Evaluation of the Humanitarian Demining Programme in Chile

Ian Mansfield
Director of Operations

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
Based on a request from the Government of Chile and the Chilean National Demining Commission (Comisión Nacional de Desminado – CNAD), the GICHD conducted an evaluation of Chile’s humanitarian demining programme from 8-22 June 2009.
> Mission

> Assess the mine clearance and quality management process planned by CNAD and implemented by the Chilean Armed Forces

> Identify and address issues that can have a negative impact on the mine clearance operations, shortcomings as well as parallels drawn to lessons learnt from mine action programmes with similarities to those conditions found in Chile

> Evaluate the national training capacity (the Army School of Engineering) for operational staff
Main findings

The way the humanitarian demining programme is organised suggests a professional organisation with very competent personnel. CNAD seems to have good command and overview of the progress of work and of the challenges ahead.
Main findings cont’d

> Open and professional attitude among all personnel encountered in the programme
> Overall, the programme is well equipped
> Safety is always of the highest importance
> Excellent minefield records
The role of the military in humanitarian demining

- The cooperation between CNAD and the Army Engineer School seems to be good.
- The Government of Chile is fortunate to be able to draw from resources from the Armed Forces.
- The personnel involved in the humanitarian demining programme have been specially trained for this task and seem to be very competent.
- The challenge is to utilise the Armed Forces as effectively as possible.
Conclusions and recommendations (1)

Through better survey and information management, clearance activities could be focussed towards clearance of the minefields in accordance with the minefield records.

Assessment should be made and targeted search should ‘fade outwards’ from the last recorded position of the missing mine.

”Inside out” methodology when operating with accurate minefield records.
GRAFICO DE AVANCE DEL CAMPO MINADO Nº13 DE BAHÍA AZUL
> Conclusions and recommendations (2)

> After all ground likely to contain mines has been cleared, the rest of the land within the perimeter of the suspect hazardous area (SHA) should be released.

> It is of critical importance that CNAD develops a national policy that allows for land release after clearance of landmines has been undertaken in an area.
Conclusions and recommendations (3)

> The current certification procedures of demining processes are complicated

> Quality management in mine action is based on quality assurance (QA) of the process and quality control (QC) of end product

> The certification process uses too many resources relative to the extra assurance it gives CNAD and is de facto the main constraint on increased productivity in the humanitarian demining programme
Conclusions and recommendations (4)

- The humanitarian demining programme in Chile needs more civil engineering type machinery
- Excavators and front end loaders should be leased or purchased to speed up clearance. Armouring of the cabin and operator training can be done in country
- Excavating and loading machines should be matched with industrial sifting machines
> Conclusions and recommendations (5)

> A centrally-managed survey component should be established
> The gathering, management and processing of available data are key to a new survey
> A systematic approach to the existing records, incorporating lessons learnt over the past few years, would move the humanitarian demining programme forward
> This would enable CNAD to make a detailed and accurate proposal for an extension request for Protocol 5 of the APMBC
> Such a survey component would probably reduce the cost of subsequent mine clearance by releasing significant areas of SHA through non-technical survey