

Operator **Safety**

is priority number one

The Swedish Defense Organization SWEDEC has thoroughly tested and compared Scanjack 3500 with similar mine clearing vehicles, MCVs. As a result the Swedish Armed Forces have so far purchased five Scanjacks.

Major Göran Danielsson is highly experienced when it comes to testing mine clearing vehicles. He has also developed some of the test procedures that are U.N. standard today.



Major Göran Danielsson regards the Scanjack 3500 as top class.

International Mine Clearance

The reason for SWEDEC's interest in mine clearance equipment is that Sweden is participating in mine clearance projects abroad through its international forces. Until the mid 1990's Sweden only worked with manual mine clearance in combination with dogs. Around 1997 the Swedish Armed Forces started discussing the need for complementary mine clearance equipment for securing roads and camps for our international forces.

"SWEDEC worked out a document regarding requirements for MCVs. We also worked out guidelines for comparing present and future equipment as well as developing methods for repeatable tests," explains Major Danielsson.

He goes on to describe how SWEDEC tested different mine clearance principles during 2001. The first was Bofors' Mineguzzler with a clearance tiller. The second was Scanjack with a double flail and the third was the Danish Hydrema with a single flail.

Unique Testing Conditions

According to Major Danielsson SWEDEC is one of a few international test centers in the world where it is possible to make repeatable tests. They can produce tests on gravel, sand and soil tracks. The three MCVs were tested for clearance performance and mobility.

"It was extremely important that we fully could compare the clearance results and it turned out that the Scanjack 3500 was the most efficient vehicle".

After these tests SWEDEC continued to work on improving the machine, now adding requirements for e.g. remote control. Scanjack was the only MCV that lived up to these demands and the first vehicle was delivered to SWEDEC in 2003.

Operator Safety

In 2003 all the requirements were checked again which resulted in four more MCVs from Scanjack. One of those were shipped to the U.S. (see article on page 8) for testing and Major Danielsson went along to help ITEP (International Test and Evaluation Program for Humanitarian Demining) and Scanjack with Basic Operator's Training of four American operators during one week.

Since the most important issue for SWEDEC in mine clearance is the operator's safety they decided to see what happened if the operator made a wrong turn while operating the Scanjack on a mine field. To test whether the Scanjack 3500 fulfilled the requirement, they put a 10 kg AT mine under one of the front wheels. A crush test dummy was placed in the operator's cabin. Nothing bad happened to the "operator" to everybody's relief.

Clearance is More Expensive

"We now have two Scanjacks ready for foreign missions. We are only waiting for a decision by the Swedish Government regarding where to send us. Two machines are used for training at the Gota Engineering Regiment in Eksjö, Sweden. The first two machines will, together with the operators, be used for international assignments. The fifth vehicle will be used for maintenance training, additional tests, etc.

The Swedish international mine clearance forces also include manual clearance and dogs. Göran Danielsson says that they have learnt a lot about mechanized mine clearance in combination with dogs from the Croats.

"We are now hoping to get the Scanjacks into international operations as soon as possible. The need for mine clearance is enormous and although it is far more expensive to clear land from mines than it is to put them down, it is a job that has to be done".

Major Danielsson finally states that he is really pleased with the Scanjack purchase.

"As far as we know it is the best and most efficient MCV that you can buy for money".

- SWEDEC is the Swedish EOD and Demining Center. The staff includes experienced researchers, ammunition technicians, officers and others with extensive knowledge and experience of military and humanitarian demining. This, in combination with the unique testing facilities, has made SWEDEC a respected partner in Sweden as well as abroad.

- For more information: www.swedec.mil.se