



2024 FACTSHEET NPA Palau



CONTEXT

The battles in 1944 between the US and Japanese forces, contaminated all 16 states of Palau with unexploded or abandoned ordnance. The types of ammunition range found consist of projectiles, mortars, rockets, anti-aircraft ammunition, grenades, aircraft bombs, sea mines, beach mines, and torpedoes.

Search teams, equipped with a variety of detection tools, and skills acquired through training, assess items based on established safety criteria. Once categorized as safe by supervisors, the ERW is transported to the Central Demolition Site (CDS) for its final disposal. This integrated approach ensures a systematic and secure process in handling explosive remnants, contributing to the overall safety of the civilian population in Palau.

The initial work plan envisaged the 118 surveyed areas to be completed by February 2020, but the COVID pandemic greatly impacted progress. In 2023, NPA made clear headways towards dealing with a backlog of tasks. As clearance and survey work continues, more areas are identified as hazardous, either through NTS or reported by the communities to NPA, and so additional tasks are added to the list. With new and improved community engagements, NPA has increased its Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) nationwide to aid in identifying hazardous areas and ensuring the populations is aware of the risks these ERW pose.

PROGRAMME

NPA established a presence in the Republic of Palau in April 2015. After a steady period of mobilization, planning and agreeing on a memorandum of understanding with the Government, the first project commenced in June 2016 to map out the contamination across the country by applying Non-Technical Survey (NTS). The initial NTS identified 188 hazardous areas. Further projects followed, incorporating Technical Survey (TS) and Battle Area Clearance activities. The primary objective of NPA in Palau is to mitigate the risk posed to civilians due to the residual Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) from World War II and to release the land, free from explosive remnants of war (ERW), back to the community.

In addition, the projects implemented by NPA aim to enhance national capacity by establishing a proficient and independent team capable of employing ecologically friendly methods for disposing of explosive munitions. NPA is committed to fostering national ownership and bolstering ERW mitigation capabilities. This is achieved through technical support, comprehensive training of Palauan staff, and improvements in operational efficiency. These efforts are reflected in the production of updated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Training Management Packages and the implementation of best practices in line with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

In partnership with the National Safety Office, NPA has safely removed and disarmed over 20,000 unexploded and abandoned ordnance. Of note is that, under Government direction, High Order demolitions are restricted to emergency cases only. Therefore, NPA continues to research and develop alternative means of disposal, one of which is Remote Bandsaw Cutting and Deflagration. This method renders the items safe and free of explosives.



2023 Results:

- Non-Technical Survey (NTS) in Peleliu identified 14 Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHA) for further Technical Survey (TS) and Clearance, resulting in the identification of 17,603 square meters of newly identified areas.
- In 2023, NPA cleared heavily contaminated areas in Angaur State, releasing 370,752 sqm of land. The released land across 3 states (Anguar, Ngeremlengui, Ngatpang and Aimeliik) totaled 451,076 sqm and was handed back to communities as free from ERW.
- A total of 812 Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) were removed and disposed, comprising 473 unexploded ordnances (UXO) and 339 abandoned ordnances (AXO). Of these 434 unexploded ordnances and 102 abandoned ordnances were found in Angaur State. In addition, NPA removed 1,229 Small Arms Ammunitions (SAA).
- Commenced new NTS and Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) activities in Palau, starting in the larger island of Babeldaob.
- Trained 5 new staff in Peleliu in Battle Area Clearance (BAC) to conduct TS and Clearance over the 14 SHAs and to respond to Spot Tasks.
- Total number direct beneficiaries: 2,574 (866 women, 1,107 men, 213 girls and 388 boys)

DONORS and FUNDING

The results in 2023, were made possible through the generous support from United States Department of State (USDOD), Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Embassy of Japan through the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP). We thank our donors for their generous support of our work to protect civilians from explosive weapons

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GGP – USD 209,081
CAPE – USD 769,225

MORE INFORMATION

Hyperlink:

[Programme webpage](#)

[NPA Palau Facebook Page](#)

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[MAR Clearing the Mines 2023](#)

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