



**Norwegian People's Aid**  
**Thailand**

# NEWS UPDATE

July 2024 - September 2024



Machine operation in the field (KBKB9).

**Welcome to NPA Thailand's Q3 update 2024.** Given the significant management changes this quarter, we felt it was timely to provide an update for our interested parties. Moving forward, we will issue quarterly news updates to offer accessible, practical, and forward-looking insights. Our annual reporting will continue as required, and we hope you find these updates helpful.

Jan Erik Støa, *Country Director for NPA Thailand*



## Farewell Aksel Steen-Nilsen

After nine years of dedicated service as the Country Director (CD) for NPA Thailand, Mr. Aksel Steen-Nilsen has been appointed as the new **Director of Humanitarian Mine Action and Disarmament** at NPA's headquarters in Oslo, Norway. In recognition of Mr. Steen-Nilsen's contributions, a farewell dinner was held on June 24th, 2024, attended by approximately 60 colleagues and key partners.

## NEW COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR NPA THAILAND



New CD Jan Erik Støa and outgoing CD Aksel Steen-Nilsen at the farewell dinner.

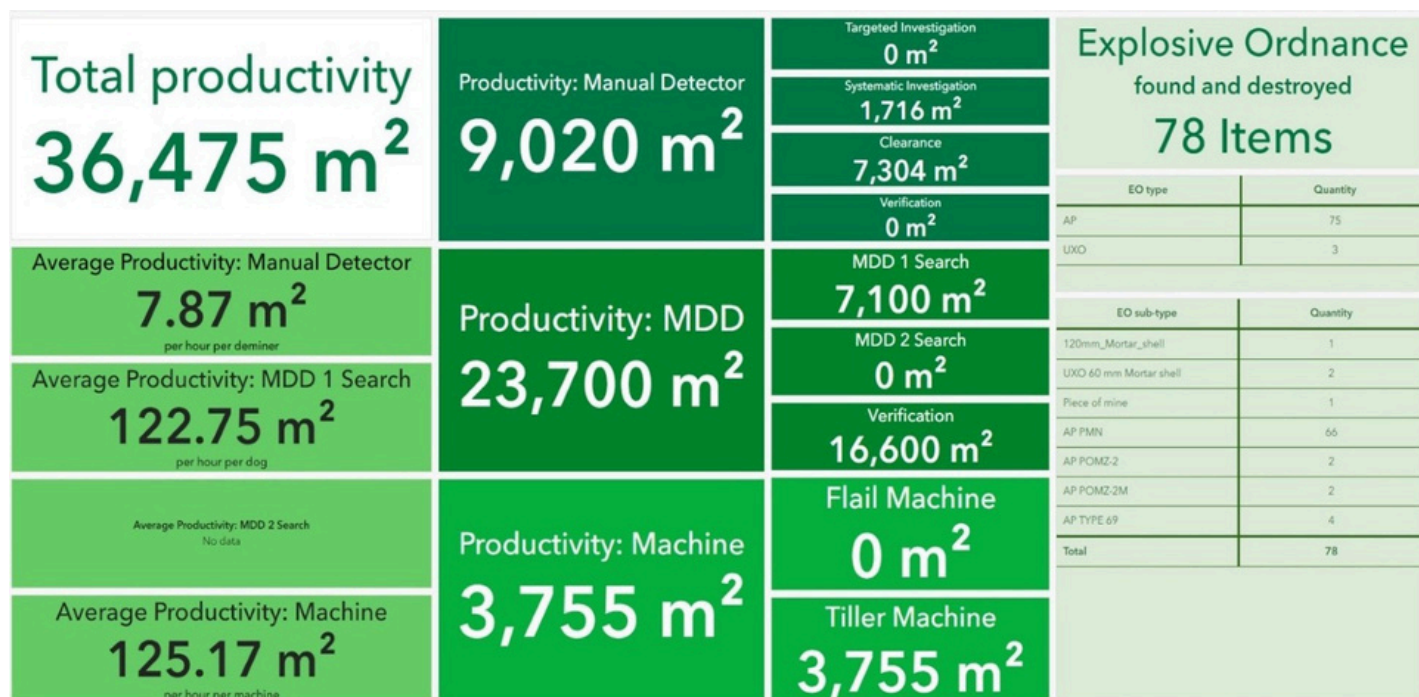
## Welcome Jan Erik Støa

Mr. Jan Erik Støa became the CD for NPA Thailand on August 15th, 2024, after serving six years in the same role for NPA Vietnam. **With over 23 years of experience at NPA**, Mr. Støa has extensive expertise in mine action and disarmament across Southeast Asia, having held leadership positions in Cambodia, Laos, and previously in the Middle East and Africa.



# OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

NPA Thailand is actively working in the beautiful **Phanom Dong Rak Wildlife Sanctuary**, specifically in the Kraban Krabai Fields. We have therefore named our task areas KBKB 1, 2, 3, and so on. Currently, our efforts are focused on KBKB 7, 9, and 11.



## Manual Demining Productivity

During Q3, the manual demining teams covered **9,020 m<sup>2</sup>** at KBKB 7, focusing on both clearance and systematic investigation of land that was suspected to still be mined. This represents a decrease compared to the last quarter's **13,083 m<sup>2</sup>**, largely due to adverse weather conditions, including heavy rains and limited visibility. Despite these challenges, the teams maintained consistent progress in clearing land of land mines and other hazardous ordnance.

## Machine Operations Productivity

The Mini MineWolf machine faced significant challenges this quarter due to wet and soft ground conditions at KBKB 9 and 10, processing only a total of **3,755 m<sup>2</sup>**. Although the machine's performance was lower than in the previous quarter, it continued to contribute effectively to clearance operations.

## Mine Detection Dog (MDD) Performance

The MDD teams covered **23,700 m<sup>2</sup>** through a single search and verification, following behind areas cleared by machines. The dogs were deployed at KBKB 11, but productivity was affected due to one dog falling ill. The team also returned to Cambodia, leaving no MDD presence in September. We anticipate the dogs' return to work by October 22, 2024.

## Mines and other Explosive Ordnance Found

A total of **78 explosive ordnance items** were discovered, including **75 anti-personnel mines (AP)** and **3 unexploded ordnances (UXO)**. Despite the tough weather conditions, the team made substantial progress in making the land safer for the local communities.



## Quarterly Management Meeting

In the second week of September, NPA Thailand held a management meeting in Bangkok. These meetings will now be held quarterly to review performance, address challenges, and ensure ongoing improvements in management practices.

## From Deminer to Field Office Coordinator (FOC)

May joined NPA as a manual deminer in March 2024 and, within six months, was promoted to FOC. Her ability to learn quickly and her organizational skills have made her a standout team member. NPA is proud to foster growth and development within our staff, providing opportunities for career advancement and capacity building.



## Field Training and Assessment

Part of the Bangkok team spent two weeks in the field at Si Sa Ket, conducting refresher courses on Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) and safety with the Technical Field Manager. The visit included open discussions and valuable insights into field operations. We plan to continue bi-monthly visits to maintain high standards.



The world is in the midst of a climate crisis, and Thailand is no exception. The northern regions have been particularly affected, with significant flooding and extreme rainfall in Q3, posing serious risks to infrastructure, the economy, and local communities



Working in a wildlife sanctuary in Si Sa Ket, a region celebrated for its rich biodiversity and dense forests, adds an extra layer of sensitivity to mine clearance operations. NPA Thailand places great emphasis on preserving the environment while making the area safer for both people and wildlife.



To ensure that our operations adhere to environmental best practices, we are proud to introduce **Ms. Cherry Helgesen** as our new Programme Officer and Environmental Focal Point. With an MSc in Environment, Politics, and Society from University College London and prior experience at the Norwegian Embassy in Hanoi, Ms. Helgesen brings fresh ideas and a strong focus on environmental sustainability to our programme.



## New Director General for TMAC

Lt. Gen. Nattawut Sabyeroop has concluded his tenure as Director General of the Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC). He is succeeded by **General Saksit Sangchanintra**, who previously served as Chief of Planning and Policy at TMAC, providing key support during the introduction of Land Release and Non-Technical Survey in Thailand 11 years ago.

Mr. Støa met with the new Director General to discuss future collaboration, with both parties committed to a strong partnership. **Environmental protection** was a key topic during the meeting, highlighting its importance to local authorities.

## Looking forward to Q4

Between the 18th and 22nd of November, several operational staff from Thailand will travel to Pakse in Lao PDR, to attend the **NPA annual global operations meeting**. This event aims to share experiences between all NPA operational programmes and will further improve our work in Thailand.


From the 25th to the 29th of November 2024 members of our team will be attending the “5 Mine Ban Treaty Review Conference” in the **Siam Reap – Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free World** in Cambodia. This meeting will be important for Thailand to update the global mine action community on progress made towards MBT obligations, and present plans for possible completion of the work. It is expected that Thailand will need more time to complete surveys and clearance, and NPA stand ready to continue the support for this work. NPA Thailand will seek to provide information on our activities in country and also ask potential donors to increase focus towards Thailand.

## Strengthening the Operational Efficiency and Coordination

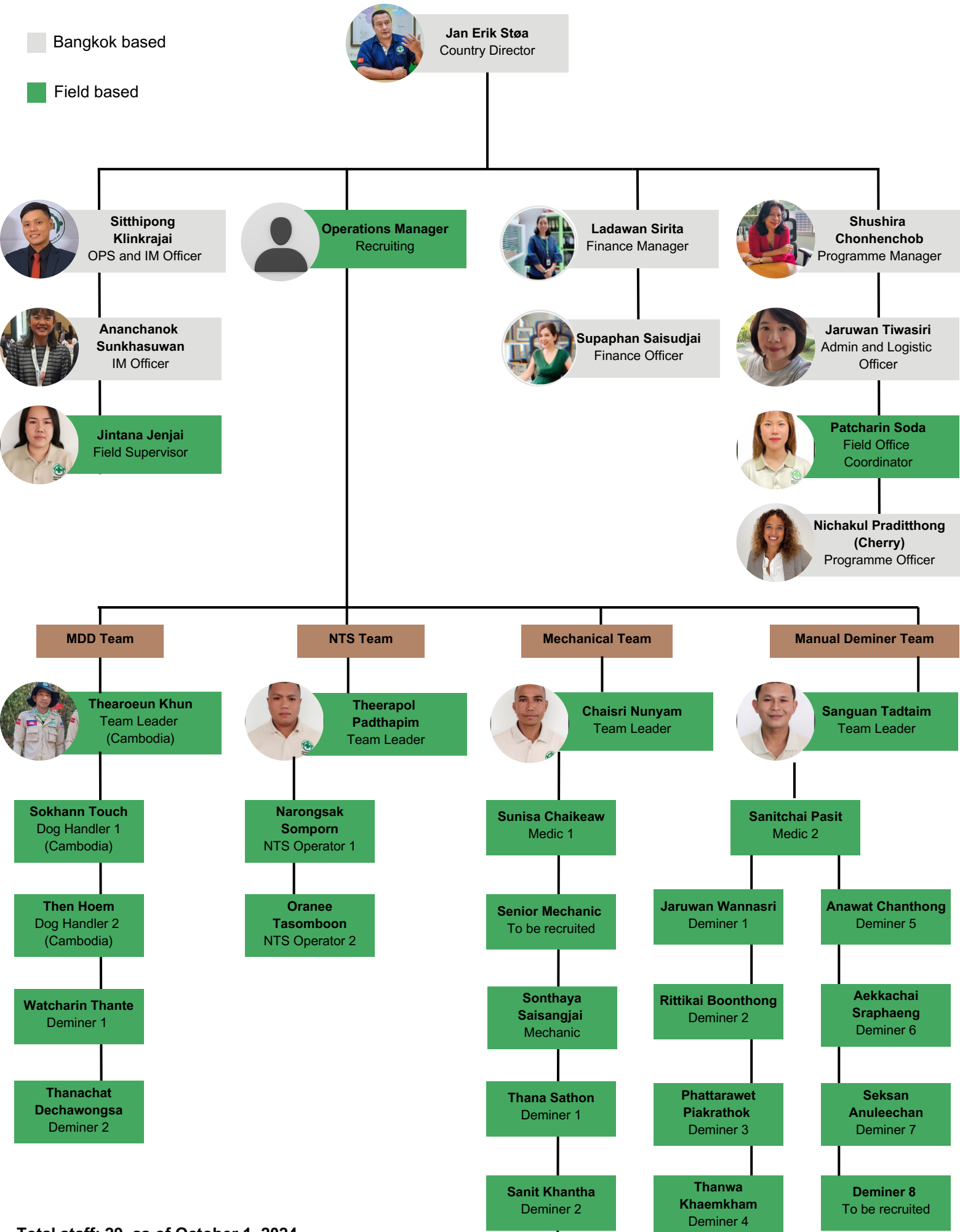
NPA Thailand has advertised and are looking to **recruit a new experienced operations manager (OM)** – The OM will be based in the field and work to increase NPA teams' productivity and identify areas for improvements. New methodologies for surveys and full integration of more environmentally friendly tools into manual deminers and machines SOP will be key tasks for the OM. NPA hopes that the new OM will start work as soon as possible and at the latest from January 2025.

NPA is working together with new management of TMAC to update the **annual national work plan**, running from November 2024 to October 2025. Focus from TMAC will be on improved Information Management, more sustainable international mine action training of national staff and updated survey. NPA will assist TMAC in developing plans and projects that will facilitate these improvements and priorities from the Thai authorities.

# ORGANISATION CHART NPA THAILAND

 Bangkok based

 Field based



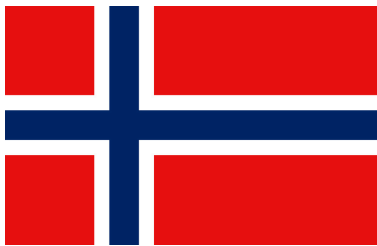
Total staff: 29, as of October 1, 2024



# Norwegian People's Aid

## Q3 NEWS UPDATE NPA THAILAND

### THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



MFA/NORAD



TMAC



USDoD



GFFO