Quick facts on unplanned explosions at munitions sites (UEMS)*

UEMS: Incidents and consequences

Casualties of UEMS, 1979–2021: During the period January 1979 to December 2021, more than 30,000 casualties resulting from UEMS incidents were recorded. The highest number of casualties was recorded in 2002, mainly due to the devastating UEMS incident that occurred in Lagos, Nigeria. Similarly, the incident in Abadan, Turkmenistan, in 2011 and the one in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, in 2012 contributed strongly to the spikes in 2011 and 2012.

Casualties per year vs. incidents per year: Comparing casualties per year with incidents per year shows that the numbers do not always correlate.

During the period examined (1979–2021) the main causes behind UEMS incidents were:

- Improper physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) practices increase the probability of UEMS occurring.

UEMS: Main causes

Improper physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) practices increase the probability of UEMS occurring. During the period examined (1979–2021) the main causes behind UEMS incidents were:

- 28.1% (179) Cause currently undetermined or unrecorded
- 21.4% (136) Handling errors and inappropriate working practices
- 17.1% (109) Failure to take into account external environmental influences and events
- 16.5%: non-state facilities
- 14.3% (91) Inappropriate storage systems and infrastructure
- 10.9% (69) Poor security
- 8.2% (52) Lack of surveillance leading to ammunition deterioration