

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN POLICE OFFICERS JOIN THE FIGHT TO CLEAR LAND MINES IN CAMBODIA

By Detective Sergeant Tony Langer, Western Australia Police

Handing over a EOD7 Bomb Suit (left to right): Major Vissal (Cambodian Army), Cooky (rear), and Tony Bower-Miles (VVMCT), Constable Jeremy O'Brian (in EOD7), Senior Constable Alasdair Kirwan, Akira Ra (CSHD), Mac McGregor (VVMCT)

Introduction

Cambodia may well be the most bombed country in history. In the year 2000, then President Bill Clinton became the first US President to visit Vietnam since the end of the Vietnam War. During his visit and as a humanitarian gesture, President Clinton released data on the extent of US bombings in Indo China between 1964 and 1975. It turns out that the United States dropped far more ordnance on Cambodia than was previously believed – some 2,756,941 tons' worth – which is nearly five times greater than the previous, generally-accepted figure. To put the sheer volume of the Cambodian bombing into perspective, the Allies dropped just over 2,000,000 tons of bombs during all of World War II, including the bombs that struck Hiroshima and Nagasaki; all this in a country roughly the size of Tasmania and with a population of around 15 million people.

This information, while shocking, was provided by President Clinton in an effort to help search for unexploded ordnances, which remain a significant humanitarian concern. The scope of the carpet bombing in Cambodia means that huge areas of otherwise arable land are rendered useless. Poverty-stricken farmers have no choice but to work land which is littered with mines and are often killed or maimed in the process. Injuries also occur when people are trying to earn a living finding and selling scrap metal or carrying out basic but essential tasks such as collecting and carrying water or timber. One third of all casualties are children.

The legacy of three decades of war has taken a severe toll on the Cambodian people. Some 40,000 people live as amputees (one of the highest rates in the world) and at least another 20,000 have died in remote areas before they could be transported to medical facilities, because they were undiscovered, or because of secondary infections.

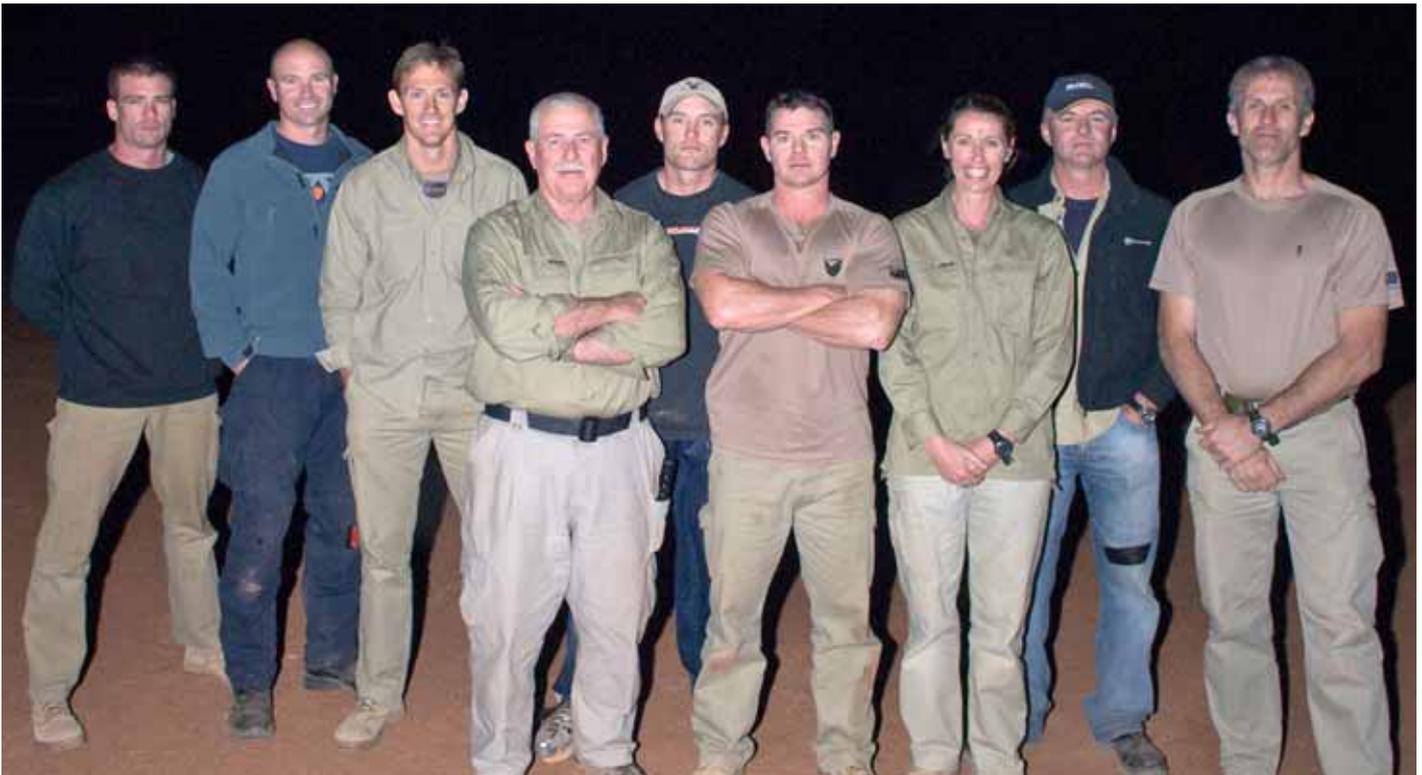
The effects of all that bombing continue to this day, as Cambodia remains one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. The Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC) estimates there are still 6,000,000 mines yet to be made safe. Cambodia is also littered with other kinds of explosive remnants of war (ERW), unexploded ordnance (UXO) and abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO). There are many different kinds of bombs and land mines. As well as the US material from the Vietnam War there are Chinese, Soviet and Eastern Bloc materials from the Khmer Rouge era in the 1970s and the decade of civil war that followed in the 1980s.

The landmines laid in Cambodia are constructed from a variety of materials including metal, plastics, nylons and wood. The metal landmines may rust out depending on their location and exposure to the elements which either renders them inert or makes them more unstable. More concerning is that some estimates place the lifespan of the landmines constructed from plastics and nylons at 200 years.

How We became Involved – The Seed is Planted

In 2008 I completed my Bomb Technician's Course with the Tactical Response Group, Bomb Response Unit (TRG BRU) as part of the Western Australian Police (WAPOL) contribution to the National Counter Terrorism Plan. Since that time I have carried out duties as a Regional Bomb Technician in the Mid West Gascoyne Region, and now provide a support role in the Metropolitan area in addition to my 'day job' as a detective.





TRG BRU staff at remote training location (left to right): Constable Jeremy O'Brian, (VICPOI BRY member); Senior Constable Chris Kelly; Senior Sergeant Bill Collidge; 1st Class Constable Danny Gray; Sergeant Glen Morey; Sergeant Jodie Pearson; Author; Senior Constable Alasdair Kirwan

While training on the Bomb Technician's Course I noticed that old explosive-ordnance-disposal gear including bomb suits, tactical helmets and personal protection equipment stored at the TRG BRU (or simply BRU) was going to be destroyed as newer equipment had been purchased.

Prior to the course I had become aware of a group of Australian Vietnam Veterans who were assisting local volunteers in de-mining villages in Cambodia. I approached the staff at the BRU and made a request for the personal protection equipment to be donated to the Vietnam Veterans Mine Clearing Team (VVMCT) for use in Cambodia. In the meantime, I learned more about the situation in Cambodia.

The Vietnam Veterans Mine Clearing Team

The VVMCT was established in 2001 by Vietnam Veterans from the Royal Australian Engineer Corp, namely Tony Bower-Miles, Gerry Lyall and Mac McGregor, to provide assistance with the landmine clearing effort in Cambodia. The group's military service had given them personal experience of the tragic effects of landmines on adults, children and families and the impact this had on their communities as a whole. The group, which currently has 19 members, decided that the best way they could help the Cambodian Self Help De-miners (CSHD) was by supplying advice, training and land mine detectors along with financial support.

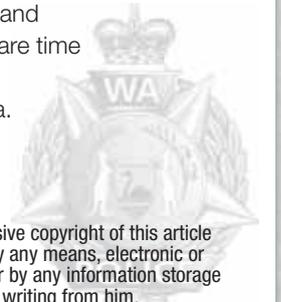
The VVMCT was directly involved with the CSHD's accreditation and certification as a de-mining organisation with the Cambodian authorities and it continues to support them with donations from concerned Australians. The VVMCT pays all its own costs and collects no salaries for its work and efforts. All money its members raise goes directly to the CSHD. They commit massive amounts of

About the Author



Detective Sergeant Tony Langer

is the Operations Manager at the Western Australia Police (WAPOL) Mandurah Detectives Office. Tony has 12 years' service with WAPOL. During his career he has worked in various general duties positions before completing his detective training in 2005. Since then Tony has served at Fremantle Tactical Investigation Group (TIG), Central TIG, the Major Fraud Squad, Midland Detectives, Geraldton Detectives (regional bomb technician/F/R negotiator), Peel District Crime Team and Mandurah Detectives office. In his spare time Tony clears land mines in the most bombed country in history, Cambodia.



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their personal time to raising funds and awareness and supporting the CSHD.

The VVMCT members have bought mine lab detectors which are the same model currently being used by the Royal Australian Engineers in the Middle East. Each unit costs \$4,000.



Clockwise from left: Author, Bill Morse (LMRF/CSHD) and Gerry Lyall (VVMCT) at Toul Prey Sneb mine field. F3 Mine-lab detector. Author conducting live fire training with CDHD at Toul Prey Sneb

Tony Bower-Miles and Gerry Lyall have taken these units to Cambodia where they have given them directly to CSHD staff. The VVMCT engrave the names of deceased Vietnam Veterans on to each detector, ensuring their contribution and sacrifice to Australia is not forgotten.

Cambodian Self Help De-miners

The CSHD was established by Cambodian national Akira Ra in the 1990s to provide a land mine and UXO clearing effort for the smaller villages that isn't available via the larger Non Government Organisations (NGOs). It is the only de-mining operation in Cambodia that is run solely by Cambodians. While other NGO de-mining companies have large pools of foreign funds to draw upon to facilitate their operations, the CSHD has limited resources and operates purely on donations and money raised from the VVMCT and the Cambodian Land Mine Museum Relief Fund (LMRF). Akira also established the Land Mine Museum in Siem Reap to raise awareness of the dangers of landmines. In addition, he founded the LMRF Orphanage, which provides shelter, education and medical care to 35 children who have been affected by landmines and ERW, either from physical injury to themselves or through the loss of their family due to these types of incidents. The orphanage runs purely on donations.

My Journey Begins

In February 2010, I travelled to Siem Reap in Cambodia, gateway to the famous and spellbinding temples of Angkor Wat.

Once there I spent the next month touring with members of the VVMCT, the CSHD and LMRF staff, along with advisors from the Cambodian Army. My primary reason for travelling there was to learn more about the VVMCT's and the CSHD's operations, resources, standard operating procedures and to ascertain what humanitarian assistance the WA Police could provide.

In Siem Reap I met Tony Bower-Miles from the VVMCT and Bill Morse and his wife Jill who, as well as managing the LMRF Orphanage, also organise teachers to come to Cambodia and teach the children English along with their normal studies.

Members of the VVMCT, CSHD and I travelled to a small village situated in the Oddar Meanchey/Siem Reap Province border (pronounced 'Dia Ow') approximately two hours from Siem Reap. Six months prior, five people from the village had been travelling on an ox cart which ran over a Russian-made T54 anti-tank mine, killing all five people and the ox. This was a horrific incident and, as the local villagers are the only emergency response, they had to tend to people they knew well and they were literally blown to pieces. The force of the blast was such that a large tree had to be cut down to remove a baby who had died from the explosion.

A Changing Landscape

This devastating incident had a huge effect on the small village and a request was passed on to the VVMCT and CSHD to conduct landmine clearance of the area. Over the next two months the VVMCT and CSHD cleared landmines from approximately 40 acres of land. Upon completion the villagers were able to use the



CSHD officers in newly-donated Med-Eng de-mining aprons and with donated HAL kit

land for farming and built five new houses and a village temple on the cleared land. Most importantly, members of this community no longer have to reside in a live mine field.

In 2010 alone the CSHD and the VMCT put over 100 families back on to land that had not been used for decades. Land that was killing people a year ago is now being put to productive use. To date the CSHD has cleared in excess of 60,000 active landmines and UXOs while adopting 35 maimed, needy and land-mine-orphaned children, providing them with a home and an education. Their primary base is in Siem Reap, but they travel throughout all of Cambodia as needed.

The Western Australia Police and Corporate Australia Reach Out to Help

Upon my return to Western Australia I was informed that approval had been granted for the donation of two EOD bomb suits and ballistic helmets to the VMCT. I then put forward a further request to the Commissioner of Police asking that other equipment earmarked for destruction (that was still of good quality) be donated to the VMCT and CSHD. Both the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner readily approved this request and gave it their full support.

Through running raffles and cash donations from the general public I raised over \$1,000. I also received a donation of \$4,000 from Komatsu Australia, which had previously donated two landmine-clearing bulldozers to the Cambodia Government that are now being used in Battambang Province. Global Communications Services WA heard of our mission and generously donated a Rothenbueler 1670 remote firing device, which negates the need for long firing cables and is capable of remote firing an explosive up to five miles away.

In keeping with the practices of VMCT members, I paid for my own flights and accommodation as I wanted all the money raised to go directly to the VMCT, CSHD and LMRF Orphanage. After advising

Qantas of the mission they provided an excess baggage waiver for the equipment being taken over (approximately 145kg in total). The paperwork associated with taking over this sort of equipment – all restricted or controlled articles – was complicated for me as I had never exported anything before but the Department of Defence and the Australian Customs and Border Protection service were more than helpful.

Western Australian Cops on the Ground in Cambodia

In August of 2011, Senior Constable Al Kirwan and Constable Jeremy O'Brien from the BRU traveled to Siem Reap two weeks before me and during their stay they delivered two EOD7 bomb suits and tactical helmets. They also conducted EOD7 familiarisation training with the VMCT and CSHD.

Upon my arrival in Siem Reap in September, I attended the LMRF Orphanage and CSHD headquarters and formally handed over the equipment and money to the VMCT, CSHD and LMRF. Half of the funds raised went towards purchasing equipment for the LMRF Orphanage school (books, stationary, food and clothing). The other half of the funds went directly to the CSHD for landmine clearing efforts. The total value of all equipment donated was in excess of \$100,000.

I conducted familiarisation training with the VMCT and CSHD with the new equipment in Siem Reap and assisted in deciding how it would be best deployed, including determining which CSHD officers would benefit most from its use. The ballistic vests that are used by the CSHD have about half of the ballistic rating of the WA Police vests and no side or rear protection on them, leaving de-miners exposed to fragmentation should someone trigger a landmine close to them whilst they are turning or facing away.

An issue with the WA Police vests was that they provided no protection above the neck. All landmine clearing vests have ballistic material that runs from the neck area to the base of the landmine



Misc ERW, landmines, anti-tank mines, mortars

clearing helmet visor (this is to negate the blast from going into the de-miner's face under the helmet shield). As I had brought with me soft ballistic plates (the standard groin plates from a police ballistic vest), these were fashioned into neck-to-visor protectors and sewn into the original WAPOL vests. The WA Police vests also have removable hard ballistic plates for the front and rear, which provide another higher level of protection.

The vests were altered to suit de-mining operations and have 'VVMCT' and 'CSHD' printed on the front and rear. Whilst the two Med-Eng EOD7 bomb suits are most likely to be used only when dealing with highly unstable ERW, to the CSHD they are invaluable equipment.

In September the CSHD had two minefields to contend with but, as it was the wet season, one was completely under water. So once training had been completed, Gerry Lyall, Bill Morse, Major Vissal and I traveled with the CSHD to Toul Prey Sneb mine field, which is located in Kampong Thom Province.

The landmine field was on a farm and the farm owner, who grew bananas and paw paw, had previously been plowing one of his fields when he noticed something on the ground. He picked it up and looked at it before placing it on a log and going to have lunch. Later, a friend of his immediately recognised it as a landmine and contacted the local authorities. The farmer who picked it up was lucky, as it was a Chinese anti-personnel mine and still live. If he'd handled it differently it could have gone off and killed him.

Land that is safe during the dry season often changes during the wet season and water in the soil can either push the landmines towards the surface, sink them or a farmer plowing his fields might plough deeper than the year prior. Another issue is that while a farmer might have 10 acres of land, he may only use half of that for farming and when he decides he is going to expand his crop, the new ground might contain landmines.

The Lay of the Land – Killing Fields

Unlike most professional armies who map mine fields as they lay them, the placement of land mines in South East Asia was not always in a straight line or particular pattern and the majority were not mapped. The person who laid the land mine may have decided that during war another enemy soldier might take cover behind a tree or in a particular area and place the land mine there (it is widely



The tragic effect of landmines

known for example that termite mounds were a favourite spot). Land mines were also used to deny access to villagers or other people fleeing conflict from entering or crossing a particular area, or to defend a location.

This of course makes the initial detection of a land mine field extremely difficult. Usually they are discovered when someone activates them by either stepping on them or by a combination of pure luck and chance someone observes one but without activating it.

Survey work is used in these instances to locate mine fields. De-mining groups attempt to re-construct what happened through interviews with local people. The most knowledgeable people are identified and participative mapping is initiated. This involves the villager and the de-mining company going together to the suspect area to evaluate it. Should a mine be located it is either marked on a GPS or hard copy map and mine field perimeters are identified and established.

At the farm I conducted further training with the CSHD, primarily the explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) officers. The de-miners conducted grid searches of an allocated area and when a land mine was located it was marked and the EOD officer and I would go forward and once the mine had been identified, place an explosive counter charge next to it and blow it up *in situ*. The land mine location would be placed onto the mine field map by the mine field manager when mine field clearing is completed the maps go to the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) for uploading to their database.

At the end of the first day only three land mines had been located. Land mine clearing is slow, meticulous work that often requires the de-miner to work in heavily-vegetated areas. This means they have to use a long-pole brush cutter to first cut the foliage down, then without moving forward use the mine lab detector to clear the area, before removing the foliage and then repeating the process.

The remote firing device was hugely popular with the CSHD, as it meant no laying out of long firing cables, afforded more protection (as they could pick their firing point and not be limited by cables etc.) and the five-mile usage radius from the explosive meant they could also get much more protection from dangerous ERW such as cluster bombs.

One Mine, One Life

After almost two weeks at Toul Prey Sneb farm the CSHD had located 48 Chinese anti-personnel land mines. Given the farmer was intending on expanding his farming plot, it would have just been a matter of time before either he or one of his children were injured or killed by a land mine.

The CSHD have a saying: "One Mine, One Life" which means every land mine they take out of the ground saves one life. In reality, it's never 'just' one person who gets injured or killed as the flow-on effect is so much greater. Families can't afford medical costs and their community also suffers because it is one less farm or business bringing in money. So the work of the VVMCT and CSHD, along with all the other de-mining organisations, reverberates on many levels.

Back to Siem Reap and on to Phnom Penh

Upon our return to Siem Reap, the VVMCT team, Akira Ra and I participated in training with Stephen Bradley from the Weapons Removal and Abatement Group. This involved lectures and practical exercises with sub surface magnetic locators, which are designed to pick up the magnetic field given off by ERW (north and south poles) up to a depth of approximately 12 feet (3.7m). While the wand-like device is complex it proved to work well in the UXO field.

The de-miners are usually given a week's down time between mine fields. So I traveled to Phnom Penh with the VVMCT to meet with the Deputy General in charge of the Cambodian Military Forces and the Senate President of the Ministry for Rural Development along with other officials regarding the VVMCT's and CSHD's work in the rural areas of Cambodia.

Tragedy Strikes

Upon arriving back in Siem Reap on Tuesday 16 November, we learnt that 14 people, including a one-year-old girl and a six-month-old baby, had been killed after a home-made tractor ran over a civil war era anti-tank mine in Battambang Province's Banan district. This occurred as the people were driving home from working at a chilli farm in Kampong Kul village. During the Khmer Rouge's reign the road was heavily mined and had been subsequently abandoned.

Battambang, along with Preah Vihear, are still the most land-mine-contaminated areas in Cambodia. 39 people in Battambang Province were reported killed or injured by land mines or explosive remnants of war in the first 10 months of 2010 alone.

Later that week we travelled to Preah Vihear Province, which is near the border with Thailand and approximately 10 kilometres from a disputed temple area. Previously, on my first trip to Preah Vihear temple, the Cambodian and Thai military were still involved in skirmishes in the region. We could hear the gunfire and see the Thai mortar positions.

At Preah Vihear a land mine field had been located at Sa Em Health Centre, the only Hospital in the province. The mine field was approximately 15 to 20 metres from the rear of the hospital and had been discovered when a mine had been set off by one of the locals. Due to the heavy foliage of the land-mined area, the going was slow and, as with every mine field, it was broken

up into grids and then working one straight line and back again, similar to mowing a lawn. Needless to say, this was slow, tedious work in very humid temperatures. As Preah Vihear has the highest rate of malaria in Cambodia, all CSHD staff were required to take malaria medication (purchased by the VVMCT) every morning.

The Conditions of Equal Opportunity Employment

One thing that surprises a lot of people when they learn about the CSHD is that they are an equal opportunity employer and currently have five female de-miners and one female EOD officer. The CSHD de-miners work for an hour and then have a 15-minute break for several reasons: the intensity of de-mining, the heat and fatigue. Whilst in the field, the de-miners sleep in hammocks with pieces of tarp over the top for shade and rain protection. They cook all their own food, which is mostly purchased from the local community they are working in, so this provides further support on a local level.

Cluster Bombs

With a week left in Cambodia I had hoped to go back to Kampong Thom Province to assist in destroying a 500lb Russian cluster bomb that was close to one of the villages. It had previously been identified and marked. Cluster bombs are designed to open prior to impact and spread bomblets everywhere, in effect creating another mine field.

The difficulty with these type of UXOs is if you just blow them up they can low order (partially explode) and spread the bomblets everywhere. If you open them to remove the bomblets by hand there is a possibility that they may have been made unstable by the impact of the bomb hitting the ground, even though it did not go off, or they may have become unstable after the passage of time. Unfortunately, the wet season made sure the cluster bomb was under about five feet of water, so we did not get to tackle it.

The Work Continues

Upon my return to Western Australia I continued raising awareness of the land mine situation in Cambodia, and was invited to be the primary speaker at the 2010 Human Rights Arts and Film festival.

I have since returned to Cambodia four more times, taking over any miscellaneous equipment I arranged to be donated and conducting follow-up training with the CSHD. This has always been a two-way street as I provide technical advice to the CSHD while learning more about the different types of landmines and ERW within Cambodia. During my first few trips language was a barrier, but the more time I have spent with the de-miners the more mutual understanding we have reached.

In July 2011, I petitioned the Commissioner of Police (WAPOL) to donate 20 laptop computers earmarked for disposal to the LMRF Orphanage. The Commissioner gave his support to the donation and officers from the WAPOL ICT department security-wiped data from the computers, then fully refurbished them and uploaded all the latest software. Cambodia does not have a government-sponsored computer program for schools, so the donation of these computers really gave the children at the orphanage a huge advantage.

The BRU uses various personal protective equipment, robots and counter-improvised explosive device equipment. The majority of this equipment WAPOL purchases is from a Queensland company

called Explosive Protective Equipment (EPE). They provide leading-edge Counter IED solutions to Australian Defence and government agencies. Their staff includes former bomb techs and Counter IED specialists with real-world operational experience. Through their philanthropic efforts we have donated approximately \$60,000 worth of brand new de-mining equipment from Allen Vanguard Corp in Canada. The equipment included 15 de-mining aprons and two Hook-and-Line (HAL) kits.

On 19 November 2011, Constable Jeremy O'Brien from the BRU and I conveyed the computers, along with the other donated de-mining equipment from Perth, to Siem Reap in Cambodia, where we handed over the computers to the LMRF Orphanage.

In keeping with my previous five trips, and Jeremy's second trip, we paid all our own costs and used our own accrued leave. Singapore Airlines heard of our mission and generously provided an excess baggage waiver, which literally saved us thousands of dollars.

Donations Pay Priceless Dividends

The equipment donated to the LMRF Orphanage and CSHD has had a major impact on their activities. The donation of the computers not only saved the LMRF Orphanage money, but the software installation by the WAPOL ICT unit also meant that only one program (Khmer typing) had to be uploaded to the computers, so within a day of the computers being delivered the children were using them. One of the computers was given to the orphanage's first students Hong Seap to help her matriculate to university.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

This article was written to highlight the serious issue of land mines in Cambodia and how former enemies are now working together to remove these heinous devices. It was not written with the intention of soliciting donations or assistance however any such offers would of course be gratefully received.

The author can be contacted directly Tony.Langer@police.wa.gov.au, or donations can be made to the following organisations (some of which are tax deductible):

Vietnam Veterans Mine Clearing Team (VVMCT)

Website <http://members.optusnet.com.au/glaust/>
Donations not tax deductible (but will be by the end of 2012)

Land Mine Relief Fund (LMRF)

Website <http://www.landmine-relief-fund.com/>
Donations are tax deductible

Cambodian Self Help De-Mining (CSHD)

Website <http://www.cambodianselfhelpdemining.org/>
Donations are tax deductible

PeaceTrees Vietnam

Website <http://www.peacetreesvietnam.org/>
Donations are non tax deductible

Apopo (Hero Rats)

Website <http://www.apopo.org/home.php>
Donations are tax deductible

She hopes to become a teacher and the computer will hopefully help her achieve this ambition.

The donated de-mining aprons provide a substantially higher amount of protection from blast/shock/fragmentation to the de-miners than the vests they were using previously. The aprons are also lighter and provide superior groin and shoulder area protection.

From 10 November 2011, the CHSD was tasked with clearing ERW from Lon Nol's last military base just outside Uodong called Banteay Long Vaek. Lon Nol was a Cambodian general who, in 1970, led the coup that deposed Prime Minister Norodom Sihanouk, and Nol assumed control of the government. He attempted unsuccessfully to suppress the Communist Khmer Rouge guerrillas. In 1975 this last military base was lost to the advancing Khmer Rouge and Nol was forced to leave the country, leaving behind vast amounts of UXO and AXO. Clearing the area involved the destruction of approximately 700 located items of UXO and AXO.

Constable O'Brien and I attended this former military base and later traveled to the United Nations training base for land mine and UXO clearance at Uodong and formally handed over the de-mining aprons and also conducted training with the HAL. The UN base was also the location of the field day exercises for the 11th International Meeting of States Parties (11MSP) which forms the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). There are 157 signatory nations to the ICBL treaty, which was initiated and run by the United Nations Development Program to set down and monitor formal dates for the complete ban of the manufacture and stockpiling of land mines and cluster munitions and dates to remove laid landmines by signatory nations.

We provided advice to the 11MSP delegates at the field training days and then attended the official opening in Phnom Penh at the Peace Palace, presided over by Cambodian Prime Minister Hung Sen and former NZ Prime Minister and head of the United Nations Development Program Helen Clarke.

Attending the 11MSP was, to say the least, an eye opener. I was fortunate enough to meet people from various de-mining companies and other related NGOs who were providing assistance throughout South East Asia. This included, for example, de-mining bulldozers and a large magnet which fitted onto the arm of a digger, which could remove metal from a depth of approximately two metres. Other NGOs provide medical support such as trauma care training and land mine education to children and adults along with prosthetic manufacture.

Where to From Here?

To date WAPOL and various corporations have arranged for over \$200 worth of equipment and funds. We have set ourselves the task of attempting to organise solar panels for the LMRF Orphanage along with defibrillators and trauma kits for the de-miners.

The orphanage is not on the main power grid, so they rely solely on generators and six very small solar panels. The trauma kits the CSHD currently have are old and unserviceable and whilst the CSHD has never had a mine field incident, new trauma kits and defibrillators will provide the necessary medical assistance required when operating in remote areas (which is always the case).

We are also in the process of expanding our donation efforts to other NGO mine-clearing companies in Thailand and Vietnam,



LMRF Orphanage children with WAPOL-donated laptop computers

specifically Apopo in Thailand (who use sack rats to locate landmines) and Peace Trees in Vietnam, while continuing our support of the WMCT/CSHD/LMRF.

We are currently in discussions with the Department of Defence to provide an Australian Army ex-military truck to the CHSD to convey their equipment and de-miners to the mine fields (currently they have a two-wheel-drive, four-cylinder truck which is less than suitable for the terrain) and we are attempting to source a new school bus for the orphanage, as the current bus is an old Toyota HiAce which can only carry 15 students and is also less than suitable.

Raising funds for the purchasing of equipment and for donation is always difficult, so we came up with the idea of filming a documentary on land mines, which will cover land mine clearance, critical incident aftercare, employment and preventative educational programs. We hope this will have the dual effect of raising awareness and also raising funds, not just in Cambodia, but across South East Asia. In April 2012, to coincide with taking over tactical trauma kits and more de-mining aprons, the director/producer and I will travel to Vietnam to begin filming the documentary. From there we will travel to Cambodia and on to Thailand to complete the filming. More than 20 NGOs will be participating in the documentary. The documentary is self-funded and while it is not being filmed for profit, it is envisaged that once production costs (which are minimal) have been covered, that any profits will be divided equally through the NGOs who participate in the documentary or to an NGO nominated by them. APJ

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Luka Yeates and Andrea Davis (WAPOL)

Brian Walters (WAPOL)

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Allen Bennett (Allen Vanguard Corp) www.allenvanguard.com

Paul Brett (Global Communication Services WA) www.gcs.com.au

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Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

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