



WEEKLY SITREP For period 15- 20 February 2009

UXO ACCIDENTS / INCIDENTS

On 16 February, one person was killed and four wounded by an item of unexploded ordnance in Beit Lahia. Accounts vary, with local press suggesting that the accident was caused when the UXO was thrown into a fire in an attempt to melt the item for scrap metal. While other accounts indicate that the UXO exploded and killed a policeman who was attempting to keep people away from it. At this stage we have no way of independently confirming this accident, but it is understood that the Police are conducting an investigation.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Explosive Ordnance Disposal

- MAG EOD teams continued to conduct EOD tasks and/or verification of suspected UXO-contaminated sites at the request of agencies and NGOs.
 - Site survey for CHF tented shelter project.
 - Conducted route assessment of two water pipelines for SCF.
 - Conducted assessments of impact holes within Wafaa Hospital, agricultural areas, a mosque, and a correction facility (some will require future mechanical support to complete).

Coordination

Gaza:

- UNMAT Gaza has met with ICRC, Norwegian Refugee Council (Acting Country Director & Shelter Advisor), and various UN Agencies over this period.
- UNMAT conducted a briefing for a three-person delegation from the Representative Office of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and MoFA.
- Assisted Save the Children Norway (regarding support to the Education Cluster Working Group), with information on schools cleared by the EOD Team.
- Provided overview of UNMAT role to the WASH Cluster Working Group.

Jerusalem:

- Met with *Handicap International* who plan to work in the field of mine risk education, and are consulting with UNICEF.
- Met with *NPA mine action*: staff are in Jerusalem and Amman waiting to deploy, subject to COGAT approval for EOD teams to enter Gaza.
- Met *DCA* for a briefing on DCA plans, and information-sharing on the situation in Gaza, constraints, and the potential for DCA EOD teams to enter and operate.
- *MAG*: Daily coordination on establishing SOPs for entry into Gaza, liaison on project proposals and general information-sharing

General:

- The Jerusalem office has now been established, and staff have moved into the new premises (downstairs from UNOPS JMOC).
- Ivo Palm the EOD Technician assigned to WFP has now been seconded to the UNMAT and is in-situ in the Gaza Office.



SUPPORT TO OVERALL UN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

- LSP training was conducted for 10 National UN staff and 1 x International UN staff member.
- UNMAT Gaza briefed members of the various Early Recovery Cluster Groups on the role and capacity of the UNMAT EOD Teams, and potential future support to their reconstruction efforts.
- Continued to feed information to the OCHA GIS section, towards the development of maps for use by the humanitarian community.
- On going ad-hoc support and briefings to agencies and organisations which require information regarding the UXO threat within Gaza.

CONSTRAINTS

- Restrictions on movement within Gaza due to security have reduced the ability of EOD teams to operate freely, resulting in limited assessments of damaged facilities and housing. UNMAT will endeavor to link into UNDP and the Cluster Working Group for Gaza Early Recovery (CWGER) assessment information, to allow some form of planning for support to rubble removal and reconstruction efforts.

FUTURE INTENTIONS

- Mine Action Coordination meeting in Jerusalem (forum for sharing information between UNMAT, UNICEF, NGOs and other interested actors)
- UNMAT Security officer expected to arrive in-country within the next week, prior to deployment to Gaza.
- UNMAT Ops/Plans/Trg Officer expected to arrive into Israel and then into Gaza in early March.
- UNMAT PM will relocate to Jerusalem once the above arrive into Gaza and a handover is completed.
- Provide Technical Advice to the Cluster Working Group for Gaza Early Recovery (CWGER) as required.
- Provide Technical advice and support to UN / Recovery Agencies.
- Provide support to the Local Authorities as and when requested.
- Establish a suitable Central Demolition Site.
- Maintain MRE training support to UNICEF and Agencies upon request.
- Reassess EOD needs in Gaza to support ER rubble removal and reconstruction efforts.
- Prioritize EOD response according to reconstruction plans once formalized by the Authorities and UN / NGO Agencies.
- Provide technical advice & assistance as required to facilitate reconstruction.
- Provide training (MRE) to rubble removal / reconstruction teams as required.
- Continue to support Local Authorities in their efforts to clear the UXO / UXB threat.
- Prepare Concept of Operations for support to Rubble Removal operations.

PERSONNEL LOCATION

Gaza:

UNMAT Programme Manager
UNMAT EOD officer (MSB)
MAG Technical Operations Manager
6 x MAG EOD
1 x Global Medic

Jerusalem:

UNMAT Support Specialist
UNMAT Programme Officer
MAG Programme Officer
MAG CL officer
1 x MAG EOD TFM



ABBREVIATIONS

COGAT: Coordination of Government Affairs in the Territories

EOD: Explosive Ordnance Disposal

IDF: Israeli Defense Force

IAF: Israeli Air Force

LSP: Landmine/UXO safety project

DCA: Danish Church Aid

MAG: Mines Advisory Group

NPA: Norwegian Peoples' Aid

UNMAS: United Nations Mine Action Service

UNMAT-GO: United Nations Mine Action Team – Gaza Office

UNOPS: United Nations Office for Project Services

UXO: Unexploded Ordnance

UXB : Unexploded Bomb