



Press Release

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A new book

Mine Detection Dogs – Training, operations and odour detection

The detection of mines is one of the most critical elements of an effective and cost-efficient mine-clearance operation. During the last decade, enormous investment has been made in many areas of research, but a significant technological breakthrough has yet to be found. In the view of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and of the mine action community, mine detecting dogs (MDD) offer one of the most promising avenues for making demining operations faster and less expensive.

The use of dogs for mine detection has expanded dramatically in the last 10 years. However, research designed to explore and understand the issues underlying mine dog detection has not kept pace with that expansion.

A poor knowledge base was recognized as a key limitation on further development and exploitation of this fascinating detection technology. The GICHD therefore undertook a programme of research on MDD, with the specific objectives of :

- improving the understanding of the skills and limitations of dogs
- optimizing their deployment and performance
- raising confidence in their work.

This book is the first extensive overview of that programme of research, which has produced considerable success. Several projects are still underway. The book is therefore as much a report on work in progress, rather than completed projects. It provides valuable reviews of current knowledge in key areas, an up-to-date summary of topical issues, historical perspectives and some empirical results. It's mostly about MDD, although it includes a first report on mine detection rats.

The MDD programme is funded by the European Commission, and the Governments of Germany, Japan (through the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund), Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The book is available in hardcopy, or can be accessed on the GICHD website (www.gichd.ch – cf. Publications).

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