Headquarters inhibits productive use of this low cost (as against expats) manpower. It is recommended that a one year cycle be requested with an overlap of four weeks in country to provide continuity during handover of duties. Nationals could be phased out of the programme within the next 2 years.

COMPASSES

Some team leaders seemed to be unaware of the need to ensure that compasses need calibration at frequent intervals. We are not certain if more than one type is used within the organizations and therefore would suggest follow-up action be taken by Demining Headquarters to verify this. Again it is recommended that standardisation of compass types be achieved if it has not been already planned.

RADIO PROCEDURE AND DISCIPLINE

Generally voice procedures were non-existent and verbose conversation seemed standard practice. In addition, frequencies being used by the mine clearance groups were cluttered by other UNOCA Agency traffic. The on-job training of radio operators will help to overcome part of the problem and Directors have been made aware of this need. Other difficulties cannot be resolved until HQ Demining accepts its command responsibility and assumes control of the command net. MCPA should not be performing this function. It is further recommended that mine clearance needs a dedicated range of frequency allocations to enable quick response for casualty clearance and re-deployment of demining units from areas of political and factional disputes. It is further recommended that in future planning, HQ Demining should

consider the installation of a separate administrative net. This will become necessary when activities become extended within Afghanistan and an echelon system of resupply becomes necessary. It is not needed at present.

FREQUENCIES

The recommended number of frequencies dedicated to mine clearance should be five. This will allow for an emergency and an administrative net when required. Currently NGOs operate on three frequencies and use the common UN frequency for emergency purposes only.

RADIO HOLDINGS

The current and proposed holding of radios is shown below and reflects organisation changes as recommended in this paper. The plan has been based on

- a. Use of HF from Base Stations to Site Offices, ambulances, survey teams, international teams and Mine Awareness and
- b. VHF and loud hailer used by the Mine Clearance teams.

The use of VHF from site office to demining teams is expensive if used in all locations in Afghanistan. In the proposal HF is used forward; one HF back pack or vehicle mounted per two teams.

COMMUNICATIONS

	HQ (1)	MCPA (2)	ATC (3)	SWAAD (3) (4)	HALO (3)	OMA	TOTAL
<u>Base Station(HF)</u>							
Current	1	2	1	1	-	2	7
Proposed	3	-	1	1	-	2	7
<u>Mobile Station(HF)</u>							
(5)							
Current	1	10	14	9	2	10	46
Proposed	10	-	30	25	8	10	83
<u>VHF</u>							
Current	-	10	10	10	-	-	30
Proposed	10	-	10	10	20	-	50

NOTES:

1. Includes the Training Organisation. Offices in Islamabad, Peshawar, Quetta and Kabul. In some instances facilities will be shared with existing UNOCA offices.
2. MCPA will be amalgamated with Demining HQ.
3. Includes ambulances (one per two teams). Any future medical plan could require an increase of 13 ambulances thus an extra 13 radios.
4. HALO to work on vehicle mounted or back packs rather than setting up base station. HALO HQ to share with UNOCA Kabul.
5. These could either be vehicle mounted or back pack.
6. Maximum use to be made of loud hailer and correct command and control. A pool of 10 VHF walkie talkies to be paid held by each NGO.

MARKING OF SAFE LANES

The standard varied between units. At one minefield within a heavily rock strewn area, marking was made by piling stones in a line. This was a sensible use of existing material but extreme care needs to be taken when a large area, such as at Shin Korrack, was being cleared. At this location teams were also clearing along diverging axes. When this occurs it is not quickly evident where the safe lane into the minefield is actually located. This needs to be particularly watched within ATC who are generally working in extremely rocky terrain. The use of white paint on selected rock piles would have assisted in indicating safe lanes.

COMMAND AND CONTROL IN THE FIELD

At the lowest level we had to consider 2 groups - the reconnaissance group and the demining group.

- a. The reconnaissance element which should be part of SWAAD and ATC can be based on the structure of a MCPA survey team. Presently these teams are presumed to consist of one qualified expat to every 2 teams, 3 or 4 Afghan Surveyors and 1 driver/cook. They are equipped with one 9 seater Station Wagon 4x4 with winch or a twin cab 4x4 with winch.

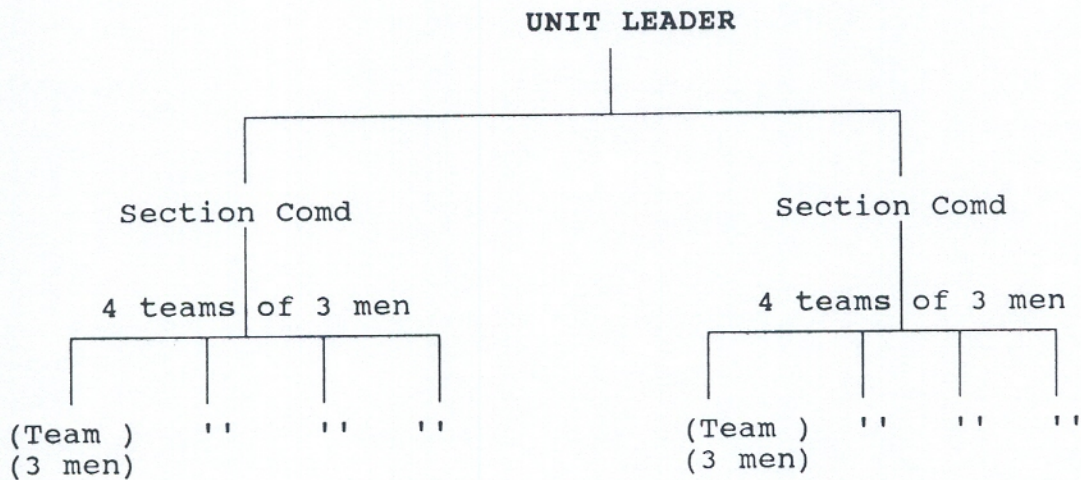
- 1 x Mobile Codan Station
- 2 x VHF hand held radios
- 2 x Detectors/probe

and sundry general equipment including 35mm camera, binoculars and compass, camping equipment and a quantity of explosives and accessories.

- b. The basic structure of the reconnaissance group can be improved. Firstly, we consider that the employment of self-monitoring expats should be discontinued and appointments terminated at the end of current contracts. The teams have been working together for sufficient time now to get on with the job. Monitoring should come from Nationals employed in direct support of SWAAD and ATC. In addition the team needs a further detector and should standardise on 4 surveyors. At present they normally use only 1 detector with 1 backup. If they are to clear reconnaissance lanes through suspected mined areas they should use 2 detectors with 1 backup. We have no objection to the use of twin cab 4x4 with winch but would also add a 1/2 ton trailer. Command of the group should be vested in a senior surveyor who should be so designated.

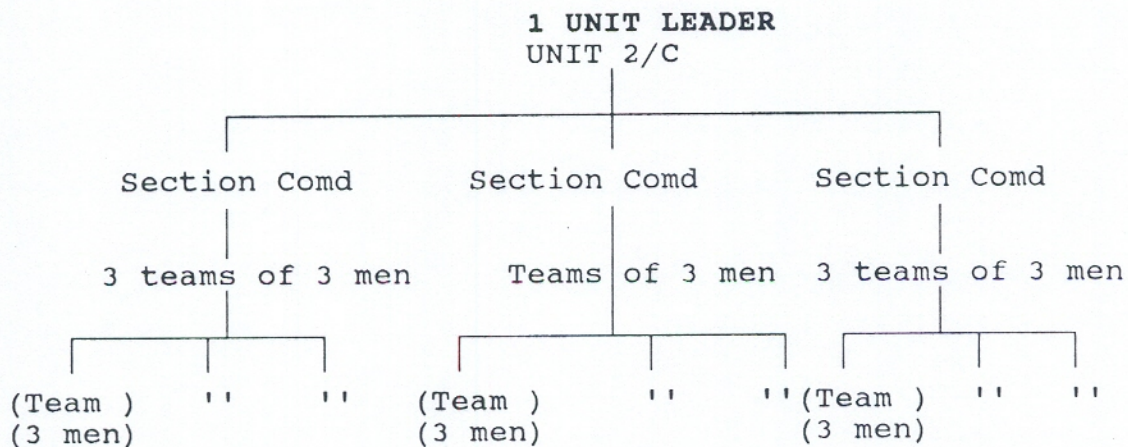
In addition, the team should include one mine dog and handler with appropriate dog equipment, food, water and shelter. The team should be under command of ATC or SWAAD. In the case of the reconnaissance elements deployed by Demining Headquarters on long term intelligence tasks, they would come directly under command of Demining Headquarters.

The Demining Group at its simplest has:



A total of 27 men

We consider four levels of control is too much for section commanders and believe the span should be no more than three. Our recommendation would be:



A total of 32 men

This introduces 2 more control elements into a team, a 2/C and an additional section commander.

In addition to the actual deminers, the team would also include 2 first aid nurses and 4 drivers. Each unit should be equipped with 4 x twin cab 4x4 with winch and one trailer. Major equipment should include 9 detectors with 3 reserve. Other locating devices, equipment both expendable and non-expendable would need adjustment.

COMMAND AND CONTROL ON SITE

The organisation for on-site operations was an area of concern. There is a difference between ATC and SWAAD in their site operations inside Afghanistan. ATC have structured their organisation to deploy one site office with every three teams. At Salar Bagh a village compound area near Asadabad, ATC actually had deployed a site office which housed four teams. The Salar Bagh organisation was divided into:

- Operations
- Logistics
- Administration
- Stores
- Medical

Command and Control is direct from the site supervisor on all matters except the actual demining which comes under the Operations Officer.

SWAAD, in contrast, houses two teams per site and governs the site on a Shura system. The Shura is headed by the site office commander, admin assistant, first aid nurse and the two leaders of the demining units in location. There is no operation staff on site. The basic organisation structure is:

- Logistics
- Accounting
- Medical
- Stores

Despite minor variation in some manpower figures and equipment holdings the main difference between the two is:

- (1) Direct versus consensus command and control.
- (2) No operational staff at SWAAD.
- (3) A two unit versus a larger unit system.

There is no doubt that direct command will create better discipline and faster control. These are very desirable elements in a successful operation. The lack of an operational head in the field tends to weaken control in the mine fields and certainly compromises effective planning. However, it is not recommended that SWAAD follow ATC by adding an additional unit to their site operations as some factors are unique to the South-West region. Politically, the area is very unstable not only within Afghanistan itself but also within the bordering Pakistan tribal areas. Villages and main towns are widely dispersed and distances encourage dispersion rather than concentration. Lastly, extreme weather conditions create a need to have a flexible organization allowing for quick movement of resources to alternative working locations at appropriate times.

ATC may continue to house 3 or 4 units per site as long as the working environment favours that course. However, the main factor is travel time between site office and minefield operation. If the site office is more than 30 minutes travelling time from the clearance operation, then it is too far away. It should be moved closer to reduce travel time. There is a tendency in both organisations to base their sites in village areas so as to utilise existing store rooms and kitchens. This tends to dictate the site location. It is strongly recommended that site offices should be kept as lean in man power and equipment as possible and also tented, so that mobility is retained. Prefabricated kitchen and food preparation areas should be constructed on site as required. No site office should be more than 30 minutes from work locations.

The daily programme in both organisations needs to be seriously re-examined. Presently ATC achieves a maximum of 5 demining hours per working day and SWAAD achieves 4 to 4-1/2 hours. Despite the difficult working conditions and some

extremes of temperature, a demining period of 7 hours is possible and desirable. Normal rest periods can still be taken each hour, and each working day can be broken into two shifts: an early morning and late afternoon working period. With tighter planning, more constructive use can be made of available time. This should provide time for training on all equipment including radio and vehicle and maintenance of valuable equipment items.

It is recommended that daily programmes be re-examined with the aim to working more time in the mine area. It is also recommended that individual and group training be undertaken for driver/operators, reconnaissance, planning, field sketching, first aid and mine intelligence. Site supervisors and office staff can also benefit from training from staff at Demining Headquarters.

DESTRUCTION OF LOCATED MINES

We could find no evidence to support a suggestion that mines were not being destroyed in situ. During our evaluation we saw the exposure of some 39 mines (POMZ and PMN) at various locations. All had been exposed to the degree necessary for detonation and no more. We also witnessed the destruction of those mines. This raised two safety points.

- a. Safety distances. The Arghhestan units were particularly vulnerable in this regard. Three members were observed well inside the danger zone when demolition charges were fired. One person was taking photographs.
- b. Even though multiple firings were indicated, no attempt was made to use simple line charges. The latter method is preferred particularly in the event of a misfire.

A check with National instructors of mine courses confirmed that correct teachings are conducted but violations are still taking place. It is recommended that stern control be exerted at all levels if the present attitude is to be corrected.

CONTROL WITHIN THE MINED AREAS

The entry of deminers into mine fields when they begin work is well controlled and well executed. Movement to clearing stations was quick and methodical. Exits for breaks and at completion of work went smoothly, except on two occasions when an exiting team passed within the danger area of another working team. The section commander should have observed this and delayed his exit until he had obtained the all-clear from his flanking team.

Control of prodders is particularly weak. Despite receiving assurances from instructors, directors and team leaders that standard procedures are being practiced, we saw individual prodders frequently kneeling over the mine locations wearing no safety goggles and prodding at too steep an angle. This is a very serious control problem. Frequently we observed that when teams noticed our approach, they followed correct procedures. When they thought we might be out of view, they reverted to the kneeling position. It is strongly recommended that directors eliminate this blatant disregard of safety procedures. We are concerned that the deminers will take unnecessary casualties if this control problem is not corrected. Monitoring will reveal the fault but only strong control will eliminate it.

MEDICAL

After experiencing the difficult road conditions and the time delays imposed by border and tribal area checks, we were anxious to examine the medical support available within Afghanistan. The present scale and use of first aid nurses at each unit working location is supported. Both ATC and SWAAD have implemented their own ambulance vehicle holdings by converting Nissan 4x4 vehicles. ATC holds 5 and SWAAD holds 3. This is insufficient in our view but if backed up by the implementation of the proposed Field Medical Units (FMU) then a realistic medical plan is possible.

Such a plan calls for the raising of 8 mobile units to ensure that qualified doctors and trained paramedics are relatively close to all demining areas. These FMUs are oriented to ATC and SWAAD. An extra ambulance is also required by HALO. Early treatment and a degree of stabilisation would save life and limb. We examined terrain, routes and distances where teams are presently deployed and are planning to be deployed. Evacuation could take up to 16 hours in some areas. This is not acceptable without ambulance support.

Even with the implementation of this plan, we also believe a back-up air support plan should be considered, even though some elements may not be under

control of the UN. The back-up plan calls for the use of the ICRC Beechcraft at exit routes close to the Afghan border. Emergency strips can be selected and prepared now to provide pick-up capability. If Beechcraft facilities are not immediately available for any reason, then an emergency request using Pakistan service ambulance helicopters should be implemented. Both back-up plans should be tested for feasibility now.

Other medical facilities which should be utilised in any medical plan are:

a. Inside Afghanistan:

ICRC have first aid posts with field ambulances and doctors available at Chawki (Kunar), Nadirshah Kot (Paktia), Nani (Ghazni).

b. On the border inside Pakistan:

ICRC have first aid posts also equipped with field ambulances and doctors at: Mohammad Gat, Landikotal, Parachinar, Miran Shah, Wana and Ghaman.

All attempts to gain support from demining personnel for an emergency evacuation to areas inside government-controlled areas met with polite but firm refusals. Nevertheless, should the political situation change, arrangements to use government facilities should be made.

The plan reflects an attempt to meet a minimum requirement. If funding becomes available in the longer term, two medical helicopters, on call, one at Quetta and one at Peshawar would solve most current problems not only for demining groups but also for other agencies.

All ambulances should be equipped with HF radios.

OTHER MEDICAL MATTERS

The first aid nurses employed at site offices and demining units could provide a better medical service than presently provided. It is suggested that they be responsible for site office camp hygiene and cleanliness, first aid training to Team Leaders and Section Commanders and water testing of the camp water supply.

The standard of cleanliness of medical clinics at site offices varies considerably. Some were clean and orderly, with well maintained medical stores and records. Others need an inspection by a qualified medico to bring them up to standard. Visits into Afghanistan by Medical Officers do not appear to be taking place regularly. The physical well-being of the field staff should be accepted as a normal command responsibility and it is recommended that field visits by Medical Officers should take place more frequently and on a programmed basis. An inspection of clinic records revealed that many deminers appear to have some stress-related disorders.

We could not obtain verification that medical examinations had been given to demining staff on employment. If medical examinations have not been performed then we recommend that they should be conducted at least once a year to ensure that deminers meet a common physical standard. The medical standard needs to be set by qualified medical staff.

No supplies of blood plasma or snake bite serum could be held in forward areas as there was no refrigeration. It is recommended that this be corrected.

STORES CONTROL

In most instances record keeping of stores, holdings and ration entitlement were reasonably maintained. The standard of cleanliness and segregation of stores left much to be desired. In one instance, food items, camp stores and oils and lubricants were all stored together. This was the worst case but it indicates that more

supervision needs to be exercised in this area. Bagged food supplies were frequently stored directly onto bare earth surfaces. Light framed pallets can easily be made to keep supplies off the ground and free from dust, rats and cockroaches.

VEHICLES

In view of the requirements to satisfy various needs, the mine clearance operation has to be flexible and mobile. The most cost effective use of vehicles is to concentrate demining teams in the minimum number of locations. In our opinion the following table which doesn't account for vehicles currently rented, shows the minimum number of vehicles that are required to achieve the UN's objectives.

VEHICLES

	HQ's	MCPA	ARCS	ATC (1)	SWAAD	HALO	OMA	DOG	TOTAL
<u>Ambulance</u> (2)									
current	-	-	-	5	3	1	-	-	9
proposed		-	-	9	7	2		-	(3) 18
<u>Pickups</u> (7)									
current	-	5	-	32 (6)	17	-	6	4	64
proposed	13	-	1	88	61	-	6	4	173
<u>Trucks</u>									
current	-	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	6
proposed	-	-	-	10	7	8	-	5	30
<u>Trailers</u> small and large									
current	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
proposed	-	-	-	35	27	8	4	5	79
<u>Land Cruiser</u> (Patrol)									
current	-	5 (5)	-	9 (4)	5	2	5	9	35
proposed	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	10	19

Notes:

1. Includes Flails.
2. Land cruisers currently held to be retained and/or made into ambulances.
3. This is minimum amount. Ideal is 29 ambulances.
4. Two on loan to other Agencies.
5. One on loan to HQ Islamabad.
6. Four on loan to other Agencies.
7. Four pickups per 32 man demining team.

The number of pickups may seem large, but the use of trucks will not enhance the efficiency and the cost will be more. Two 4 wheel drive pickups are the same price as single drive trucks. Three pickups cost the same as one 4 wheel drive truck. As with the mine detectors the vehicle fleet should be standardised by only purchasing pickups.

The maintenance bill may increase with standardization. If so, then the UN could approach a main supplier and thus guarantee support services.

The above figures do not reflect the number of vehicles to be rented by the NGOs in order to achieve the UN's objectives. The breakdown of the rented vehicles is shown below:

	MCPA	ATC	SWAAD	OMA	TOTAL
Pick ups	3	30	7	4	44
Land Cruiser	-	8	6	-	14
Sedan	-	2	-	-	2
Van	-	1	-	1	2
Truck	-	1	1	-	1

The number of vehicles could be reduced only if the UN accepts far less flexibility in moving demining teams from one area to another. One area that cannot be reduced is that of medical evacuation. No western country would accept such medical support but would, as already highlighted, demand helicopter support at the accident site. A number of the land cruisers should be converted into ambulances.

We strongly recommend the transfer of trucks from UNILOG to this programme. The contribution from the USSR should be expedited. We note that the transfer of vehicles from UNILOG has been in abeyance since early this year. It is also recommended that the UN approach a host country to enquire if it might donate a fleet of vehicles in a similar manner as the UNILOG trucks.

The trailers are to be fuel, water and general cargo. These trailers should remain at the site office whilst the teams are on site. Each demining team should have one general cargo trailer.

CONCLUSIONS

Numerous comments have been made about deficiencies as they presently exist within the demining organisation. But splendid and dedicated work from individuals and groups is taking place. We saw within the minefield and at work sites men who had a firm belief in their role and a firm resolve to produce something worthwhile for their country. Despite harsh and trying conditions, morale appeared good and in ATC particularly, discipline was evident.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 A National sergeant should be placed on the staff of ATC and SWAAD to screen Minefield Completion Report Data.
- 5.2 Explosives and detonators should be separately stored and bulk explosives should not be stored in close vicinity to village living areas. Separate lockable boxes should be used for the storage of team and site office explosive lots.
- 5.3 Examine the need for a modification to the lead of the Philips mine detector to prevent short circuits.
- 5.4 Establish a central procurement cell at demining headquarters for the purchase of equipment.

- 5.5 Standardise mine detection holdings along suggested lines.
- 5.6 Do not issue the Soviet mine detector currently held.
- 5.7 No test equipment for detectors should be issued to the two NGOs until trained technicians and facilities are available.
- 5.8 Make no further purchase of White detector spares and gradually phase them out. Cannibalize where necessary to keep other Whites serviceable.
- 5.9 Reallocate training camp detectors to ATC and SWAAD.
- 5.10 Examine whether more Philips detectors may need to be bought to equip village teams.
- 5.11 Train one Afghan EOD team for ATC and SWAAD using National instructors.
- 5.12 Use the National Warrant Officer Class 1 who is a plant specialist, to assist in the proposed review of flail operations and future planning of their use.
- 5.13 Replan on job training and monitoring using Afghan and National Instructors inside Afghanistan.
- 5.14 Use National Staff senior officers in the planning cells of both ATC and SWAAD.
- 5.15 Request a 1 year turnaround of National attachments with a four week overlap incountry for handover. In addition, review the need to phase Nationals right out of the programme within the next 2 years.
- 5.16 Standardise compasses and schedule a recalibration programme.
- 5.17 Introduce voice procedure and driver/operator on-job training.

- 5.18 Demining Headquarters accept its responsibility to control the radio net of demining organisations.
- 5.19 Try to gain dedicated radio frequencies for mine clearing nets. Five frequencies are required.
- 5.20 Start planning now for future use of an administrative net inside Afghanistan.
- 5.21 Review vehicle holdings based on the proposed outline plan.
- 5.22 Use white paint to mark safe lanes inside rocky area minefields.
- 5.23 Observe safety distances when destroying in situ mines. Use main line charges where possible.
- 5.24 Ruthlessly apply safety rules in every situation and at all levels inside the minefield.
- 5.25 Exercise firmer control of passing teams inside a minefield.
- 5.26 Prodder men must be forced to obey safety rules.
- 5.27 Adopt the proposed outline medical plan.
- 5.28 The Deployment of nursing-aids on field hygiene duties and water supply testing. Programmes for frequent inspection of their performance by medical officers be instituted.
- 5.29 That medical inspection of deminers take place before they are taken into service and that annual medical reviews be programmed on set standards.
- 5.30 That use be made of refrigeration forward at site offices for the storage of

blood plasma, snake bite serum and other temperature-sensitive medical supplies.

- 5.31 That the standard of hygiene and cleanliness of site office store rooms, kitchens and ablution areas be improved and inspected.
- 5.32 That bulk bagged supplies be palletized.
- 5.33 Review vehicle holdings against the proposed plan and distribution. Try and standardise vehicle types.
- 5.34 Recommend transfer of funds from UNILOG to the mine clearance programme together with acceptance of the proposed Soviet contribution.
- 5.35 The current MCPA survey team should be reorganised to meet its new role in support of Demining NGOs and Demining Headquarters.
- 5.36 The demining unit should be restructured to decrease the span of command and increase the level of control within the minefield. Other adjustments in vehicles and detectors.
- 5.37 ATC should work in 3 and 4 team groups. SWAAD should remain as 2 team group.
- 5.38 Site offices should be lightly equipped and located no more than 30 minutes travel from a work site.
- 5.39 Daily work programmes need to be reorganised to produce more productive working hours. Work at the minefield should be done in 2 shifts totalling 7 hours in the field.
- 5.40 Individual/Group Training be carried out at site offices for all on site employment codes.

6. SPECIALIST SUPPORT TO FIELD OPERATIONS

MINE DOGS

Mine dogs have now been used in the detection role in Afghanistan since October 1989. The programme is supported by USAID. Transport needs are supported by UNOCA at a budget cost of US\$ 382,000 and at an operation and maintenance cost of US\$ 32,800 per 6 months.

Since its inception, either working independently or with demining teams the dogs have located some 3,004 explosive devices and cleared an estimated distance of approx 780 Km.

As the organisation is not a part of UNOCA, we could not do an evaluation to the degree that we did with UNOCA organisations. However, we did interview Dr. John Walker, the manager at the Animal Holding Facility at Pabbi, Mr. Eduardo Eckert, the senior trainer and some of the team leaders of demining teams who had worked with the dogs. We inspected the facilities at Pabbi including the kennels and the veterinarian clinic facilities. We also observed two of the new breeds of dog recently obtained from Amsterdam, the Malloise, doing some obedience training.

It should also be noted that one member of the evaluation team had, during one 2-year term of service in Australia, under his engineer command, a mine dog training and breeding unit. During the period 1973 to 1975 training was being conducted for the first of the Thai army student dog handlers who were to raise a mine dog capability for operations along the Thai/Cambodian border.

OBSERVATION FROM PABBI VISIT

We were impressed with the cleanliness of kennels and the standard of dog care being carried out. Dr. Walker is obviously dedicated to his work as Manager of the animal facility but he did admit that he has had no mine dog training experience. Mr. Eckert's previous experience also did not include specifically working on mine dog training. He had experience in dog training for other roles, such as guard duties. We understood also that no RONCO handler had previously worked on mine dog training nor had they had experience inside a minefield.

We were informed that whilst Afghan handlers are being successfully employed and trained, the process takes time.

Despite previous lack of experience, the organisation has fulfilled a vital role in mine clearing. It should be borne in mind however that success was built around the use of Thai trained and handled German Shepherd dogs. The recent introduction of the new breed may introduce new problems but we can only await the outcome of the experiment. The newly-introduced breed appeared to be strong, alert and intelligent. They also appeared to be aggressively nervous during the obedience training. If that aggressiveness is not well-controlled inside a minefield then problems could arise. The German Shepherd is a proven breed and we wondered: why the change?

We spoke to both Dr. Walker and Mr. Eckert about the present use of a bouncing ball as a reward indicator. It was suggested that this could have serious consequences if used inside a minefield and they have agreed to change that system. We also spoke about the need for dogs and handlers to work and train with the demining and minefield reconnaissance teams.

The demining teams were not very enthusiastic about working with dog teams and apparently there is doubt as to their real value. This is unfortunate but Dr. Walker and his trainers should be made aware that these doubts exist. They will have

to work hard at overcoming them. A very real spirit of cooperation will be needed to get the best value out of the marriage between the dog teams and demining teams. The evaluation team believes that dog teams must work directly under the control of SWAAD, ATC and minefield reconnaissance teams. They should also be incorporated into the village demining team project which has been recommended elsewhere in the evaluation.

We also consider that ideally the best solution is to have 1 dog team working with each demining team making a total of 30 dogs/handlers. In addition, we see a need for a further 10 dogs to work with reconnaissance teams with 10 in reserve for village clearance, illness and injuries. This would make a total of 50 dog teams assuming ideal circumstances. We have not spoken to Dr. Walker about his units' ability to handle this requirement but we do consider that well-trained dogs being used by well-trained handlers will produce the most cost effective and reliable method of mine detection available to us today. The challenge for Dr. Walker and his unit plus all elements of the demining units is to get the best value from the assets they are given.

We have not considered vehicle increases to meet our recommendations above. We see this evolving from experience gained over the next year.

We do see a need to provide assistance to Dr. Walker, so that he can produce the best training possible. If he was agreeable and the recommendation is approved, then we could request assistance from a donor country who still uses mine dogs, to provide 2 trained mine dog handlers on one 6 month attachment.

It is recommended that real mines such as the TC 6 should be made available for training of dogs. We understand that there are some difficulties attached to this recommendation but if we want good results from training then all attempts should be made to get the necessary training aids.

MECHANICAL MINE CLEARANCE

The principle of Mechanical Mine Clearance (MMC) is fully supported but the existing contract needs to cease once the task in Urgan is complete. The flails should then be moved to Peshawar for a major overall and maintenance. The services of Clearway, which is not cost effective, should be replaced by requesting donor countries to provide military personnel (specialists) to carry out a similar role. It is suggested that countries that have experience in operating flails, eg., Sweden, Norway, could be approached. It is stressed that it will take a minimum of twelve months to 'Afghanise' this operation.

Although we did not visit the flails, it is evident that the project has not progressed at a satisfactory pace due to poor planning, logistic support and cumbersome funding procedures.

The most cost effective use of the flails is where the density of mines is the greatest and where large rocks are not evident. In order to identify these areas the release of minefield records by the Government of Afghanistan is paramount. If this is not possible then time, manpower and money will have to be expended in reconnaissance to establish these areas. This will further delay the clearance of mines and thus reduce the cost effectiveness of the operation.

The use of the Armoured Recovery Vehicles (BMR 2) and mine rollers by HALO is supported purely from the point of attempting to make operations more cost effective. As with the flail operations it is stressed that HALO needs to carefully study and plan the actual operation, maintenance and support of these machines.

In future the operation of the flails should come directly under the Programme Manager with support being provided by either ATC or SWAAD. It is strongly recommended that a study be completed for the following:

- a. establish a workable/efficient support system for the MMC operators.

- b. select the most cost-effective locations for the flails to operate.
- c. provide a detailed programme for the systematic training of Afghans in the operations and maintenance of the flails.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 A review of the number of dogs and handlers who need to be trained should be undertaken, taking into account our recommended numbers. In the meantime we should provide assistance in dog training using existing specialists and requesting some assistance from donor countries for a period of 6 months. TC6 mines need to be purchased as dog training aids.
- 6.2 The flail operation should cease immediately once the Urgan task is finalised. Replace Clearway team with a specialist national group from a donor country such as Sweden/Norway. Both have had extensive experience in flail operations in Lebanon. The flails should not be phased out of service. They should be returned to Peshawar, overhauled and serviced then held for a period of at least 12 months whilst further Afghan training and more effective future planning can take place. Both a technical and planning review should start immediately using the services of the NZ Warrant Officer who is a qualified plant supervisor.

7. POSTSCRIPT: INTO AFGHANISTAN

Nothing is certain in Afghanistan. However, at some point in the near future, development services to Afghanistan will move from their bases in Peshawar and Quetta to bases in Afghanistan. The delivery of services will switch from a cross border strategy to a strategy that attempts to serve both government and opposition areas simultaneously from within the country.

This will never be easy. No one can speak about Afghanistan without moving his eyes toward a map, because the complex alignments and movements of groups changes not only from region to region but also from moment to moment. Conflicts occur at many levels. Conflict between the government and the mujahideen organizations are complicated by the rise of militia groups which can easily change loyalties. Conflicts between rival ethnic groups in particular areas are complicated by party affiliation and religious divisions.

But like other development services, the demining programme must at some juncture move its operation into Afghanistan. Right now it is not a matter of whether such a move is feasible. It is a question of when and how. All NGOs presently involved in demining activities and all management and technical advisory staff have expressed the same opinion. There is, in short, complete agreement on the matter of shifting the operation to Kabul.

Furthermore, the transition from Pakistan-based operations to Afghanistan-based operations parallels the stress that this report has placed on the transition from a focus on repatriation to a focus on rehabilitation and village development. This transition would effectively sever ties with the refugee communities and solidify those with rural villages in Afghanistan. Indeed, it is only from a 'cross line' or 'within Afghanistan' perspective that one can develop a national demining plan for Afghanistan which is prepared to take account of the political and cultural particularities of each region.

The demining programme should open a formal discussion immediately on this subject and within six months prepare a plan for shifting operations to Afghanistan. Ideally, this plan should be developed by the demining programme representative resident in Kabul. Such a plan must treat at least the following issues:

NEUTRALITY

The transition is impossible without careful attention to guaranteeing the neutrality of each operation. Halo Trust achieves neutrality in certain areas. ATC and SWAAD may be able to achieve neutrality in other areas largely by the influence of their directors. But this is not sufficient. True neutrality is only possible by ensuring that demining operations work under the sponsorship of the United Nations. The extent of protection and the extent of sponsorship will certainly give rise to a lively debate. The mission into Bagdis by SWAAD last year elicited considerable controversy largely because SWAAD made full use of UN protection. Mishaps were inevitable and they created concern. But the ultimate impact was positive: a non partisan all-Afghan organization crossed opposition and government lines several times in order to accomplish a humanitarian objective. In spite of the controversy and the risks involved, the mission must be considered a success.

These experiences must be examined as one elaborates a policy that will guarantee neutrality. Directors of both demining organizations must be consulted for it is clear that both unquestionably avoid partisan identification. And they also both want to establish permanent administrative centres inside Afghanistan. But they can go just so far on their own. At the very least, during the early stages of their cross-line work, the demining agencies will require considerable UN protection.

LOGISTICS

At the present, all provisioning of the demining agencies must pass through Pakistan. Recently, this provisioning has encountered obstacles, most of them created by Pakistan's Home Secretaries. The issues are complex and the solution is not easy. Intervention is required by a very senior United Nations official. This will become even more important when administrative centres are established inside Afghanistan. Good relations must continue with Pakistan authorities, for the success of the demining activities inside Afghanistan is at their mercy. Logistics centres must be maintained in Pakistan for some time to come, staffed with influential Pakistanis who are able to guarantee a flow of goods and equipment across the border.

LOCATIONS

Ideally, permanent demining centres could be established in or near major cities. Qandahar, Lashkagar, Herat, Mazar and Jalalabad are possible candidates. These need to be selected after careful consideration of their security for demining teams. The principal danger may not come from government forces, but rather from mujahideen groups themselves who are likely to regard the demining agencies as traitors. Transportation of goods and personnel must also be considered when selecting these original bases of operation.

TIMING

The timing of the transition may vary with the areas targeted as bases of operation and will certainly vary with the changes in the political climates of different areas. An initial phase may involve the establishment of bases of operation in non-

headquarters in Peshawar. A second phase may involve moving the headquarters into Kabul. In any event the phasing of the transition is critical and a transition plan must provide a number of possible options.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 A comprehensive plan for shifting the administration of the demining programme to Afghanistan should begin immediately. It should be prepared by the demining expert resident in Kabul. The final report should be submitted within six months.