United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

Explosive Hazard Management – First Responder Training

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Introduction

In 2017, UNMAS Iraq designed the Explosive Hazard First Responder (EHFR) course for the Ministry of Interior (MoI).

Focus is to improve and enhance public safety during the initial suspected threat, and on post-blast situations until the EOD or IEDD Response Teams can arrive.
EHFR Roles

Works with the National Authorities or Mine Action Organizations (MAO’s).

Basic identification skills only, not an EOD/IED Operator.

Trained to recognize potential threats, help remove the public from it, and contact the correct authorities.
Helping the Overall Public Safety Effort

- Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) teams & programs quickly reach thousands of at-risk people.
- Demining Teams work suspected or confirmed hazardous areas.
  - A very time consuming and tedious task.
- Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Teams respond to suspected items.
  - Often under-manned/over-tasked.
- EHFR Teams works to assist all aspects.
Complacency

- When ERW is present over long periods of time, the local population becomes familiar with it.
  - Familiarity leads to complacency.
  - Complacency leads to carelessness.
  - Carelessness leads to unsafe acts.
  - Unsafe acts leads to injuries and/or casualties.
Landmine/ERW Casualties

- The Cambodia Mine Victim Information System (CMVIS) was established in 1994.
  - Maintained by the Cambodian Mine Action Authority (CMAA), current information is available at the following link: https://www.cmaa.gov.kh

- All Pie charts are from the July 2022 Report; note the items circled in Red.

- ERW injured or killed 100% Women, 82% Children, and 39% Men during this reporting period.

- Handling/Watching: 47%
Visible Killers

- Minefields are often called ‘Hidden Killers’,.. and rightly so.

- >50% of casualties are caused by ERW that were fully visible.
  - All items shown were found by a UAV/Drone conducting remote NTS in a ‘low threat’ area.

- This is only one part of where the EHFR teams assists the public.
EHFR Training
Basic EHFR Training

- Five Day Course to designed teach non-technical personnel the basic procedures.
- Does not qualify anyone to be an EOD/IEDD Operator.
- The focus is on how to assist until the response teams arrive.
EHFR T³ Course

- The top graduates of the basic course are invited to attend the five day ‘Train-the-Trainer (T³)’ course.
- This combines the lessons learned from the basic course and methods of instruction.
- Helps to sustain the overall national efforts.
Response to Suspect Threat

- The 5 ‘W’ questions will help provide the response team with critical information before they deploy:
  - **WHERE** is the item located
  - **WHAT** has been observed
  - **WHO** was responsible/the target
  - **WHY** was it placed (motive, reason)
  - **WHEN** did the incident occur
Encountering a Threat: The Five ‘C’s

• **Confirm** the item is suspicious
• **Clear** the area of personnel
• **Cordon** the area to an appropriate distance
• **Control** by establishing an Incident Control Point (ICP)
• **Check** the ICP is safe by conducting the appropriate 5x25m searches
Confirm

• Details (Photo?)
• Size (Estimated)
• Shape (Estimated)
• Appearance
• Colors
• Components (Best Guess)
• Location
Clear

• Calmly inform people to put down their cell phones and move away from the potential threat
• Move people away and out of Line-of-Sight
• Select areas away from glass, windows, and other secondary hazards.
• Account for personnel (when possible)
Cordon

- Coordinate with local authorities to establish a cordon pending the arrival of the EOD/IEDD Team

- Approximate Cordon Distances
  - Grenade-Projectile = 50-100m
  - Suspect car bomb = 200m
  - Suspect truck bomb = 400m
Control and Check

- Establish an Incident Control Point (ICP) within the cordon.
  - Avoid using an obvious *or a previously* used ICP location
    - Secondary devices are commonly used to target response teams.
  - Conduct 5/25m search of the ICP Area to ensure it’s clear
    - If unsure – move ICP to an alternative location
  - Away from ‘Line of Sight’ to the Threat
  - Away from glass and windows and any other secondary hazards
  - Must have access for emergency vehicles
The 5 ‘C’s’ Example

Confirm
Clear
Cordon
Control
Check
Detonation Aftermath

- EHFR may be the first person on the scene immediately after a IED attack.
- Their task is to help control the chaos until the authorities can arrive.
Actions

• Remove the by-standers from the site
  • Secondary Devices are common.
  • Contamination of evidence.

• Cordon and control the area until the response teams arrive.

• Do not get involved in rescue efforts*.
  • Unless fully medically trained and equipped.
Transferrable Skills

• The UNMAS-Iraq EHFR Course was designed for the Ministry of Interior Officers, both men and women.

• The course can be tailored for other organizations, locations and threat situations.
EHFR Training: Yemen

- In March 2022; UNDP and UNMAS-Iraq coordinated EHFR Basic and $T^3$ training for x18 personnel from Yemen in Amman, Jordan.
- The course was very successful, graduates began implementing the methods shortly after returning.
Summary

• Between 2017 to 2023; UNMAS-Iraq has:

  • Conducted 76 EHFR Basic and EHFR T³ Courses.

  • The training was comprised of 1,006 Men and 375 Women: **1,381 personnel in total**.

  • MoI employ these skills on a routine basis to assist in overall public safety and streamline the response by the EOD/IEDD Teams.
Questions?
UNITED NATIONS MINE ACTION SERVICE

THANK YOU

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VIDEOS, NEWSLETTERS AND PHOTOS
PLEASE VISIT:

https://www.unmas.org/en/programmes/iraq