

In the field with MAG



Vietnam

A photo report showing one of MAG's Mine Action Teams conducting an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Response Task in Quang Tri province, Vietnam



Arriving on site:

There's no mistaking that we are now entering a MAG site. The MAT had arrived before us to secure the area and position warning signs to notify that MAG was undertaking Unexploded Ordnance clearance activities.



Sizing up the situation

The deminers who work for MAG in Vietnam have encountered all kinds of explosive ordnance disposal tasks in a range of situations. Today's task would call on their skills and experience to successfully remove the item of UXO that now confronts them.



Identification and assessment:

To correctly identify the large item, and to determine that it was safe to move, MAG Technical Operations Manager Tony Fernandes and Technical Operations Coordinator, Le Van Tra inspect the item.

The item is identified as a 16" HC Mark 13 projectile, consistent with the type fired from IOWA class battleships during the American Vietnam war.



Waiting for the verdict:

Members of the team look on while the assessment is taking place.



All Clear:

The word is given that the projectile is safe to remove. Weighing in at more than 860 kg the JCB is positioned in to place to help hoist the item out of the creek bed.



All hands on deck:

The team now move in to secure the projectile with straps and a chain to prepare moving it.



Slow and steady:

The team pitches in to carefully guide the projectile up the bank of the creek. The straps and chain are readjusted as the projectile is moved upwards.



And its up!

The projectile has now been safely raised up the creek bed and is now on the road.



Good work team:

With the projectile now on the road the team stops to mark the moment.



Loading up:

The team then load the projectile into the bucket of the JCB. The item is packed with sand bags so that is cushioned as it is moved.

The projectile is transported to a safe storage area before being destroyed in a controlled demolition at a later date.



The workers nearby:

During the EOD response task we could hear chainsaws in the distance. The surrounding area where the projectile was found is being cleared for agriculture development and families will soon be settling nearby.



Be prepared:

MAG Community Liaison Officer Le Van Minh provides the workers with MAG's contact details. As they continue to clear the land in this remote area it is quite possible that they will discover more items of UXO. They will now be able to report directly to MAG in the future

Some days later, the 16" projectile is prepared for demolition.....



Teamwork:

MAG technical staff made careful and calculated plans in order to destroy the 16" projectile.

A deep pit was dug and the projectile placed inside. The Mine Action Team then began to pack the pit with sandbags.



Preparing the pit:

Dozens of sandbags were carefully placed around the item.

The sandbags will help control the demolition.



Detonation:

The destructive power of the 16" was captured by a remote camera especially set up to take the photo.

All personnel were located more than one kilometre away.



Job Done!:

After the demolition MAG staff go back to check.

All up, it has been a successful operation from the initial removal, transport and final demolition.

Great Job MAG Quang Tri.

MAG's life saving work in Quang Tri is made possible thanks to the support of:



Photos and story by Greg Secomb
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