

# Milestones



**1980**

~ The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is created to regulate the use of landmines and other weapons, marking the first time that there has been an attempt to restrict the use of landmines.

**1983**

~ The CCW enters into force, as does Protocol II of the CCW, which deals with the use of mines, booby-traps and other devices.

**1988**

~ Rae McGrath, founder of Mines Advisory Group, defines the survey process as an absolute prerequisite for mine action. He defines the Impact Assessment Survey (Level One) as a field assessment through interviews and questionnaires conducted among the local population, former fighting forces, hospitals and community as a prerequisite for determining the impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) on the community. The Technical Survey (Level Two) is a mapping process to confirm the location and size of the minefield. \**Landmines and UXO: A Resource Book* by Rae McGrath.

~ The founders of HALO Trust, a private British demining organization, engage in one of the earliest private demining efforts in Afghanistan. They are credited with coining the term “humanitarian demining” to differentiate it from military demining efforts.

**1990**

~ The word “deminer” begins being used in the mine action community to describe the individuals who are removing the mines from the ground.

~ The US Agency for International Development (USAID) establishes rehabilitation centers in Afghanistan and Pakistan for training orthopedic technicians to render professional treatment to Afghan mine survivors.

**1992**

~ The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) is formed. The ICBL brings together over 1,300 human rights and humanitarian mine action organizations in one of the most thorough information-gathering networks on mine action.

~ The United States unilaterally bans the export of its anti-personnel landmines



Mine risk education is an integral part of reducing landmine casualties and involves the entire community's efforts.

per Public Law 102-484, Section 1365; 22 United States Code, 2778. This ban currently extends until 2008.

~ The Cambodian Mine Action Center is formed and is considered the first major integrated mine action program.

**1993**

~ The United States formally establishes the US Humanitarian Demining Program, an inter-agency (US Department of State, USAID, US Department of Defense) effort to provide appropriate assistance to mine-affected countries around the world that seek US help. Since 1993, the US has spent over \$900 million on humanitarian mine action.

**1994**

~ The US Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs releases *Hidden Killers: The Global Landmine Crisis*. This is the first of many reports detailing landmine statistics, deaths and injuries in mine-affected countries.

**1995**

~ Mozambique begins demining using a non-governmental organization, Menschen gegen Minen (MgM), on its first humanitarian mine action project.

~ Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are introduced to map contaminated areas, which will eventually result in mine contamination maps to assist in risk reduction.



- ~ Princess Diana visits Angola and draws world attention to the landmine crisis.
- ~ United States Special Forces start training deminers throughout the world in support of the US “Train-the-Trainer” program.

### 1995–1997

- ~ Humanitarian demining begins on a large scale in the Balkans.

### 1996

- ~ Books by DC Comics are delivered to Bosnia. This is the first attempt to distribute mine awareness information on a large scale using the medium of comic book heroes to help expose children to the threats of mines in their communities.
- ~ United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) establishes Mine Awareness Guidelines.
- ~ MgM establishes an Internet forum, which provides many in the mine action community with an information-sharing network as well as a place to air criticisms and concerns.
- ~ The CCW Review Conference adopts the AMP. It is made applicable to both internal and international armed conflicts.
- ~ The Copenhagen Conference unveils a proposed set of standards and procedures for mine action, including Medical Evacuation procedures, for deminers and UXO.
- ~ First introduction of *Jane’s Mines and Mine Clearance*, edited by Colin King. This is an encyclopedia of landmine information providing technical details and photos of nearly all mines used around the world.

### 1997

- ~ The first issue of the *Journal of Mine Action* appears online. “Its appearance marks a milestone in transparency and information sharing.”—Andy Smith, independent demining consultant.
- ~ The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is formed to serve as the UN focal point for mine action. At the global level, it is responsible for coordinating all aspects of mine action within the UN system to ensure an

effective and proactive response to mine contamination. At the field level, it is responsible for providing mine action assistance in the context of humanitarian emergencies and peacekeeping operations.

- ~ The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, commonly known as the Ottawa Convention, is opened for signature in Ottawa, Canada. It plays a significant role in the public’s awareness of the mine problem and in directing government and donor funding and attention to it.

- ~ *ORDATA, The International Deminers Guide to Unexploded Ordnance Identification, Recovery and Disposal* is released to the general public. It provides the mine action community with a reference guide to identifying, recovering and disposing of unexploded ordnance. The CD-ROM database was conceived by the US Department of Defense to capitalize on the success of its earlier “MineFacts” CD. ORDATA has since been followed by ORDATA II, KORDATA and the Iraq Ordnance Identification Guide. To date, tens of thousands of copies of the ORDATA series database have been distributed free of charge to the mine action community, as well as military and civilian bomb disposal technicians.

### 1998

- ~ The ICBL’s first *Landmine Monitor Report*, a massive reference guide to landmine facts and statistics around the world, is released. It is an invaluable reference tool for all involved in demining and mine action.
- ~ The Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) is established by the government of Switzerland to support mine action efforts of the international community and the United Nations through research, operational assistance and support of the mine ban treaty.

### 1999

- ~ The UN, in cooperation with the GICHD, initiates a review of what was then known as the “International Standards for Humanitarian Mine Clearance Operations.” The review, and subsequent revision, has acknowledged the important changes that have taken place in the strategic management and funding of mine action and reflects ongoing developments in operational practices and procedures. Twenty-two new standards now form part of the framework of the overall International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), which in September 2001 were endorsed by the UN Interagency Coordination Group.

~ The *Journal of Mine Action* appears in print. The first hard copies are mailed to 300 subscribers. Subscriptions quadruple over the next year.

~ The Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Version One is developed for UNMAS. Expectations are that such a system will greatly enhance monitoring, planning and program implementation. IMSMA has been designed for use within mine-affected countries, and incorporates a database and GIS. It provides an effective tool to store, process and analyze the information gathered during the three levels of survey. It also deals with mine awareness- and survivor assistance-related data.

## 2000

~ The Deminer Injury Study is released to the international demining community. It broke new ground and established not only a milestone, but also a baseline for future collection of deminer injury data. The initial study has since been undertaken as a long-term project by the GICHD.

~ The United States, the European Commission, Belgium, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Sweden sign the International Test and Evaluation Program (ITEP) for Humanitarian Demining Equipment, Processes and Methods, in Brussels.

~ The US Department of Defense releases the final report of its Lower Extremity Assessment Program (LEAP). This milestone effort utilized full-body human cadavers to fully evaluate the mechanism of injury and determine current levels of protection provided by commercially produced landmine protective footwear. The research broke new ground in the use of test instrumentation, in particular high-speed radiographic imaging (cineradiography).

~ The first Landmine Impact Survey is completed in Yemen.

~ The Kosovo Mine Action Coordination Center is heralded as a success in establishing the major coordination role of a mine action center.

## 2001

~ The revised UNMAS IMAS are released to include structures for timely revision and for sharing information. Many believe this is more significant than the first issue of IMAS because now the industry has usable standards that can be applied and revised.

~ The results of the International Pilot Project for Technology Cooperation are

published. The US Department of Defense conceived the milestone report, sometimes referred to as the metal detector “consumer report,” as a first-ever attempt to conduct a multinational test and evaluation venture. Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre joined the US in evaluating 25 different detector models from 13 manufacturers. The intent of the project was to determine the best detector(s) for a given set of operational parameters, as well as serve as a pilot project for the ITEP.

~ The conflict in Afghanistan and the media attention on the landmine problem results in increased landmine awareness among the general population.

~ Moldova is declared mine safe.

## 2002

~ The US Department of State’s Quick Reaction Demining Force (QRDF) makes its first foreign deployments to Sri Lanka and Sudan to provide emergency mine and UXO clearance assistance in support of international peace-keeping and reconstruction efforts in the two war-torn nations.

~ Costa Rica is declared mine safe.

## 2003

~ Two Warner Bros. public service messages in the Khmer language, sponsored by the US Department of State’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs and USAID’s Leahy War Victims Fund, are televised nationally in Cambodia and distributed in rural areas. One has a mine risk education (MRE) message; the other deals with social reintegration of landmine survivors.

## 2004

~ A new US policy on landmines is announced. The new policy will eliminate the use of all long-lasting or “persistent” landmines after 2010. The new policy mandates that the US will no longer keep undetectable landmines in its inventory.