

MINE
ACTION
REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2020

A REPORT BY MINE ACTION REVIEW FOR THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING
OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION

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A REPORT BY MINE ACTION REVIEW FOR THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION



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OTHER INFORMATION

This publication is available for download at www.mineactionreview.org

Mine Action Review welcomes comments from national authorities and other relevant stakeholders. Please send any comments to MineActionReview@npaid.org

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KEY FINDINGS

- In 2019, a global total of more than **131 square kilometres** was cleared of anti-personnel mines, with more than 96% of recorded clearance occurring in States Parties to the APMBC. However, this total is a marked decrease on output in 2018 of more than 155 square kilometres, and was the lowest recorded clearance globally for more than ten years. The true total area of clearance is probably considerably greater, but data recording and reporting problems prevent accurate reporting of a higher figure, in addition to a lack of transparency by several States not party.
- In total, **almost 164,000 emplaced anti-personnel mines** were destroyed during clearance and explosive ordnance disposal operations (EOD), an increase compared to 153,800 in 2018. In addition, **39,700 anti-vehicle mines** were destroyed during clearance of anti-personnel mined areas in 2019, a slight increase on the 38,500 destroyed the previous year. When considered together with the area of land cleared, this might indicate more targeted and efficient clearance was achieved in 2019.
- No clearance was recorded or reported for 2019 in eight States Parties: Cameroon, Cyprus, DR Congo, Eritrea, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, and Senegal. A small amount of mined area was, however, cancelled through non-technical survey in Cyprus and reduced through technical survey in Senegal. Some clearance, including in spot tasks, may also have occurred but which was not reported.
- No State Party fulfilled its APMBC Article 5 obligation to survey and clear all mined areas containing anti-personnel mines in 2019, but **Chile declared completion in February 2020**. Since entry into force of the APMBC in 1999, 33 States (all States Parties to the APMBC, except for Nepal) and 1 other area (Taiwan) have completed mine clearance.¹ Mauritania was on this achievement list last year but has since reported newly discovered mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and is seeking a new extension to its Article 5 deadline.
- As at 1 October 2020, **57 States and 3 other areas** were confirmed or suspected to have anti-personnel mines in mined areas under their jurisdiction or control,² an overall increase of one State on the previous year. While Chile was removed from list, Mauritania and Mali³ were added.

Of the 57 affected States, 35 are party to the APMBC. As at 1 October 2020, three of the 35 States Parties (**Cameroon, Mali, and Nigeria**) did not have a legal Article 5 deadline in force, but have ongoing Article 5 obligations due to new contamination from the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature by non-State armed groups on areas under their jurisdiction or control. These States must therefore request an extension to their previously expired deadlines and submit Article 7 reports detailing the new contamination and clearance of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature. In addition, **Eritrea's** Article 5 deadline expires on 31 December 2020 after it was granted an interim extension at the Fourth Review conference in November 2019. However, as at 1 October 2020 Eritrea had yet to request a deadline extension.

1 States Parties: Albania, Algeria, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burundi, Chile, Rep. of Congo, Costa Rica, Denmark, Djibouti, France, The Gambia, Germany, Greece*, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Hungary, Jordan, Malawi, Montenegro*, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Republic of North Macedonia, Palau*, Rwanda, Suriname, Swaziland, Tunisia, Uganda, Venezuela, and Zambia. In addition, State not Party, Nepal, and "other area", Taiwan, have also completed mine clearance. *Indicates States Parties not listed on the APMBC Implementation Support Unit (ISU)'s list, "States Parties That Have Completed Article 5", at: bit.ly/30xgu9r, presumably because they did not officially report having mined areas under the APMBC and/or have not made a formal declaration of fulfilment of their clearance obligations under the Convention. Mauritania declared completion previously in 2018, but has subsequently reported having mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and has therefore been taken off this list.

2 **Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, DR Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, India, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Dem. Rep., Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Nagorno-Karabakh, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Peru, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Somalia, South Korea, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Western Sahara, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.** States Parties to the APMBC are in bold. Other areas are in italics.

3 Mali, which faces a rising threat from anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, as a result of escalating conflict involving armed non-state actors, has been added to Mine Action Review's list of States Parties to the APMBC with anti-personnel mine contamination.

- Based on Mine Action Review's assessment of the extent of contamination in affected States Parties, Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Iraq are massively contaminated (defined as covering more than 100km² of land), while heavy contamination (covering more than 20km²) exists in Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Thailand, Turkey, and Yemen. In other affected States Parties, the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination is medium or light.
- As at 1 October 2020, of the 35 mine-affected States Parties, 9 (Cameroon, DR Congo, Eritrea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Palestine, and Sri Lanka) had yet to submit an Article 7 report covering 2019, which is a legal obligation under the APMBC.
- Only Oman, Peru, Serbia, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom/ Argentina, and Zimbabwe appear to be on track to meet their respective current Article 5 deadline.
- In Mine Action Review's assessment of national mine action performance in 2019, two States Parties had demining programmes rated as very good: Chile (which has now fulfilled its Article 5 obligations) and Zimbabwe. Six were assessed to be good: Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the United Kingdom. A further 12 States Parties had demining programmes rated as average: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq, Oman, Peru, Serbia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tajikistan, and Turkey. Chad, Colombia, Ecuador, Niger, Somalia, and Yemen attained only a rating of "poor", while Eritrea, Senegal, and Ukraine all rated "very poor".

Seven States Parties were not ranked: Argentina, Cyprus, and Palestine (not assessed due to issues related to lack of jurisdiction or control of mined areas); Mauritania (not assessed due to the fact it only reported the discovery of new CMR contamination in 2020); and Cameroon, Mauritania, Mali, and Nigeria (not assessed due to insufficient information available to assess performance in 2019).

- The **Oslo Action Plan** (OAP) was adopted by the Fourth Review Conference of the APMBC in November 2019. Mine Action Review has assessed implementation of the OAP action items related to survey and clearance in 2020 and will assess progress annually, through to the Convention's Fifth Review Conference in 2024. Our **provisional 2020 baseline results of the survey and clearance related indicators** monitored can be found on the Mine Action Review website, together with a supporting guide to the OAP.

The results of Mine Action Review's 2020 baseline assessment will be finalised following the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties on 16-20 November 2020. Mine Action Review welcomes feedback from States Parties and other stakeholders on the results of the provisional assessment. Please email MineActionReview@npaid.org with any feedback or additional information for Mine Action Review's consideration.

OVERVIEW

SUMMARY

In February 2020, Chile declared it had fulfilled its clearance obligations under Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the 32nd State Party to do so. Chile's remarkable rate of clearance in the first two months of 2020 saw the destruction of 12,526 anti-personnel mines and 10,170 anti-vehicle mines, allowing it to meet its treaty deadline with days to spare. Two further States—the United Kingdom and Argentina—were set to be added by early 2021 to the list of those whose clearance was complete, with planned release of remaining mined areas on the Falkland Islands/Malvinas.

But despite Chile's achievement, as at 1 October 2020, 57 States and 3 other areas still had anti-personnel mines in mined areas under their jurisdiction or control, an overall increase of one State on the previous year. Mauritania, which had previously declared fulfilment of its Article 5 obligations in 2018, reported newly discovered mined areas under its jurisdiction or control in 2020. Mali, which faces a rising threat from anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, as a result of escalating conflict involving armed non-state actors, has been added to Mine Action Review's list of States Parties to the APMBC with anti-personnel mine contamination.

Recorded clearance for 2019 worldwide was down significantly compared to the previous year, reducing from 155km² in 2018 to 131km² in 2019, the lowest recorded for more than a decade. This can be largely ascribed to an almost 50% drop in clearance output in Cambodia, from 41km² in 2018 to 21km² in 2019. There was also a large decline in clearance output in Croatia in 2019 compared to the previous year, down from 48km² to 39km². However, while the amount of area cleared decreased compared to 2018, the total of almost 164,000 anti-personnel mines destroyed during clearance and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) operations in 2019 was considerably greater than the 153,800 destroyed in 2018. This might indicate more targeted and efficient clearance was achieved in 2019.

In fact, though, given that several States have either not reported at all on significant clearance progress (e.g. Iran and Syria) or have done so only partially or inaccurately (e.g. China, Iraq, and Ukraine), the global figure is certainly higher. In all of these States, significant demining has certainly occurred. Mine Action Review figures are, though, conservative, to avoid exaggerating what is undoubtedly welcome progress.

That said, in nearly all affected States, the COVID-19 pandemic had been impacting negatively to some degree on operations in 2020, whether through the mandatory

halting of operations under national lockdown rules, reduced operations due to distancing measures in place to help prevent the spread of the virus, difficulties in international staff returning to or visiting mine action programmes due to travel restrictions, or other impacts. Survey and clearance results for the year are therefore likely to evidence a reduction in output, although the extent of the impact is, as yet, unknown and will vary between affected countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has, however, also revealed the adaptability and resilience of the mine action sector, with national authorities, operators, and implementing partners striving to find ways to continue land release operations, training, capacity development and more, whenever possible and where required, remotely.

Of the 57 affected States around the world, 35 are party to the APMBC. As at 1 October 2020, three of these States Parties (Cameroon, Mali, and Nigeria) did not have a legal Article 5 deadline in force, but have ongoing Article 5 obligations due to new contamination from the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature by non-State armed groups on areas under their jurisdiction or control. These States must therefore request an extension to their previously expired deadlines and submit Article 7 reports detailing the new contamination and clearance of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.

Two of the 35 affected States Parties, Eritrea and Senegal, appeared to be in violation of their clearance obligations under the Convention, because they were making insufficient progress in clearing mined areas under their jurisdiction or control. Clearance must occur "as soon as possible" according to the terms of Article 5. Moreover, unjustified delays in clearing military bases, borders, or other "sensitive areas" of anti-personnel mines also constitutes prohibited use under Article 1 of the APMBC. In the case of Eritrea, States Parties should implement all of the provisions of Article 8 of the Convention and mandate a fact-finding mission to the country with a view to supporting Eritrea's swift return to compliance. Eritrea's individual failure is also the Convention's collective failure. States Parties should no longer turn a blind eye to Eritrea's non-compliance, and should urge and support Eritrea to comply with its international legal obligations. Eritrea's Article 5 deadline expires on 31 December 2020 after it was granted an interim extension at the Fourth Review conference in November 2019. Eritrea was expected to submit a more detailed extension request by 31 March 2020, for consideration at the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2020, but as at 1 October 2020 had not yet done so.

GLOBAL CONTAMINATION

As at 1 October 2020, 57 States and three other areas were contaminated by anti-personnel mines globally, as listed in Table 1.

Asia (including the Middle East) is the most affected continent by number of countries, with 23 mine-contaminated States. Most are not party to the APMBC. Across Asia (including the Middle East), Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iraq, Oman, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, and Yemen are all States Parties. China, India, Iran, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Lebanon, Myanmar, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), Pakistan, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Syria, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam are all States not party.

Africa is the second most affected region with 18 States and Western Sahara (the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic) remaining contaminated with anti-personnel mines. Angola, Cameroon, Chad, DR Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Zimbabwe are all States Parties to the APMBC. Egypt, Libya, Morocco are States not party; along with other area Western Sahara.¹

In Europe, 11 States and Kosovo and Nagorno-Karabakh are still mine-affected. The seven States Parties are: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Croatia, Cyprus, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine, as well as, with respect to the Falkland Islands/Malvinas, the United Kingdom. Affected States not party are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Russia, as well as other areas Kosovo and Nagorno-Karabakh.

In the Americas, only 5 States remain affected by anti-personnel mines: States Parties Argentina (Malvinas), Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, and State not party Cuba.

Table 1: Global Anti-Personnel Mine Contamination (at 1 October 2020)

States Parties		States not party	
Afghanistan	Nigeria**	Armenia	Lebanon
Angola	Oman	Azerbaijan	Libya
Argentina*	Palestine	China	Morocco
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Peru	Cuba	Myanmar
Cambodia	Senegal	Egypt	North Korea
Cameroon**	Serbia	Georgia	Pakistan
Chad	Somalia	India	Russia
Colombia	South Sudan	Iran	South Korea
Croatia	Sri Lanka	Israel	Syria
Cyprus	Sudan	Kyrgyzstan	Uzbekistan
DR Congo	Tajikistan	Lao People's Dem. Rep.	Vietnam
Ecuador	Thailand	22 states not party	
Eritrea	Turkey		
Ethiopia	Ukraine		
Iraq	United Kingdom	Other areas	
Mali**	Yemen	Kosovo	
Mauritania	Zimbabwe	Nagorno-Karabakh	
Niger		Western Sahara	
35 states parties		3 other areas	

* Argentina is mine-affected by virtue of its assertion of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands/Malvinas. The United Kingdom also claims sovereignty over the Islands and exercises control over them.

** Has not yet submitted a request to extend its already expired Article 5 deadline.

In addition, State Party Burkina Faso may also be contaminated by victim-activated improvised explosive devices (IEDs) which meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine. The UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) deployed to Burkina Faso in September 2019 and as part of its work was developing a consolidated IED incidents database.²

1 The Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic is considered a State by the African Union but not by the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), who is the depository of the APMBC.

2 Burkina Faso webpage, UNMAS, accessed 12 September 2020 at: bit.ly/2Feh1p2; and "Explosive Developments: The Growing Threat of IEDs in Western Niger", Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), 19 June 2019, at: bit.ly/35sZ6p0.

Table 2 below summarises what is known or reasonably believed about the extent of contamination in affected States Parties. It is therefore an assessment by Mine Action Review of the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination based on available evidence, as opposed to the claims of governments or mine action programmes, some of which do not stand up to scrutiny.

Table 2: Extent of Anti-Personnel Mined Areas in Affected States Parties (at 1 October 2020)

Massive (>100km ²)	Heavy (>20km ²)	Medium (2–20km ²)	Light (<2km ²) or extent of contamination unclear
Afghanistan	Angola	Argentina*	Cameroon**
Cambodia	BiH	Chad	Cyprus
Iraq	Thailand	Colombia	DR Congo
	Turkey	Croatia	Ecuador
	Yemen	Eritrea	Mali**
		Ethiopia	Mauritania
		Palestine	Niger
		Somalia	Nigeria**
		South Sudan	Oman
		Sri Lanka	Peru
		Sudan	Senegal
		Tajikistan	Serbia
		Ukraine	
		United Kingdom	
		Zimbabwe	

* Argentina is considered mine-affected by virtue of its assertion of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands/Malvinas. The United Kingdom also claims sovereignty over the Islands and exercises control over them.

** Has not yet submitted a request to extend its already expired Article 5 deadline.

Every State should establish a national baseline of contamination as soon as security permits. This is the basis for effective planning. A number of States, such as BiH and Senegal, still do not have a comprehensive baseline despite being party to the APMBC for more than two decades. Once a national baseline has been established, release by non-technical and technical survey is a critical focus. Such survey serves to confirm specific areas that contain mine contamination on the basis of evidence and significantly reduce the size of polygons from exaggerated estimates. Clearing suspected mined areas without also employing survey continues to occur with respect to far too many areas that prove to have no anti-personnel mines. Operators in Colombia reported that no contamination was found in up to 60% of all tasks cleared in 2019. Of the total anti-personnel mined area cleared in Cambodia, for instance, 43 minefields were cleared during the year totalling over 1.7km² of area but in which no anti-personnel mines were found.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES OF AN IMPROVISED NATURE

While use by States has almost ended globally,³ significant numbers of anti-personnel mines, especially, but not only, those of an improvised nature, continue to be laid by non-state armed groups in several States, including Afghanistan, Colombia, Yemen, and others.⁴

Improvised munitions are both captured by and prohibited under the APMBC whenever they are designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity, or contact of a person. It does not matter under the Convention how these weapons were produced or employed, nor by whom they were laid; if they fall within the jurisdiction or control of a State Party, all of the Convention's provisions apply. The obligations to clear mined areas and report on progress under Article 5 and Article 7, respectively, apply to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature just as they do to more conventionally manufactured landmines.⁵

The continued and perhaps increasing use of victim-activated IEDs meeting the definition of anti-personnel mines by non-State armed groups in the Sahel, especially the Lake Chad Basin, continues to cause harm to civilians.⁶ This contamination must be addressed under the framework of the Convention, in particular Article 5 with reporting under Article 7. Affected States Parties in this region could benefit from a regional workshop, such as under the auspices of the Convention's presidency of the meeting of States Parties, to discuss how best to report and address such devices in accordance with the Convention. Considerable additional guidance on how to address IEDs, including anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, has, though, already been incorporated into International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

3 State not party Myanmar is a notable exception.

4 Presentation by Lucy Pinches, Project Manager, Mine Action Review, Panel Discussion on Addressing Anti-Personnel Mines of an Improvised Nature under the Convention's Framework, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, 1 July 2020, at: bit.ly/2Fy0kEQ.

5 See Paragraph 6 of the 2019 Oslo Declaration, adopted by States Parties to the APMBC at the final plenary meeting on 29 November 2019 during the Fourth Review Conference of the Convention, at: bit.ly/2DFNrQY.

6 "Landmines, improvised explosive devices pose deadly risks for displaced in Sahel and Lake Chad", UNHCR, 28 July 2020, available at: bit.ly/3k4ltpo.

In February 2018, at its annual meeting in Geneva, the IMAS Review Board, which is chaired by UNMAS, recognised the requirement to provide affected States with improved guidance on how to deal with contamination from mines of an improvised nature as well as other IEDs while continuing to meet their reporting obligations, including under Article 7 of the APMBC.⁷ As part of the subsequent updates, a new, welcome edition of IMAS 05.10 on Information Management for Mine Action was published in March 2020, and now includes an annex outlining minimum data requirements for mine action.⁸ The minimum data requirements represent standardised guidance that clarifies what data needs to be collected by operators in all mine action programmes globally, to help improve and standardise reporting, including on anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.

Anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature are also firmly embedded in the Oslo Action Plan. Action Item 21 and monitoring of the corresponding indicator on “the number of States Parties that apply the provisions of the Convention to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature (for the purpose of this indicator: survey, clear and report)”⁹ will help elicit the extent to which these types of mines are being addressed correctly under the Convention.

STATES THAT HAVE COMPLETED ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CLEARANCE

Since 1997, clearance has been completed in 33 States (see Table 3), 32 of which are party to the APMBC, as well as in 1 other area (Taiwan). In March 2020, Chile became the latest State Party to report completion of clearance; it was expected to make a formal declaration of its completion at the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2020. As also noted above, Mauritania was on this achievement list last year but has since reported newly discovered mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and is seeking a new extension to its Article 5 deadline. Twelve of the States that completed clearance are from Africa; nine are from Europe; seven are from the Americas; and five are from Asia (including the Pacific and the Middle East). Nepal is the only State not party to have completed mine clearance on its territory.

Table 3: States Having Completed Clearance Since 1999

Albania	Costa Rica	Guatemala	Mozambique ¹⁰	Tunisia
Algeria	Denmark	Guinea-Bissau	Nicaragua	Uganda
Bhutan	Djibouti	Honduras	North Macedonia	Venezuela
Bulgaria	France	Hungary	Palau*	Zambia
Burundi	The Gambia	Jordan	Rwanda	
Chile	Germany	Malawi	Suriname	Nepal ¹¹
Republic of Congo	Greece*	Montenegro*	Swaziland	

* States Parties not listed on the AMPBC Implementation Support Unit (ISU)'s list, “States Parties That Have Completed Article 5”, at: bit.ly/30xgu9r, presumably because they did not officially report having mined areas under the APMBC and/or have not made a formal declaration of fulfilment of their clearance obligations under the Convention.

By 2021, both Argentina and the United Kingdom should be added to the list, following expected completion of clearance in the Falkland Islands/Malvinas.

CLEARANCE IN 2019

Globally, reported clearance in 2019 covered 131km², with the destruction of almost 164,000 anti-personnel mines and nearly 39,700 anti-vehicle mines (including mines destroyed during spot tasks). Of this, 126.3km² (96%) was cleared from 27 of 36 States Parties as summarised in Table 4 below. The largest extent of clearance in a single State (39km²) took place, for the second year running, in Croatia. But only 2,530 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in the process, implying that huge swathes of land were cleared that in fact contained no landmines. In contrast, in Turkey, 25,957 anti-personnel mines were destroyed during clearance of only 0.7km², while in Zimbabwe, 38,947 landmines were destroyed during clearance of 2.8km², plus a further 84 mines in spot tasks, demonstrating the very high density of contamination in these two countries. Despite major armed conflict, in 2019 Afghanistan still managed to clear 28km², destroying in the process more than 7,800 anti-personnel mines.

⁷ Presentation by Rory, Rory Logan, Secretary of the IMAS Review Board and Advisor IHL and Policy, GICHD, Panel Discussion on Addressing Anti-Personnel Mines of an Improvised Nature under the Convention's Framework, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, 1 July 2020, at: bit.ly/32lt2kY.

⁸ IMAS 05.10 on Information Management for Mine Action, IMAS, available at: bit.ly/3bRGIaP.

⁹ Oslo Action Plan, Action Item number 21 Indicator.

¹⁰ Mozambique has four very small suspected mined areas that remain underwater.

¹¹ State not party to the APMBC.

The 131km² of anti-personnel mined area cleared in 2019 was a decrease on the 155km² cleared the previous year, and was the lowest annual output in more than ten years. However, the almost 164,000 anti-personnel mines and 39,700 anti-vehicle mines destroyed in 2019 were considerably more than destruction in 2018 when 153,800 anti-personnel mines and 38,700 anti-vehicle mines were destroyed. The increase may indicate better targeted and more efficient clearance in 2019.

No clearance was recorded or reported for 2019 (although some may have occurred) in eight States Parties: Cameroon, Cyprus, DR Congo, Eritrea, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, and Senegal. A small amount of mined area was, however, cancelled through non-technical survey in Cyprus and reduced through technical survey in Senegal.

Table 4: Anti-Personnel Mine Clearance in 2019

States Parties	Area cleared in 2019 (km ²)	AP mines destroyed (including spot tasks)	Comparison to 2018 clearance (+/-km ²)	Comment
Afghanistan	28	7,807	- 2.9	
Angola	1.6	2,012	+ 0.6	
Argentina	N/A	N/A	N/A	
BiH	0.5	963	- 0.4	
Cambodia	20.9	8,476	- 20.1	
Cameroon	0	0	0	Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Chad	0.4	0	+ 0.4	
Chile	0.6	4,093	- 0.4	
Colombia	0.8	325	- 0.2	
Croatia	39.2	2,530	- 9.2	
Cyprus	0	0	0	
DR Congo	N/R	N/R	N/R	Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Ecuador	0*	62	0*	*Ecuador cleared 2,899m ² of mined area in 2019, equivalent to less than half the size of an average professional football pitch. In 2018, 14,068m ² was cleared.
Eritrea	N/R	N/R	N/R	Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Ethiopia	1.8	128	+ 0.7	
Iraq	15.7*	14,253	+ 7.3	*Conservative estimate of clearance output as a result of a lack of reliable reporting by the authorities.
Mali	0	0	0	Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Mauritania	0	0	0	
Niger	0*	199	0	*Niger cleared 11,500m ² of mined area in 2019, its first mine clearance for three years. Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Nigeria	N/R	N/R	N/R	Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Oman	0.1	0	+0.1	
Palestine	0*	106	0	*Palestine cleared 13,976m ² of mined area in 2019 and 5,221m ² in 2018. Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Peru	0.1	1,113	0.1	
Senegal	0	0	0	Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Serbia	0.6	22	+ 0.3	

Somalia	1.8	274	+ 0.2	
South Sudan	1	437	- 1.1	
Sri Lanka	2.9*	20,302*	- 0.6*	* Estimate based on a combination of operator and national authority data. Had yet to submit an Article 7 report (covering 2019), as at 1 October 2020.
Sudan	0.9	1	- 0.1	
Tajikistan	0.5	5,254	- 0.1	
Thailand	0.1	2,713	- 0.4	
Turkey	0.7	25,959	- 0.5	
Ukraine	0.7*	12*	+ 0.3*	* Based on available operator data. Clearance output not reported by Ukraine.
United Kingdom	3.6	319	+ 2.1	* Includes land reduced through technical survey, as the United Kingdom does not disaggregate land released through technical survey from land released through clearance in its reporting.
Yemen	1	1,536*	+ 0.9	* Based on UNDP data.
Zimbabwe	2.8	39,031	+ 0.7	
Sub-total (States Parties)	126.3	137,927		
Sub-total (States not party and other areas)	4.7	26,039		
Grand Totals	131.0	163,966	- 24	

N/R = Not reported

In addition, in each of States not party Azerbaijan and China 1km² was cleared (the figure for China is a low estimate). In Israel, 0.6km² was cleared, while in Lebanon 0.5km² of area was cleared, with the destruction of 25,101 anti-personnel mines. In Morocco, an estimated 0.5km² was cleared (23 anti-personnel mines destroyed),¹² and in Georgia, 0.4km² was cleared (342 anti-personnel mines destroyed). Clearance in other areas Kosovo, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Western Sahara was of 0.3km² (21 anti-personnel mines destroyed), 0.2km² (114 anti-personnel mines destroyed), and 0.1km² (4 anti-personnel mines destroyed) respectively.

Total global clearance for 2019 in States not party and other areas was only 4.7km², although clearance data were not available in many instances. Despite not being party to the APMBC, every State not party has obligations under international human rights law to clear landmines as soon as possible in order to protect life. Many do not take this obligation seriously.

ARTICLE 5 IMPLEMENTATION

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, each of the 35 mine-affected States Parties has a specific deadline within which it must complete clearance of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas within its sovereign territory or in other areas under its jurisdiction or control. When a State adheres to the Convention, it must fulfil this obligation *as soon as possible*, but not later than 10 years from becoming a State Party. If it is unable to do so, it must seek and be granted an extension period of up to 10 years prior to the expiry of the deadline in order to remain compliant with the Convention. Three of the thirty-five affected States Parties – Cameroon, Mali, and Nigeria – had no obligations under Article 5 previously and their respective original 10-year Article 5 deadlines had already expired. However, conflict has resulted in suspected or confirmed mined areas on their territory arising through use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, by non-state armed groups. These three States should provide

more information in their Article 7 reports and submit Article 5 deadline Extension Request to remain within Treaty compliance while possible anti-personnel mined areas exist and until they can survey and if confirmed, clear them. As mentioned previously, State Party, Burkina Faso may also have contamination from anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, in which case it too should seek a new Article 5 deadline and report under Article 7.

As of 1 October 2020, only Oman, Palestine, Somalia, and Sri Lanka were still within their respective original 10-year deadline. All other States Parties had either been granted one (or more) extension periods or were in violation of the Convention. Table 5 summarises the Article 5 deadlines for all affected States Parties. Those whose deadline has expired are marked in bold.

¹² In its voluntary Article 7 report covering 2019, Morocco reported "clearance" of a total area of 301km², with the destruction of 23 anti-personnel mines, 21 anti-vehicle mines, and 511 items of ERW.

Table 5: Article 5 Deadlines for Affected States Parties

State Party	Article 5 Deadline	State Party	Article 5 Deadline
Afghanistan	1 March 2023	Nigeria	1 March 2012
Angola	31 December 2025	Oman	1 February 2025
Argentina	1 March 2023	Palestine	1 June 2028
BiH	1 March 2021*	Peru	31 December 2024
Cambodia	31 December 2025	Senegal	1 March 2021*
Cameroon	1 March 2013	Serbia	1 March 2023
Chad	1 January 2025	Somalia	1 October 2022
Colombia	1 March 2021*	South Sudan	9 July 2021*
Croatia	1 March 2026	Sri Lanka	1 June 2028
Cyprus	1 July 2022	Sudan	1 April 2023
DR Congo	1 January 2021*	Tajikistan	31 December 2025
Ecuador	31 December 2022	Thailand	31 October 2023
Eritrea	31 December 2020**	Turkey	1 March 2022
Ethiopia	31 December 2025	Ukraine	1 June 2021*
Iraq	1 February 2028	United Kingdom	1 March 2024
Mali	1 March 2009	Yemen	1 March 2023
Mauritania	1 January 2021*	Zimbabwe	31 December 2025
Niger	31 December 2020*		

States Parties in bold have expired deadlines and should request a new deadline to address contamination from anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.

* Extension to the deadline formally requested.

** No extension to the deadline formally requested as at 1 October 2020.

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING ARTICLE 5

There have been many notable achievements in clearing mined areas since the entry into force of the APMBC in 1999. But progress in implementing Article 5 has been disappointing and far too slow in too many affected States Parties. In Chad, Ecuador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Niger, Senegal, and Turkey, in particular, years went by either without meaningful clearance or indeed, in several cases, without any clearance at all. The duty to clear anti-personnel mines from mined areas *as soon as possible* is a substantive international legal obligation.

Table 6 summarises progress by affected States Parties in implementing their Article 5 obligations. It assesses whether they are on target to meet their respective deadline for completion of clearance and recommends actions to speed up the release of mined areas. As the Table illustrates, only Oman, Peru, Serbia, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom/Argentina, and Zimbabwe appear to be on track to meet their respective Article 5 deadline. Aside from these seven States, all other affected States Parties will either need to seek further extensions to their deadlines or they are already in violation of their Article 5 obligations.

Table 6: Progress in Implementing Article 5 Obligations

State Party	Article 5 Deadline	Status of progress	Implementation priorities
Mali	1 March 2009	Needs Article 5 deadline extension and to submit annual Article 7 report, including information on anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.	Mali needs to request a new Article 5 deadline. It should formally establish a mine action programme headed by a senior official and seek further assistance from the international mine action community, including demining NGOs.
Nigeria	1 March 2012	Needs Article 5 deadline extension and to submit annual Article 7 report, including information on anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.	Nigeria needs to request a new Article 5 deadline. It should formally establish a mine action programme headed by a senior official.
Cameroon	1 March 2013	Needs Article 5 deadline extension and to submit annual Article 7 report, including information on anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.	Cameroon needs to request a new Article 5 deadline. It should formally establish a mine action programme headed by a senior official.
Eritrea	31 December 2020 (interim deadline)	In violation. No Article 5 deadline extension requested as of writing.	Eritrea needs to request a further extension to its Article 5 deadline and return to compliance with the Convention by clearing mined areas and reporting formally on progress.
Niger	31 December 2020	Article 5 deadline extension requested to 31 December 2024	Niger should seek to ensure that the forthcoming extension period is its last. It should sustain the clearance operations that restarted in mid 2019 after a two-year hiatus.
DR Congo	1 January 2021	Article 5 deadline extension requested to 1 July 2022	DR Congo should seek to ensure that the forthcoming extension period is its last. DR Congo should elaborate a timeline for survey of remaining suspected hazardous areas, in addition to implementing its planned clearance.
Mauritania	1 January 2021	Article 5 deadline extension requested to 1 January 2022	Mauritania should proceed with all speed to undertake an assessment of the mined areas it has newly reported, following consultation with Morocco and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic if required.
BiH	1 March 2021	Article 5 deadline extension requested to 1 March 2027	BiH needs to overhaul and strengthen all aspects of its mine action programme: legal, managerial, operational, and strategic. The newly established country coalition with Germany, which aimed at bringing together the authorities, donors, and key stakeholders could be one mechanism to support the necessary transformation and improve coordination.
Colombia	1 March 2021	Article 5 deadline extension requested to 31 December 2025	The national mine action centre, Descontamina Colombia, should task operators in a manner that ensures the best use of resources and prioritises the highest impact areas. Operators should also be supported to use the full toolbox of land release methodologies.
Senegal	1 March 2021	Article 5 deadline extension requested to 1 March 2026; compliance in question	Senegal needs to overhaul and strengthen all aspects of its mine action programme: legal, managerial, operational, and strategic. An in-country platform bringing together the authorities, donors, and key stakeholders could be one mechanism to support the necessary transformation and strengthen coordination.
Ukraine	1 June 2021	Article 5 deadline extension requested to 1 December 2023	Ukraine should adopt and implement mine action legislation without delay, enabling it to formally establish a national mine action authority and a functioning national mine action centre to manage survey and clearance of anti-personnel mines.
South Sudan	9 July 2021	Article 5 deadline extension requested to 9 July 2026	South Sudan needs to significantly increase the pace of clearance of anti-personnel mined areas if it is to meet its extended Article 5 deadline.
Turkey	1 March 2022	Will need to seek Article 5 deadline extension in 2021	Turkey should expand large-scale survey and clearance of border and non-border areas.
Cyprus	1 July 2022	Will need to seek Article 5 deadline extension in 2021	Cyprus and Turkey should facilitate clearance of all remaining anti-personnel mined areas inside and outside the Buffer Zone.

State Party	Article 5 Deadline	Status of progress	Implementation priorities
Somalia	1 October 2022	Will need to seek Article 5 deadline extension in 2021	Somalia should commit resources for mine action operations and establish a national baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination as soon as security conditions allow.
Ecuador	31 December 2022	Will likely need to seek an Article 5 deadline extension in 2022; compliance in question	Ecuador should significantly increase the pace of clearance, dedicating the necessary resources to ensure far greater land release each year.
Afghanistan	1 March 2023	Will need to seek Article 5 deadline extension in 2022	The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) should review land release standards and practices to encourage greater application of non-technical and technical survey to confirm and release mined area.
Argentina	1 March 2023	On track	None.
Serbia	1 March 2023	Just on track	Serbia should consider using its armed forces for mine clearance or inviting demining NGOs to help meet its Article 5 obligations by 2023. The Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) should conduct non-technical and technical survey routinely, as part of efficient land release.
Yemen	1 March 2023 (interim deadline)	Will need to seek Article 5 deadline extension in 2022	Mired in conflict, with large-scale new use of anti-personnel mines, Yemen needs to develop its mine action capacity, increase cooperation with international demining organisations and continue emergency clearance until a new baseline survey is possible.
Sudan	1 April 2023	Will likely need to seek extension in 2022	Sudan should complete its baseline survey as soon as possible and ensure that evidence-based survey is conducted prior to clearance, to avoid clearance of uncontaminated areas.
Thailand	31 October 2023	Not on track	Thailand should seek to conclude a bilateral cooperation mechanism with Cambodia that would enable both countries to survey and clear all mined areas along the shared border.
United Kingdom	1 March 2024	On track	The United Kingdom should continue the pace of land release operations and complete clearance of remaining mined areas in the Falkland Islands as soon as possible.
Peru	31 December 2024	On track	Peru should survey its outstanding mined areas to develop a more accurate baseline and release areas without anti-personnel mine contamination.
Chad	1 January 2025	Not on track	Chad needs to overhaul and strengthen all aspects of its mine action programme: legal, managerial, operational, and strategic. An in-country platform bringing together the authorities, donors, and key stakeholders could be one mechanism to support the necessary transformation and strengthen coordination.
Oman	1 February 2025	On track	Oman should ensure it conducts land release operations according to international standards, applying non-technical and technical survey to confirm contamination prior to clearance, whenever possible.
Angola	31 December 2025	Not on track	In accordance with Articles 1 and 5 of the APMBBC, Angola should ensure the destruction of anti-personnel mines in all mined areas, including those in and around military installations.
Cambodia	31 December 2025	Not on track	Cambodia should seek to conclude a bilateral cooperation mechanism with Thailand that would enable both countries to survey and clear all mined areas along the shared border.
Ethiopia	31 December 2025	Not on track	Ethiopia should re-survey the Somali region to establish an up-to-date and accurate baseline of contamination. Ethiopia should ensure the re-established national mine action authority has the resources to sustain an effective mine action programme and ensure the mobilisation of resources to complete clearance.
Tajikistan	31 December 2025	Not on track	The Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) should expedite planning and conduct of accelerated survey to establish a clear national baseline of contamination.

State Party	Article 5 Deadline	Status of progress	Implementation priorities
Zimbabwe	31 December 2025	Just on track	Zimbabwe should increase efforts to secure additional national and international funding to meet its 2025 clearance completion deadline.
Croatia	1 March 2026	Not on track	Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC should increase its survey capacity and ensure that survey is conducted to confirm evidence of mines before embarking on full clearance. The Ministry of Defence should ensure sufficient capacity is in place and should significantly increase clearance to release mined areas on military land.
Iraq	1 February 2028	Not on track	Iraq needs to overhaul and strengthen all aspects of its mine action programme: legal, managerial, operational, and strategic. An in-country platform bringing together the authorities, donors, and key stakeholders could be one mechanism to support the necessary transformation and strengthen coordination.
Palestine	1 June 2028	Not on track	Palestine should continue to engage positively with all stakeholders to promote progress in mine clearance and survey.
Sri Lanka	1 June 2028	On track	The National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) should conduct survey/re-survey in mine-contaminated districts to ensure that every effort is made to identify remaining mined areas and include them in its completion strategy.

States Parties in bold have expired deadlines and should request a new deadline to address contamination from anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.

Based on the rate of current progress, the likelihood is thus that, by the time of the next APMBC Review Conference due to take place in late 2024, more than 25 States Parties will still be affected by anti-personnel mined areas.

COMPLETION OF CLEARANCE BY 2025

The Third APMBC Review Conference in Maputo set 2025 as a target for a world free of anti-personnel mines. The Fourth APMBC Review Conference in Oslo in November 2019 reiterated this aim, with States Parties declaring that they “aspire to meet these goals to the fullest extent possible by 2025.”¹³ Yet, as we have seen, worryingly few affected States Parties are on track to meet the goal of completing clearance by the end of 2025. With five years still available to achieve this target, many States Parties could still fulfil their Article 5 obligations by the end of 2025, but it will require strong national ownership, elaboration of concrete action plans, application of efficient land release methodology, and sufficient and sustained funding through to completion.

Each year that passes in which affected States Parties fail to make meaningful progress to release mined areas, is a missed opportunity and takes us further from the collective 2025 goal the mine ban community committed to in Maputo in 2014 and recommitted to in Oslo in 2019.

Mine Action Review believes that the establishment of in-country national mine action platforms that strengthen coordination and enable open and regular dialogue among all mine action stakeholders will play an important part in supporting several affected States Parties to reach fulfilment of Article 5. To date, only a handful of such forums exist, but we hope that Action Item 44 of the Oslo Action Plan incentivises other affected States Parties to establish them.

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

To help affected States Parties and their partners focus their capacity building and technical assistance efforts on areas of weakness, and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of survey and clearance programmes, a performance scoring system is used by Mine Action Review. The scoring criteria were developed in consultation with the Mine Action Review’s Advisory Board Members (The HALO Trust, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), and Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA)), and with input from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), including the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP).

Mine Action Review assesses mine action programme performance in affected States Parties according to a set of seven core criteria: Understanding of contamination; National ownership and programme management; Gender and diversity; Information management and reporting; Planning and tasking; Land release system; and Land release outputs and Article 5 compliance. In the scoring, additional weighting is accorded to Understanding of contamination; Land release system; and Land release outputs and Article 5 compliance. An average is then calculated that determines the overall score. A score of 8 or more is ranked Very Good. A score of 7.0–7.9 is ranked Good. A score of 5.0–6.9 is ranked Average. A score of 4.0–4.9 is ranked Poor. A score of less than 4 is ranked Very Poor.

¹³ Oslo Declaration, para. 15.

The text box on pages 14-15 outlines the seven programme performance criteria and key factors in detail. The results of the scoring for 2019 are summarised in Table 7. The country-specific assessments of the seven criteria, which should be viewed alongside the Recommendations for Action, are intended as an implementation tool, offered in the spirit of openness and constructive dialogue, to assist States Parties to identify and overcome challenges and fulfil their Article 5 obligations as efficiently as possible.

The highest score was recorded by Chile, which significantly increased land release during 2019 and early 2020, culminating in its announcement that it had completed clearance before the expiry of its Article 5 deadline of 1 March 2020. Also ranked Very Good for the first year was Zimbabwe, which has strong national ownership and which increased its clearance output by 30% from the previous year. Close behind with an increased score in 2019 was the United Kingdom, whose combined clearance and release through technical survey of more than 3.8km² in 2019 has brought it within touching distance of fulfilment of its Article 5 obligations.

Another strong performer was Angola, whose ranking as rated Good for the first time, while Peru also increased its score significantly, reflecting a significant rise in clearance in 2019. Overall, two mine action programmes were ranked Very Good; six were ranked Good; twelve were ranked Average; six were ranked Poor; and three were ranked Very Poor. Seven States Parties were not ranked: Argentina, Cyprus, and Palestine (not assessed due to issues related to jurisdiction or control of mined areas); Mauritania (not assessed due to the fact it only reported the discovery of new mine contamination in 2020); and Cameroon, Mali, and Nigeria (not assessed due to insufficient information available to assess performance in 2019).

Table 7: Mine Action Programme Performance in Selected States Parties

State Party	Ranking	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Change in Score
Afghanistan	Good	7.0	7.0	0
Angola	Good	7.0	6.3	+ 0.7
BiH	Average	5.9	6.0	- 0.1
Cambodia	Good	7.0	6.8	+ 0.2
Chad	Poor	4.5	3.9	+ 0.6
Chile	Very Good	8.1	6.4	+ 1.7
Colombia	Poor	4.6	4.4	+ 0.2
Croatia	Average	6.3	6.8	- 0.5
DR Congo	Average	5.1	4.9	+ 0.2
Ecuador	Poor	4.5	4.9	- 0.4
Eritrea	Very Poor	2.7	2.7	0
Ethiopia	Average	5.2	4.9	+ 0.3
Iraq	Average	5.1	4.9	+ 0.2
Niger	Poor	4.1	3.7	+ 0.4
Oman	Average	5.3	5.0	+ 0.3
Peru	Average	5.6	4.3	+ 1.3
Senegal	Very Poor	3.8	3.9	- 0.1
Serbia	Average	6.1	6.0	+ 0.1
Somalia	Poor	4.6	4.6	0
South Sudan	Average	6.8	6.5	+ 0.3
Sri Lanka	Good	7.0	7.4	- 0.4
Sudan	Average	6.5	6.8	- 0.3
Tajikistan	Average	6.3	6.3	0
Thailand	Good	7.1	7.0	+ 0.1
Turkey	Average	6.3	6.2	+ 0.1
Ukraine	Very Poor	3.9	4.0	- 0.1
United Kingdom	Good	7.9	7.1	+ 0.8
Yemen	Poor	4.0	4.0	0
Zimbabwe	Very Good	8.0	7.8	+ 0.2
Average Scores		5.7	5.5	+ 0.2

The three States Parties ranked Very Poor were Eritrea, Senegal, and Ukraine. Eritrea is in violation of the APMBC for failure to report on and seemingly conduct any clearance for five years. Senegal's compliance with the Convention remains in doubt and it must determine a better baseline of mine contamination and start clearing confirmed mined areas. Ukraine's progress in demining has been very disappointing, with coordination by the national authorities hampered by its failure to put in place legislation needed to establish the required infrastructure for an effective mine action programme.

Mine Action Review Criteria to Assess National Programme Performance of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention

Criterion	Key Factors Affecting Scoring
UNDERSTANDING OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Has a national baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination been established and is it up to date and accurate? ■ If no national baseline, or only a partial or inaccurate baseline, exists, is survey and/or re-survey being conducted or is it planned? ■ Are anti-personnel mined areas disaggregated from areas with other types of explosive ordnance (e.g. anti-vehicle mines or explosive remnants of war (ERW))? ■ Is contamination from anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature included in the national baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination? ■ Is anti-personnel mine contamination classified into suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) and confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), based on whether there is indirect or direct evidence of emplaced anti-personnel mines respectively? ■ Is there a high ratio of CHAs to SHAs?
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is there a national entity, such as a national mine action authority, overseeing mine action? ■ Is there a national mine action centre coordinating operations? ■ Are the roles and responsibilities in mine action clear and coherent within the national programme? ■ Is the mine action centre adequately staffed and skilled? ■ Are clearance operators involved in key decision-making processes? ■ Does national legislation, or other suitable administrative measures, effectively underpin the mine action programme? ■ Have the authorities created an enabling environment for mine action? ■ Has the government facilitated the receipt and efficient use of international assistance? ■ Is there political will for timely and efficient implementation of Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC)? ■ Does the affected State contribute national resources to support the cost of the mine action centre and/or survey and clearance of anti-personnel mined areas? ■ Does the affected State have a resource mobilisation strategy in place for Article 5 implementation?
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the national mine action programme have a gender policy and implementation plan? Do the main mine action operators have one? ■ Is gender mainstreamed in the national mine action strategy and national mine action standards? ■ Are women and children in communities affected by mined areas consulted during survey and community liaison activities? ■ Are survey and community liaison teams inclusive and gender balanced, to facilitate access and participation by all groups, including women and children? ■ Are the needs of women and children in communities affected by mined areas taken into account in the prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance activities? ■ Are ethnic or minority groups in communities affected by mined areas consulted during survey and community liaison activities? ■ Do survey, clearance, and community liaison teams include representatives from different ethnic or minority groups, to facilitate access and participation by all groups? ■ Are the needs of ethnic or minority groups in communities affected by mined areas taken into account in the prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance activities? ■ Is relevant mine action data disaggregated by gender and age? ■ Is there equal access to employment for qualified women and men in survey and clearance teams, including for managerial level/supervisory positions?

Criterion	Key Factors Affecting Scoring
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is there a national information management system in place (e.g. IMSMA), and is the data accurate and reliable? ■ Are data collection forms consistent and do they enable collection of the necessary data? ■ Is data in the information management system disaggregated by type of contamination and method of land release? ■ Is the data in the information management system accessible to all operators? ■ Are ongoing efforts being made to ensure or improve the quality of data in the mine action database? ■ Does the affected State Party to the APMBC submit accurate and timely annual Article 7 reports on Article 5 progress? ■ Are Article 5 extension requests of a high-quality and submitted in a timely manner? ■ Is the survey and clearance data reported by the affected State Party (e.g. in Article 7 reporting) accurate and disaggregated by type of contamination (i.e. anti-personnel from anti-vehicle mines) and method of land release? ■ Does the affected State Party report on progress in Article 5 implementation at the intersessional meetings and Meetings of States Parties, and is reporting accurate and consistent between reporting periods?
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is there a national mine action strategy in place and does it include realistic goals for land release? ■ Is there a realistic annual work plan in place for land release? ■ Are there agreed and specified criteria for prioritisation of tasks? ■ Are key stakeholders meaningfully consulted in planning and prioritisation? ■ Is clearance of anti-personnel mines tasked in accordance with agreed prioritisation? ■ Are task dossiers issued in a timely and effective manner? ■ Where relevant, is there a plan for dealing with residual risk and liability? Is it realistic and sustainable?
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Does the affected State have national mine action standards in place for land release? ■ Do the standards enable or impede efficient evidence-based survey and clearance? ■ Are national standards reflected in SOPs? ■ Are standards and SOPs periodically reviewed against IMAS and international best practice, in consultation with clearance operators? ■ Is there an effective and efficient: i) non-technical survey capacity, ii) technical survey capacity, iii) clearance capacity in the programme? Does this include national capacity? ■ Are areas being cleared that prove to have no anti-personnel mine contamination? ■ Where relevant, is there national survey and clearance capacity in place to address anti-personnel mine contamination discovered after the release of mined areas or post completion? ■ Is there an appropriate range of demining assets (manual, mechanical, and animal detection systems) integrated into land release operations? ■ Is there an effective quality management system in place for survey and clearance operations? ■ Where an accident has occurred within a mine action programme was there an effective investigation? Were lessons learned shared between operators?
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Is the affected State seeking to clear all anti-personnel mine contamination from territory under its jurisdiction or control, including anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, border minefields, anti-personnel mine contamination in and around military installations, hard to access minefields etc.? ■ Have national mine action authorities set a target date for the completion of anti-personnel mine clearance and is this within the State Party's Article 5 deadline? ■ Is the target date for completion realistic based on existing capacity? ■ Is the target date sufficiently ambitious? ■ What were the outputs of survey and clearance of anti-personnel mined area in 2019, and were they greater or lesser than the previous year and why? ■ Are survey and clearance outputs in line with plans and Article 5 obligations? ■ Are anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, if present, included in the clearance plans and operations? ■ Is the affected State on track to meet the target completion date and/or Article 5 deadline?

THE OSLO ACTION PLAN

The year 2019 was an important one for the APMBC, marking 20 years since its entry into force. The Fourth Review Conference of the Convention was held in Oslo on 25–29 November 2019. The anniversary represented an opportunity to take stock of the huge progress in Article 5 implementation over the last two decades, but also of lessons learned and challenges in implementation.¹⁴

Of particular concern is the slow pace of survey and clearance in too many States Parties, including requests for repeated Article 5 deadline extensions by those with relatively limited contamination. In many cases, States Parties could have fulfilled their Article 5 obligations within the initial 10-year clearance deadline, had there been sufficient commitment to do so, supported by evidence-based work plans for the release of mined areas, application of efficient survey and clearance methodology, and sufficient and sustained funding.

Under Norway's presidency of the Review Conference and in collaboration with States Parties, mine action NGOs, and other expert organisations, the five-year Oslo Action Plan (OAP) was elaborated. The OAP is a blueprint for implementation of the Convention, supporting States Parties and their implementing partners get to completion in the best way possible – efficiently, effectively, safely, and inclusively.

For the first time, the Action Plan has action items with measurable indicators. This aims to establish a baseline of the current status of implementation against which progress will be measured year-on-year up to the next Review Conference in 2024. It is essential for national authorities to have the systems in place to support implementation of the Treaty and of the OAP. This means ensuring that the obligations in Article 5 and the guidance provided by the OAP are integrated into national strategies, annual work plans, information management systems, and national mine action standards. National ownership, the subject of the first Action Item, is critical to successful Article 5 implementation.¹⁵

Action Item 49 of the OAP includes an additional measure to help ensure compliance, calling upon States Parties to provide detailed information on implementing Article 5 each year through submitting Article 7 reports (as the Convention requires) and during meetings of States Parties. If a State Party implementing Article 5 (or Articles 3 and 4) has not provided information for two consecutive years, “the President will assist and engage with the States Parties concerned in close cooperation with the relevant Committee”.¹⁶

MONITORING THE OSLO ACTION PLAN

Members of the Coordinating Committee and the President of the APMBC will be responsible for establishing a baseline value for the OAP and measuring progress in implementing the OAP within their mandates, with the support of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU). The information submitted in the States Parties' annual Article 7 reports will serve as the main source of data to assess progress.

In addition to the official APMBC monitoring of the OAP, Mine Action Review is also providing civil society monitoring and analysis of the implementation of the OAP actions relating to survey and clearance. This is based on our broader research, which includes not only official treaty reporting (Article 7 reports and official government statements and updates under the Convention), but also liaison with national authorities, clearance operators, UNMAS, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the GICHD.

This year's baseline results of Mine Action Review's 2020 monitoring of survey and clearance related indicators can be found on the Mine Action Review website. They include a guide describing the Oslo Action Plan action items and indicators relevant for survey and clearance, along with supporting commentary on the meaning and importance of each action item, with regards to efficient and effective Article 5 implementation.

The results of Mine Action Review's 2020 baseline assessment will be finalised following the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties on 16-20 November 2020. Mine Action Review welcomes feedback from States Parties and other stakeholders on the results of the provisional assessment. Please email MineActionReview@npaid.org with any feedback or additional information for Mine Action Review's consideration.

As the provisional 2020 baseline of current progress illustrates, States Parties have not yet fully implemented the action items and indicators applicable to them. But the hope is that through the efforts of national authorities, with the support of implementing partners, they can identify where there are gaps and make progress in addressing them, which will then be reflected in progress in the indicators each year between now and the Fifth Review Conference in 2024.

14 Lucy Pinches and Stuart Casey-Maslen, “Clearing under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention”, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Occasional Papers – No. 34, *The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention: 20 Years of Saving Lives and Preventing Indiscriminate Harm*, 2019, p. 43, at: bit.ly/357fxXY.

15 The States Parties have defined national ownership as entailing the following: “maintaining interest at a high level in fulfilling Convention obligations; empowering and providing relevant State entities with the human, financial and material capacity to carry out their obligations under the Convention; articulating the measures its State entities will undertake to implement relevant aspects of Convention in the most inclusive, efficient and expedient manner possible and plans to overcome any challenges that need to be addressed; and making a regular significant national financial commitment to the State's programmes to implement the Convention”, Oslo Action Plan.

16 Oslo Action Plan, Action Item number 49.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The mine action community is also rightly seeking to strengthen performance in areas which were not adequately covered in the initial Convention text in 1999, including the importance of ensuring gender- and diversity-sensitive mine action programming. Norway, during its presidency of the Fourth Review Conference, established a civil society Gender Working Group¹⁷ that supported the presidency and States Parties to successfully ensure that a gender perspective was applied into the implementation of the Convention. Importantly, this has been embedded in the treaty machinery and each Committee (including the Committee on Article 5 Implementation) is mandated to appoint a focal point among its members to provide advice on gender mainstreaming and ensure that the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities are taken into account in the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan.

In this year's research, Mine Action Review has seen an improvement in the availability and quality of information on gender provided by national authorities and their implementing partners, compared to last year when we started to ask questions related to the gender sensitivity of mine action programmes for the first time. Furthermore, in this year's assessment of programme performance for 2019, Mine Action Review has also assessed diversity alongside gender, as initially intended. While we have received some information on measures national authorities are taking to consider diversity in mine action programming, the information received on diversity has lagged behind that on gender. It is essential that diversity is also mainstreamed within mine action programmes, alongside gender, especially in mine-affected countries where conflict has been on ethnic grounds.

INNOVATION

In a number of affected States Parties and States not party, demining operators have shown a welcome commitment to innovation. Action 27 of the Oslo Action Plan adopted at the Fourth APMBC Review Conference called on States Parties to "Take appropriate steps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance, including by promoting the research, application and sharing of innovative technological means to this effect".

In September 2020, Humanity and Inclusion (HI) won a European Union Horizon Prize for Affordable High-Tech for Humanitarian Aid, for its "Odyssey2025" project. The project in Chad uses drones equipped with infrared cameras to locate mines buried in the desert, accelerating the pace of clearance and release of land to local populations.¹⁸

In 2019, The HALO Trust introduced a new mechanical vegetation cutter in Ukraine, one of the latest in the mine action sector's use of commercial and bespoke mechanical assets to increase the efficiency of survey and clearance. The quaintly named "Robocut" has quadrupled the productivity of manual clearance in areas that have only an anti-personnel tripwire-threat. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) (colloquially called drones) were used by Norwegian People's Aid and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMACH) for non-technical survey during the country-wide assessment of mined areas. In Abkhazia, HALO has developed and deployed bespoke operational methods to clear heavy rubble and unexploded ordnance (UXO). It has found that reinforced armouring of mechanical assets and the use of drones to map and identify hazardous items has increased its programme's effectiveness and efficiency.

MAG has developed an urban approach model, which involves threat assessment, analysis of high-level satellite imagery (such as urban gridding and categorisation, changes to building structure over time, remote battle damage assessments, rubble signature identification using machine learning, land use analysis, and 3D modelling), and a supporting IM platform. The approach, funded by the Netherlands, will be used by MAG in Iraq and is based on MAG's experience from urban settings together with the GICHD threat assessment model. It is envisaged that this approach will help in the planning and prioritisation of survey and clearance efforts in complex urban environments, including in areas where conflict is ongoing or security levels do not yet permit deployment of teams into the area.

Finally, Fenix Insight, a UK-based mine action company, has developed a valuable online repository for IMAS. All of the normative references in the IMAS ("shall", "should", and "may") have been incorporated in a searchable database at <https://mineaction.net>. The IMAS, which were developed collaboratively by experts in the sector, have continued to evolve throughout the 20 years of the APMBC, to capture and promote minimum good practice (including, crucially on Land Release). They serve as an invaluable tool for helping national authorities develop their own national standards and Fenix's online repository makes the IMAS more accessible than ever, providing a valuable tool for the mine action sector.

17 The Gender Working Group is chaired by The HALO Trust and MAG, and other members of the group include Dan Church Aid (DCA), GICHD, Humanity and Inclusion (HI), International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), Mine Action Review, Mines Action Canada, and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA).

18 HI, "European Union awards HI two prizes for its innovative projects", available at: bit.ly/33fkbC3.

STATES PARTIES

The background consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various shades of orange and red. The shapes are primarily triangles and quadrilaterals, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The colors range from a bright, vibrant orange to a deep, dark red, with some areas appearing as a mix of these colors due to the transparency.

AFGHANISTAN



CLEARING THE MINES 2020

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2023
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

MASSIVE, 150 KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

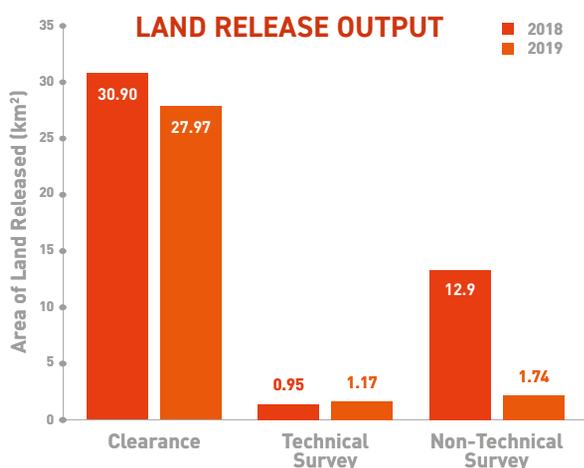
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

27.97 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

7,807

(INCLUDING 334 DESTROYED
IN SPOT TASKS)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The amount of land released in 2019 dipped from the previous year although by a slightly smaller percentage than the drop in international donor funding. The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) introduced a national standard for clearing mines of an improvised nature (called "Abandoned Improvised Mines" (AIMs)) in March 2019 and focused more attention on their survey and clearance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- DMAC should review land release standards and practices to encourage greater application of non-technical survey/cancellation and technical survey/area reduction.
- Afghanistan should revise and update its Article 5 deadline extension request to provide a timeline to take account of lower levels of donor funding and the additional challenge of mines of an improvised nature.
- The Afghan government should provide funding to mine action, particularly in areas where survey and clearance facilitate priority national development projects.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	7	Afghanistan has a good, if still incomplete, knowledge of pre-2001 anti-personnel mine contamination but continues to add significant amounts of previously unrecorded mined area to the database. There is only rudimentary knowledge of post-2001 contamination, including improvised mines, which may now be more extensive in extent and pose the main threat to civilians.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	8	The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) completed its transition to national management in 2018 but DMAC salaries are largely donor funded and the government has not yet made a significant financial contribution to the programme. A modest payment pledged in 2019 was received in 2020 and was followed by a pledge of further government funding for clearance.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	DMAC mainstreamed gender and diversity in its 2016–2020 strategic plan. Practice in implementing partners lags behind formal commitment to the goals while custom in deeply conservative Afghan society limits the extent of women's recruitment, particularly in operations. Two female teams who conducted demining in Bamyán were reassigned to battle area tasks in the same province; women have not been able to work as deminers elsewhere. Mixed-gender explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and survey teams are, however, working across the country.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	8	8	DMAC has an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation database that provides a range of reports and extensive disaggregated information. DMAC continues to work with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) preparing to upgrade to IMSMA Core and to adopt new mobile data gathering technologies. Operators say DMAC's data entry can be slow. Afghanistan routinely submits comprehensive Article 7 transparency reports though often late. National operators are not proactive reporting on their operations.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	8	8	Afghanistan produced a model extension request in 2012 and although funding shortfalls and insecurity ensure the MAPA will not achieve its objectives DMAC produced detailed work plans in consultation with operators that seek to address emerging challenges.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	The MAPA has national mine action standards in Dari and English that are subject to regular review and in 2019 it introduced new standards for clearance of mines of an improvised nature. Land release is achieved almost entirely by full clearance and DMAC consulted the GICHD with a view to increasing operational efficiency.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	7	The MAPA has released an average of more than 25km ² a year through clearance over the last five years and reached that level again in 2019 despite financial and security challenges.
Average Score	7.0	7.0	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority
- Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC)
- Agency for Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation in Afghanistan (AREA)
- Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA)
- Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA)
- Mine Detection and Dog Centre (MDC)
- Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation (OMAR)
- 22 commercial companies accredited in 2019, one company (Trust Demining Company) reported active in anti-personnel mine clearance

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Demining Group (DDG)
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)
- The HALO Trust (HALO)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Afghanistan had more than 207km² of contamination by conventional and improvised anti-personnel mines at the end of 2019 (see Table 1), making it among the world's most heavily mined countries.¹ A definitive understanding of the extent of its contamination remains elusive due to conflict that continues to restrict survey while also adding contamination by mines of an improvised nature.

Table 1: Mined area by type of contamination (at end 2019)²

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total areas	Area (m ²)
Anti-personnel mines	1,662	119,920,460	179	50,902,554	1,841	170,823,014
Improvised mines	218	15,565,719	42	21,222,215	260	36,787,934
AP mine total	1,880	135,486,179	221	72,124,769	2,101	207,610,948
Anti-vehicle mines	936	164,455,642	327	146,561,256	1,263	311,016,898
Totals	2,816	299,941,821	548	218,686,025	3,364	518,627,846

CHAs = Confirmed Hazardous Areas SHAs = Suspected Hazardous Areas

Afghanistan reported anti-personnel mine contamination dating from before 2001 at 170.8km² at the end of 2019 (see Table 1), down from 178km² a year earlier as a result of land released through survey and clearance during 2019. DMAC also reported a total of 36.8km² of improvised mine contamination. These estimates, however, significantly understate levels of contamination.

In the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline extension request that Afghanistan submitted in 2012 it proposed to conduct non-technical survey in all 400 of the country's districts. By the end of 2016, it had completed surveying 295 districts but suspended the project due to funding shortfalls and insecurity, leaving 105 remaining to be surveyed. Since then, some surveyed districts have additional contamination as a result of continued fighting and there is little doubt that districts that have yet to be surveyed will add further contamination to the database.³

Table 2: Pre-2001 anti-personnel mined area by region (at end 2019)⁴

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total CHA/SHA	Total Area (m ²)
Central	415	26,332,126	35	4,852,466	450	31,184,592
East	124	11,830,306	5	534,900	129	12,365,206
North	216	7,596,773	9	2,451,375	225	10,048,148
North East	616	41,362,130	15	8,965,142	631	50,327,272
South	83	11,376,468	60	8,977,770	143	20,354,238
South East	146	11,388,016	30	5,750,344	176	17,138,360
West	62	10,034,641	25	19,370,557	87	29,405,198
Totals	1,662	119,920,460	179	50,902,554	1,841	170,823,014

Most mines emplaced in recent years are improvised devices, which now pose a greater humanitarian threat than factory-made anti-personnel mines.⁵ The conflict in which they are being used has also prevented an accurate determination of the extent of improvised contamination but DMAC is clear that it far exceeds the 36.8km² so far recorded in the database (see Table 3). Afghanistan reported in May 2019 that an area of 465km² may be affected by abandoned improvised mines.⁶

Table 3: Abandoned improvised mine contamination by region (at end 2019)

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total CHA/SHA	Total area (m ²)
Central	2	591,675	0	0	2	591,675
East	59	1,514,384	10	374,585	69	1,888,969
North	2	988,874	0	0	2	988,874
North East	15	355,271	7	99,231	22	454,502
South	138	12,116,490	25	20,748,399	163	32,864,889
Totals	216	15,566,694	42	21,222,215	258	36,788,909

Most of Afghanistan's known mine contamination resulted from the decade-long war of resistance that followed the Soviet invasion of 1979, the 1992–96 internal armed conflict, and the 1996–2001 fighting between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. The intervention of the United States (US)-led coalition in late 2001 added considerable quantities of unexploded ordnance (UXO). Continuing conflict between the government and the Taliban and other armed groups is still adding contamination.⁷

In addition to the challenge from landmines, Afghanistan contends with huge areas affected by explosive remnants of war (ERW). DMAC reported total mine and ERW contamination of 1,603km² remaining at the end of 2019, of which it said nearly two-thirds occurred after 2001. It included North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) firing ranges covering 630km².⁸

DMAC has also identified 299km² of what it designates as “initial hazardous areas”. Most areas were subjected to a form of rapid survey at the request of the National Security Council but need further survey before they can be recorded as SHAs or CHAs. More than 60% of the total area is attributed to ERW but it includes 63km² of suspected AIM contamination located largely in the south, 6km² of anti-personnel mined area located largely in central provinces, and 48km² of anti-vehicle mined area, almost entirely located in the south.⁹

NEW CONTAMINATION

DMAC added 56km² of previously unrecorded ERW contamination to its database as a result of survey in 2019. It included nearly 21.7km² of anti-personnel or mixed mine contamination, almost entirely dating back to before 2001 and 3.2km² of abandoned improvised mines resulting from recent conflict.¹⁰

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), originally established in 1989, is led by DMAC, which comes under the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority. DMAC fulfils the role of a national mine action centre. From its headquarters in Kabul and seven regional offices, DMAC manages and coordinates the work of national and international implementing partners.

DMAC provides strategic planning and annual work plans, sets priorities and standards, accredits operators, conducts quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC), manages the mine action database, and conducts resource mobilisation. It coordinates closely with operators through technical working groups that address planning and priority setting, survey, mechanical clearance, risk education, and victim assistance. In 2018 a separate technical working group was set up to deal with AIMS.¹¹

The MAPA is nationally managed but in 2019 remained almost entirely internationally funded. Since 2012, it has transitioned from being a project of the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to national management, a process formally completed with the transfer of the last positions from UNMAS to DMAC in June 2018. The government paid salaries of 13 members of DMAC's total staff of 144 people. Most of the remainder are paid by UNMAS with 27 paid by the International Trust Fund.¹² The government earmarked a payment of AFS 20 million (approximately US\$250,000) for a humanitarian mine clearance project for the first time in 2019 but lengthy bureaucratic procedures meant the funding was not received until 2020.¹³ The government pledged additional funding of about US\$500,000 in 2020 for demining operations in Nangahar province's Achin district.¹⁴

UNMAS continued to support DMAC in 2019 employing 32 national and 3 international staff in 2019 providing technical advice, training, and capacity building. It expected to add two more international and one national staff in 2020. It also remained a major channel of funding, providing US\$17.4 million to the MAPA through the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) for projects including survey, clearance, quality assurance, and risk education. UNMAS reported advising DMAC on developing standards for survey and clearance of AIM and co-hosted with HALO Trust a workshop in Kabul on non-technical survey of AIM-affected areas. It conducted workshops in Kabul covering operational planning, conflict sensitivity training, and mainstreaming gender in mine action and a series of workshops on negotiating humanitarian access held in Kabul, Kandahar, and Mazar-e-Sharif. It also led an overhaul of explosive ordnance risk education.¹⁵

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) provided third party monitoring of all mine action and conventional weapons disposal projects funded by the US Department of State working with 18 staff, including 6 internationals. In 2019, it monitored 15 contracts worth approximately US\$13 million: 1 grant for non-technical survey and 14 other grants for non-technical survey and clearance.¹⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The MAPA has had a policy of including gender in mine action since 2014 and set gender mainstreaming as one of four goals of its 2016–20 strategic plan. It states that “achievable targets, reflecting prevailing circumstances and conditions, will be adopted to support and encourage progress wherever possible.”¹⁷

Progress appears to be slow. DMAC employed only four women among its staff of 194 as of the middle of 2019 while the MAPA employed only 167 women out of a total workforce of 6,772.¹⁸ Women work in operational as well as administrative roles but employing women in field operations in particular remains challenging in Afghanistan’s deeply conservative society. Female deminers were employed for the first time in 2018 but operate in only one province, Bamyan. Mixed-gender explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and survey teams are, however, working across the country.

The gender strategy and Afghanistan’s national mine action standards (AMAS) for community liaison underscore the importance of including women and girls as well as boys and men in non-technical survey, and pre- and post-clearance impact assessments and for equal access to employment for women. The strategy called for implementing partners (IPs) to identify forums in which to access under-represented groups, including women and girls, and to ensure data collection and reporting was disaggregated for gender and age.¹⁹ The AMAS also refer to the importance of consulting representatives of different groups, such as tribal and religious leaders.²⁰ Explosive ordnance risk education teams are required to include a female and male trainer but deploying women as deminers has so far been achieved only in one province, Bamyan, because of cultural sensitivities.²¹

DMAC has a technical working group on gender and diversity working with IPs to promote implementation. DMAC’s review of IP project proposals also ensures gender issues are considered in operational planning. It operates a hotline taking calls from affected communities which it said also allows interests of minorities to be taken into account.²²

Converting policy into practice, however, remains a challenge. DMAC’s gender focal point resigned in October 2018 and the post remained vacant for almost a year. The next appointee stayed half a year before leaving for personal reasons at the end of March. Similar issues hold back progress among IPs. DMAC reported that IPs did not have a dedicated gender focal point and constantly rotated the role among staff with other duties.²³

For Danish Demining Group (DDG) – the first and only IP to employ female deminers – women made up 61 of its 487 staff (12%). DDG increased its female demining component from one team of eight to two teams totalling sixteen, plus two women paramedics in 2019. The teams worked in Bamyan and after completing demining were assigned to battle area clearance of firing ranges in the same province.²⁴ DDG employed another 29 women as risk educators and facilitators, four as community engagement officers, and two as QA officers, along with five cleaners and a cook.²⁵ The Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD), working in the remote north-eastern province of Badakshan, said local religious tradition prevented it from employing any women.²⁶

The HALO Trust’s end-year staff of 2,521 included 23 women and it anticipated a slight increase in their number in 2020. HALO employed women in mixed-gender quick-response teams, risk education, and impact monitoring, but also underscored social and cultural challenges to women working in the field. In HALO Afghanistan’s head office and regional offices women also worked in information management, donor relations, and finance. Its field surveys contain specific questions to ensure inclusion of different groups in the community.²⁷

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

DMAC operates an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) NG database and continued working with the GICHD in 2019 on cleaning up data as well as preparing to upgrade the database to IMSMA Core. DMAC expected the transfer to be completed in 2021.²⁸ DMAC also worked with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) on installing the Mine Action Reporting System (MARS), a mobile system designed for data entry in the field. DMAC conducted two workshops with UNMAS and IPs to introduce the system, which was due to go into service after IPs completed field testing in 2020. DMAC had planned to introduce a cloud-based data warehouse in 2020 but reported the project was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁹

Afghanistan consistently submits comprehensive Article 7 reports and DMAC’s information department produces a range of monthly, quarterly, and annual reports as well as reports on request and maps.³⁰ DMAC also holds monthly data coordination meetings which IPs said had resulted in improvements, but that entry of survey and clearance data continued to be slow because of a shortage of trained information management staff in DMAC.

Afghanistan continues to measure the progress of mine clearance and international funding that supports it against targets set in its Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in April 2012. The request earned praise as a model for its comprehensive overview of all aspects of Afghanistan’s response to explosive hazards, including milestones for clearance. After seven years of the extension period, Afghanistan had received 71 per cent of projected funding³¹ and corresponding clearance targets were in need of updating to match financial circumstances.

PLANNING AND TASKING

The national strategic plan for 2016–20 reaffirms Afghanistan's broad commitment to the APMB and implementing its Article 5 obligations, but has four broad goals: facilitating development; engaging with other sectors and government departments to have them include mine action in their development plans; preventive action to reduce the impact of mines and ERW, including by enhanced resource mobilisation, completing survey of all communities, explosive ordnance risk education, and keeping its extension request work plan on track; and gender and diversity mainstreaming.³²

DMAC's annual work plan sets more specific targets according to priorities determined by a matrix of indicators that takes account of blockages caused by contamination, proximity to communities, and device types. For Afghan year 1398 (1 April 2019–30 March 2020), DMAC targeted release of 44.7km² of pre-2001 mine and ERW contamination, non-technical survey of 29 districts, and post-demining impact assessments in 85 contaminated areas, along with 12 livelihood surveys.³³

In 2020, DMAC's priorities for survey included areas where casualties occurred, with a focus on improvised mine casualties and districts where fighting raised the likelihood of explosive hazards. DMAC planned to focus more clearance resources on abandoned improvised mines.³⁴ The HALO Trust cleared a number of areas of improvised mines in 2019 as a pilot project and together with other IPs carried out training in survey and clearance in preparation for operations on a larger scale.³⁵ DMAC targets for 2020 included release of 19.5km² of areas affected by AIMS, 40km² affected by anti-personnel mines, and 45km² by anti-vehicle mines.³⁶

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The MAPA has comprehensive national mine action standards that DMAC reviews annually and amends in consultation with IPs.

The GICHD noted in a 2019 capacity assessment that DMAC is "proactive in introducing new AMAS as and when needed" but had not updated them regularly. It noted that most of the AMAS were developed between 2011 and 2013 and some chapters needed to be reviewed and updated to promote greater efficiency.³⁷ DMAC and the GICHD are due to review land release standards and are expected to undertake revisions to strengthen non-technical survey and increase operational efficiency.

DMAC introduced a policy and standing operating procedure (SOP) for environmental protection in mine action in 2018, and in 2019 Afghanistan became the first country programme to release a standard for tackling mines of an improvised nature. AMAS 06.10, Abandoned Improvised Mine Clearance, was released in March 2019 emphasising the neutrality of humanitarian mine action. The standard requires operators to get prior written consent from local authorities and other "key local stakeholders", including armed opposition groups, and confirmation by the party that laid devices that they are abandoned and that clearance may proceed. It stipulates clearance should take place only in a rural or semi-rural setting. All action to neutralise AIMS should be conducted remotely or semi-remotely, and where possible devices should be destroyed in situ.³⁸

DMAC also updated AMAS 03.02 for planning and prioritisation in 2019, among other points developing procedures for IPs seeking to alter projects they have started.³⁹ HALO Trust was due to deliver an AIM survey and clearance training course for national IPs in 2020 covering basic and advanced non-technical survey; basic, intermediate and advanced clearance; a train-the-trainer course; and an AIM QM course for DMAC personnel.⁴⁰

The very high percentage of land released through full clearance – consistently around 90% of total land release – has called into question the efficiency of the MAPA's land release practices. A GICHD assessment in 2019 observed that the emphasis on costs-per-square-metre cleared in tendering and contractual arrangements did not encourage operators to apply the full range of land release options, including survey. It recommended operations should be based on stronger evidence-based decision-making and that a review of land release applications should probe the reasons for the high percentage of full clearance and consider possible alternatives. To increase efficiency, it also recommended standardised training in non-technical survey and technical survey.⁴¹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Mine survey and clearance are conducted mainly by six national and three international IPs. The MAPA operated with a total of 346 operational teams in 2019: 204 manual clearance teams, 33 mechanical clearance teams, 40 survey teams, 35 explosive ordnance risk education teams, 31 teams conducting explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and weapons and ammunition disposal, and 3 victim assistance teams. DMAC reported total manpower of 7,050 engaged in all areas of mine action in 2019 (including risk education and victim assistance) and expected the number to rise in 2020.⁴²

After a big expansion in capacity in 2018, DDG employed a total staff of 487, including 324 in operations, conducting survey and clearance in eight provinces, including Bamiyan, Baghlan, Balkh, Kabul, Kunar, Nangarhar, Panjshir, and Samangan. DDG was the only IP employing women deminers, deploying two teams in Bamiyan province, but also had 29 women working as risk education instructors.⁴³

FSD worked in remote northern Badakhshan province bordering Tajikistan with total capacity of 53 staff in 2019. This consisted of two teams accredited for non-technical survey, EOD, and mine clearance, and one risk education team. Despite the small size of the operation it clears large numbers of the small Soviet-era Butterfly mines that contaminate the area. FSD teams travel cross-border from Tajikistan to reach their operating area and because of logistical and access difficulties for DMAC staff FSD is quality assured by the Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre.⁴⁴

The HALO Trust remained much the biggest operator in Afghanistan although the total number of employees decreased from 2,885 staff at the start of the year to 2,521 at the end, mainly because of the end of a five-year United Kingdom-funded contract. In the process, the number of manual demining teams fell from 75 teams to 54 with a total of 1,474 deminers. HALO also finished the year with 17 survey/EOD teams and 21 mechanical teams. It expected further staff cuts as other UK funding came to an end in 2020.⁴⁵

HALO, however, was increasing capacity to address Afghanistan's AIM contamination. It increased the number of multi-task AIM teams conducting survey, EOD, and risk education from two in 2018 to twelve by the end of 2019. It also combined with two national IPs, Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA) and Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA), in setting up 11 mixed gender and multi-task quick response teams to undertake non-technical survey, risk education, EOD call-outs, small task clearance, and the collection of victim data. The teams help planning and project design by confirming hazardous areas and reporting on local security conditions and other issues that may affect access.⁴⁶

National IPs did not respond to requests for details of their operations and results.

DEMINER SAFETY

DMAC reported one deminer killed and six injured in demining accidents in 2019. It attributed the casualties to carelessness, weakness in command group supervision, and attempts to accelerate clearance. One civilian was injured by a mine detonation in a location that had been cleared in 2017 and another was killed by an unspecified ERW in an area cleared in 2018.⁴⁷

The biggest threat to deminers remained insecurity which blocked access to many areas. The MAPA reported 22 security incidents in 2019 in the course of which three deminers were killed and a fourth was injured. DMAC said the three deminers who died were killed in an airstrike while working on their land. Fourteen deminers were abducted as part of extortion attempts by armed groups but later released unharmed after negotiations by community elders.⁴⁸ Most abduction incidents appear to involve extortion attempts by Taliban demanding payment of taxes. HALO Trust reported five such incidents but said they were resolved without payment for release of people or equipment.⁴⁹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Afghanistan released a total of 30.9km² of mined area through survey and clearance in 2019, 9% less than the previous year but close to the level maintained in the last four years. Clearance accounted for 90% of the total area released in 2019, underscoring the limited contribution of cancellation and reduction to land release in Afghanistan.⁵⁰

SURVEY IN 2019

DMAC reported release of a total of 2.9km² through cancellation and area reduction in 2019, but discrepancies between results reported by DMAC and some IPs left uncertainty about the exact extent of the land released.⁵¹

DMAC's data attributed release of 1.74km² to cancellation through non-technical survey (see Table 4), a sharp reduction from 2018 when 12.9km² was cancelled, mainly as a result of resurvey by HALO Trust quick response teams which accounted for 11km² of the total. A further 1.17km² was released in 2019 through area reduction (see Table 5).⁵²

The MAPA changed the focus of non-technical survey in 2019. A workshop in March 2019 concluded that the Mine/ERW Impact Free Community Survey (MEIFCS) included in Afghanistan's Article 5 deadline extension request should be shelved because of mounting obstacles to implementation posed by lack of funding and shrinking access.⁵³ DMAC instead concentrated non-technical survey in 2019 on two projects. The biggest, targeting 30 districts in 14 provinces, aimed to capture explosive ordnance contamination resulting from combat and did not address landmines. The second, concentrated on central, eastern, north-eastern, and southern regions, aiming to record contamination by both improvised and "legacy" mines.⁵⁴

HALO Trust said its quick response teams resurveyed large SHAs and CHAs converting them into smaller polygons and in the process achieving significant cancellation and area reduction. HALO said its teams cancelled 700,469m² in seven provinces in 2019, down from a little over 1km² the previous year, but it released 2.56km² through area reduction compared with 0.2 km² reduced in 2018, more than half of it in four districts of northern Samangan province.⁵⁵

Table 4: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁵⁶

Operator	Province	Area cancelled (m ²)
ATC	Parwan	1,339
DAFA	Baghlan	5,000
DMAC	Baghlan	1,027
HALO	Baghlan, Farah, Ghazni, Kapisa, Nuristan, Partika, Paktia, Parwan	999,749
MCPA	Helmand, Maydan Wardak, Sari Pul, Zabul	726,487
OMAR	Parwan	2,000
Total		1,735,602

Table 5: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁵⁷

Operator	Province	Area reduced (m ²)
ATC	Baghlan	58,120
DAFA	Baghlan, Kapisa	20,467
DDG	Baghlan, Balkh, Bamyan, Kabul, Nangarhar, Panjshir	313,637
HALO	Baghlan, Kabul, Laghman, Panjshir, Parwan	546,173
MCPA	Zabul	75,782
OMAR	Baghlan, Kabul, Kapisa, Logar, Parwan	151,439
Total		1,165,618

CLEARANCE IN 2019

DMAC reported that IPs released 27.9km² through clearance in 2019 (see Table 6), nearly 10% below the 2018 level. National IPs together cleared 43% of the total, releasing 12.1km². HALO Trust accounted for almost half the area released. In the process, IPs also destroyed fewer anti-personnel mines: 7,452 through clearance and 334 in roving EOD tasks for a total of 7,786 mines destroyed in 2019 compared with a total of 8,859 in 2018. DMAC attributed the outcome in part to sparser levels of contamination as clearance progresses to remoter minefields.⁵⁸

In addition, HALO and DAFA conducted small-scale clearance of AIMS in southern Afghanistan releasing 84,972m² and destroying 21 items. DAFA cleared 25,677m² in Helmand province reportedly destroying 1 AIM. HALO worked in Helmand and Ghazni provinces, clearing around 59,295m² and 20 devices.

Table 6: Mine clearance in 2019⁵⁹

Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Area	269,055	29	0	22
ATC	4,964,011	429	18	279
DAFA	2,708,707	265	3	290
DDG	1,748,687	450	0	696
FSD	326,751	1,090	0	68
HALO Trust ⁶⁰	13,710,302	4,771	0	439
MCPA	1,329,584	25	0	46
OMAR	2,885,086	393	0	289
SDC	22,195	0	0	0
TDC	8,642	0	0	0
Totals	27,973,020	7,452	21	2,129

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the 10-year extension granted by States Parties in 2013), Afghanistan is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2023. Afghanistan will not meet this deadline.

Afghanistan set out detailed timelines for completing clearance of all ERW in its first Article 5 extension but will need to request a second extension to its Article 5 deadline in 2022. As one of the world's most heavily mine contaminated countries it will not complete clearance by 2025 either. Continuing conflict also leaves Afghanistan unable realistically to set a target for completion.

The key obstacles remain unchanged:

- Since starting the extension period, Afghanistan has never received the levels of funding required to achieve its targets. In 1398 (April 2019-March 2020), the MAPA received \$45.3 million, less than half the amount targeted. For Year 1399, donors had committed to provide around \$24 million as of February 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic has added uncertainty to funding prospects.
- Conflict limits access for survey and clearance teams, preventing an accurate determination of the extent of contamination and adding additional explosive hazards.
- Insecurity means that even in areas where clearance continues, access often requires lengthy negotiation with local communities and armed opposition groups, particularly in relation to clearance of abandoned improvised mines.

Table 7: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	27.97
2018	30.90
2017	28.12
2016	27.12
2015	13.44
Total	127.55

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Afghanistan's national mine action strategy makes no provision for tackling residual contamination. The issue is not a priority given the high levels of remaining contamination but the GICHD is recommending DMAC plan to include it in the next MAPA strategy.⁶¹ The GICHD observed that further support was needed to develop definitions and approaches to residual risk management.

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- 1 Email from Fazel Rahman, Project Manager Operations, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 2 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 28 April 2020.
- 3 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 The United Nations identified 650 civilian casualties (including 275 killed and 365 injured) caused by pressure-plate devices in 2019. UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict 2019, Report, 22 February 2020.
- 6 Statement of Afghanistan, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 23 May 2019.
- 7 See, e.g., reports that armed opposition groups mined the highway linking Kabul and Ghazni during fighting in August 2018: "Intense fighting as Taliban presses to take Afghan city", Reuters, 12 August 2018.
- 8 MAPA Fast Facts, Quarterly Update for 4th quarter of Afghan year 1397 (April 2018 – March 2019).
- 9 Emails from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 28 April and 3 June 2020.
- 10 This included 18.4km² of anti-personnel mines and 3.2km² of mixed mine contamination.
- 11 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, DMAC, 3 April 2019.
- 12 Emails from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February and 12 July 2020.
- 13 Ibid. The funding was allocated for clearance of a total of 403,423m² in two districts of south-eastern Khost province.
- 14 Email from Mohammed Shafiq Yousufi, DMAC, 20 July 2020.
- 15 Email from Sohaila Hashemi, Communications and Advocacy Officer, UNMAS, 13 May 2020.
- 16 Email from Mats Hektor, Senior Technical Adviser – EOD, NPA, 22 April 2020.
- 17 DMAC, "National Mine Action Strategic Plan 1395–1399 (2016–2020)", State Ministry for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, undated but 2016, p. 17.
- 18 GICHD, Integrated Capacity Assessment Report, 5 July 2019 (draft), p. 19. DMAC reported that at the end of 2019 it employed 144 staff and total manpower of MAPA humanitarian IPs amounted to 6,338. Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 19 DMAC, "Gender mainstreaming strategy of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan", undated but 2013, pp. 3–9.
- 20 GICHD, Integrated Capacity Assessment Report, 5 July 2019 (draft), p. 17.
- 21 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Emails from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February and 3 June 2020.
- 24 Email from Mohammed Shafiq Yousufi, DMAC, 20 July 2020.
- 25 Email from Daniel Bertoli, Head of Programme – Afghanistan, DDG, 6 April 2020.
- 26 Email from Peter Smethers, Country Director, FSD, 9 April 2020.
- 27 Email from Farid Homayoun, Country Director, HALO Trust, 27 May 2020.
- 28 Emails from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February and 28 April 2020.
- 29 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 28 April 2020.
- 30 GICHD, Integrated Capacity Assessment Report, 5 July 2019 (draft), p. 16.
- 31 MAPA, Annual Operational Work Plan 1398 (April 2019–March 2020), Version 4, Graph 2, p. 6. The extension request projected funding totalling US\$479 million in the first seven years of the plan, receipts totalled US\$338 million.
- 32 DMAC, "National Mine Action Strategic Plan 1395–1399 (2016–2020)", State Ministry for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, undated but 2016, pp. 2–5.
- 33 DMAC, "Annual Operational Work Plan 1398", undated but 2019, pp. 1–2.
- 34 Interview with Mohamad Shafiq Yosufi, Director, DMAC, in Geneva, 12 February 2020.
- 35 Email from Calvin Ruysen, Head of Region – Afghanistan, Middle East, North Africa, HALO Trust, 24 June 2019.
- 36 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 37 Ibid., p. 7.
- 38 Afghanistan Mine Action Standards, AMAS 06.10, March 2019, p. 5.
- 39 Emails from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February and 28 April 2020.
- 40 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO Trust, 27 May 2020.
- 41 GICHD, Integrated Capacity Assessment Report, 5 July 2019 (draft), pp. 7–9, 28.
- 42 Emails from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February and 19 July 2020.
- 43 Email from Daniel Bertoli, DDG, 6 April 2020.
- 44 Emails from Peter Smethers, FSD Iraq, 9 April 2019 and 24 April 2020.
- 45 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO Trust, 27 May 2020.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO Trust, 27 May 2020.
- 50 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 51 DDG reported cancelling a little over 121,000m² through non-technical survey in seven provinces that was not recorded in DMAC data. HALO Trust reported cancelling 700,469m² through non-technical survey and reducing 2,563,192m² through technical survey.
- 52 Emails from Fazel Rahman, DMAC 25 February and 3 June 2020.
- 53 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO Trust, 27 May 2020.
- 56 Email from Fazel Rahman, DMAC, 25 February 2020.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 HALO Trust reported clearance of 15,616,340m² of anti-personnel mined area in 2019.
- 61 GICHD, Integrated Capacity Assessment Report, 5 July 2019 (draft), p. 17.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2025
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

HEAVY, 30 KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

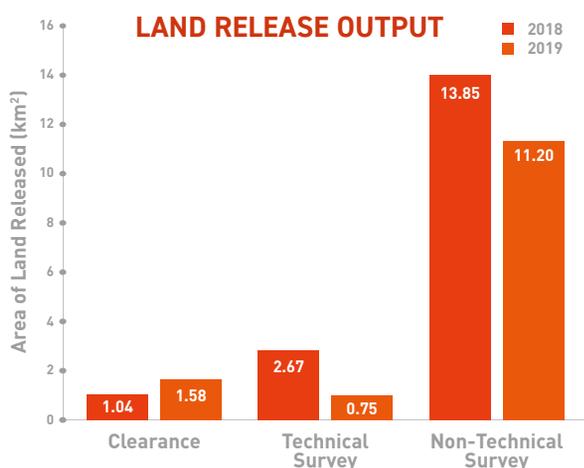
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

1.58 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

2,012

(INCLUDING 69 DESTROYED
DURING SPOT TASKS)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Angola completed non-technical survey of all 18 provinces in 2019 and now has its most accurate baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination to date. Clearance increased significantly in 2019 compared to the previous year. There was an overall decrease in land release output, but this is expected as productivity increasingly results from clearance and technical survey rather than large amounts of cancellation through non-technical survey. Angola launched its National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025 and an accompanying Article 5 implementation work plan, both developed under the lead of the National Intersectoral Commission on Demining and Humanitarian Assistance (CNIDAH), with clear targets for land release and planned completion of clearance by 2025. Continued improvement was also made to information management, throughout 2019 the database was reconciled, updated, and quality assured. But while funding in 2019 increased after years of decline, Angola still does not have the requisite funding or capacity to meet its clearance goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Angola should ensure that there are no data discrepancies between the 2018 and 2019 anti-personnel mine contamination figures.
- Angola should accelerate the integration of mine action data from the Executive Commission for Demining (CED) into the CNIDAH national database.
- Angola should finalise its resource mobilisation strategy increasing its international advocacy to attract new and former donors.
- In light of its new National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, Angola should include measurable gender and diversity targets in its Article 5 implementation work plan.
- Angola should operationalise its new system of prioritisation, planning, and tasking of operations.
- The Government of Angola should mobilise financial resources for CNIDAH's quality management capacity to allow it to function effectively across provinces.
- Angola should ensure that no taxes are imposed on equipment imported by international operators to carry out mine action operations.

- Angola should complete the comprehensive review of its National Mine Action Standards (NMAS).
- Angola should establish a national strategy on the management of residual contamination.
- In accordance with Articles 1 and 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), Angola should ensure the destruction of anti-personnel mines in all mined areas under its jurisdiction or control, including mines in and around military installations.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	8	8	Angola has now completed its nationwide re-survey of anti-personnel mine contamination and there is a high ratio of confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), from 11% of the total in 2018 to 96% in 2019. However, there is a discrepancy of 3.5km ² in total anti-personnel mine contamination between 2018 and 2019 that cannot be explained by the figures provided for land release, data clean-up, and additional contamination.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	4	Tensions between the government entities responsible for mine action (CNIDAH and the CED) have lessened significantly, but issues remain with coordination and information sharing between the two bodies. Coordination between CNIDAH and operators has improved with the re-establishment of mine action and donor coordination meetings (four were held in 2019). There is still a significant funding shortfall but, in 2019, the government of Angola demonstrated its commitment to mine action by pledging \$60 million of funding to an international operator over five years to clear land for conservation and eco-tourism.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	5	Gender and diversity are included as a cross-cutting issue in Angola's new National Mine Action Strategy but there are no outcomes or targets related to gender or diversity in the work plan.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	6	Significant improvements have been made to the CNIDAH's national database in 2019 through data reconciliation and quality assurance, staff training, and monthly data sharing meetings with operators. The database can now be considered a more reliable source of information following years of problems with information management in Angola. Some issues remain, though, as progress on integrating mine action data with the CED stalled in 2019.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	6	In 2019, Angola launched a new National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025 and accompanying Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025. The strategy presents clear land release objectives and a frank discussion of the challenges. However, annual projections are unlikely to be met without a significant increase in funding and capacity. CNIDAH has acknowledged that its tasking, prioritisation, and planning procedures are inadequate and plans to introduce a new system for Angola.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	National mine action standards (NMAS) are in the process of being reviewed and an NMAS Review Board and Technical Working Group have been established. Quality management continues to be a challenge, with a lack of financial resources impacting on capacity at CNIDAH.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	8	7	Overall land release fell in 2019, as minefields are now more well defined and there was a decrease in survey output. Clearance rose significantly compared to 2018. Lack of funding continues to be the main challenge for Angola to meet its 2025 Article 5 deadline. Angola does not yet have plans in place to manage residual contamination but aims to establish a national strategy and build capacity.
Average Score	7.0	6.3	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- CNIDAH (Comissão Nacional Intersectorial de Desminagem e Assistência Humanitária)
- Executive Commission for Demining (Comissão Executiva de Desminagem, CED)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- National Demining Institute (Instituto Nacional de Desminagem, INAD)
- Angolan Armed Forces,
- Military Office of the President

- Police Border Guard (under the CED)
- The Association of Mine Professionals (APACOMINAS) (NGO)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- APOPO
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- The HALO Trust
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at the end of 2019, according to CNIDAH, a total of 1,054 anti-personnel mined areas with an estimated size of just over 88km² remained to be addressed in 18 provinces (see Table 1). This includes almost 85km² across 981 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and just over 3.2km² across 73 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs).¹

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end 2019)²

Province	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
Bengo	55	3,440,820	0	0	3,440,820
Benguela	48	2,537,111	0	0	2,537,111
Bié	105	5,514,496	0	0	5,514,496
Cabinda	27	1,230,321	0	0	1,230,321
Huambo	0	0	1	12,890	12,890
Huíla	17	3,339,594	0	0	3,339,594
Kuando Kubango	231	17,913,343	0	0	17,913,343
Kunene	33	2,575,367	0	0	2,575,367
Kwanza Norte	23	5,520,135	0	0	5,520,135
Kwanza Sul	125	9,819,486	2	413,999	10,233,485
Luanda	9	1,121,211	0	0	1,121,211
Lunda Norte	47	1,733,252	10	143,913	1,877,165
Lunda Sul	46	7,569,410	20	1,095,145	8,664,555
Malange ³	0	0	0	0	0
Moxico	177	11,135,049	39	1,211,994	12,347,043
Namibe	2	155,100	0	0	155,100
Uíge	18	1,365,290	1	360,000	1,725,290
Zaire	18	9,823,000	0	0	9,823,000
Totals	981	84,792,985	73	3,237,941	88,030,926

This is a 34km² reduction in the overall amount of anti-personnel mined area from the 122km² reported at the end of 2018. There has also been a shift in the amount of contamination reported as CHAs from 11% of total anti-personnel mine contamination in 2018 to 96% in 2019.⁴ During 2019, in addition to the 13.5km² of land released through survey and clearance, approximately 18km² was removed from the national database through data reconciliation and data correction processes. Most of these adjustments were attributed to errors during data entry of both SHA and CHA polygons.⁵ Approximately 1km² was added to the database as a consequence of survey in the Cabinda, Moxico, and Kwanza Norte provinces.⁶ However, this amounts to a 30.5km² difference in overall anti-personnel mine contamination (3.5km² shy of the total difference from the end of 2018).

In addition, as at November 2019, Angola had an estimated 3,749km of roads contaminated with mines, of which, 3,214km are CHAs and 535km are SHAs.⁷

In 2019, non-technical survey of all 18 provinces across the country was completed, ensuring that previously overinflated minefields have now been redefined or cancelled. CNIDAH, The HALO Trust, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) all agree that Angola now has its most accurate baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination ever.⁸ However, NPA emphasised the need to continue

evidence-based survey, in order to provide more accurate information on the type of contamination and to increase further the number of CHAs.⁹

In the national Mine Action Work Plan 2020–2025, CNIDAH states that non-technical survey will remain an integral component of all operations and will be conducted in areas that may need additional verification during the work plan implementation period. In addition, CNIDAH acknowledges the gap in coordination and monitoring of CED operations at provincial level and that areas cleared by the CED-coordinated entities may need further assessment and verification before they can be removed from the database. At CNIDAH's request, NPA has conducted additional non-technical survey on SHAs in Kwanza Norte, resulting in the cancellation of approximately 3km². Similar activities will be conducted in selected hazardous areas in 2020.¹⁰

It is also expected that, as people return to previously uninhabited areas, previously unrecorded mined areas will be added to the database and that new areas of contamination will be found as operators revisit more remote areas and address minefields where clearance has yet to begin. For example, in Cabinda Province, during 2019, HALO Trust survey teams were unable to access some of the minefields due to opposition from the military, meaning that they could not be re-surveyed.¹¹ In 2019, the HALO Trust discovered 19 previously unrecorded areas of anti-personnel mine

contamination: 16 in Cabinda province, 1 in Kwanza Sul, and 2 in Kuando Kubango, totalling 782,892m². Areas found in Cabinda province resulted mainly from the fact that a full re-survey of the province only took place in 2019.¹² NPA identified one new task, in Kwanza Norte province, of 171,544m²;¹³ APOPO discovered two mined areas with a total size of 363,400m²;¹⁴ while MAG discovered 16 new areas totalling 262,053m².¹⁵

Overall, Angola's progress in land cancelled and reduced through the re-survey has resulted in huge land release, with nearly 143km² released from 2017 to 2019 and the cancellation of more than 90% of SHAs recorded as a result of inflated estimates from the 2004–07 Landmine Impact Survey (LIS). It is, however, important to note that most of the land released has been due to cancellations through non-technical survey and with the completion of non-technical survey in all provinces and more well defined minefields, there will be far less cancellation from now on. Most of the remaining contamination is expected to be dealt with through clearance and technical survey.¹⁶

Angola's contamination is the result of more than 40 years of internal armed conflict that ended in 2002, during which a range of national and foreign armed movements and groups laid mines, often in a sporadic manner. Historically, the most affected provinces have been those with the fiercest and most prolonged fighting, such as Bié, Huambo, Kuando Kubango, and Moxico. In addition to its anti-personnel mine contamination, CNIDAH reported that at the end of 2019 Angola had more than 2.3km² of anti-vehicle mine contamination.¹⁷ Many minefields contain a mix of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines. MAG reported that during its operations it frequently discovers anti-personnel mines connected to anti-vehicle mines.¹⁸ In 2019, The HALO Trust found an improvised anti-vehicle mine in Kuando Kubango province and APOPO found and destroyed one anti-personnel mine that was connected to three 82mm mortar shells.¹⁹ The HALO Trust reported that they have found quite a few improvised devices in Angola, particularly in Kuando Kubango province. In the past they have found many linked items with detonating cord, as well as reinforced items, for example anti-personnel mines coupled with blocks of TNT.²⁰

CLUSTER MUNITION REMNANTS AND OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR

Angola also has a significant problem of explosive remnants of war (ERW), especially unexploded ordnance (UXO), and what appears to be very limited, if any contamination from cluster munition remnants (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Angola for further information).²¹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Angola's national mine action programme is managed by two mine action structures. CNIDAH serves as the national mine action authority and reports to the Council of Ministers or, in effect, to the Presidency of the Republic. Surprisingly, the other coordination body, the CED, reports to the Ministry of Social Action, Family, and Women's Promotion (MASFAMU). The CED's main role is to coordinate and manage four national operators: The Demining Brigades of the Security Unit of the President of the Republic, the Angolan Armed Forces, the National Demining Institute (INAD), and the Brigades of the Angolan Border Guard Police. And while Presidential Decrees stipulate the mandates of both CNIDAH and the CED, there are clear overlaps and ambiguities as to the exact division of labour and their related roles and responsibilities.²²

Tensions between these entities lessened significantly in 2019 as CNIDAH, over the past three years, has focused on reorganising the mine action sector and the CED is now more aligned with their approach and more concentrated on getting the job done.²³ However, the CED-related activities do not currently fall under CNIDAH's coordination oversight and are not registered in the CNIDAH-managed national database. This has made it difficult for Angola to describe in detail and with any degree of accuracy the extent of land released over the years. The CED operators are not accredited by CNIDAH, nor are their activities quality assured in line with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).²⁴ This has resulted in limited oversight regarding where the CED-coordinated operations are conducted, what kind of activities are implemented, and what results are achieved.²⁵ As at April 2020, CNIDAH was in the process of changing its legal status from a commission to the National Demining Agency (ANAM), which, it is hoped, will strengthen coordination mechanisms and information sharing between the different national bodies.²⁶

CNIDAH has re-established mine action and donor coordination meetings with all partners, operators, and key donors every four months, with four taking place in 2019.²⁷ The HALO Trust, NPA, MAG and APOPO have all reported being consulted in key decision-making processes by the national authorities through participation at these meetings and other channels.²⁸ For example, it was reported that all operators participated actively in the elaboration of Angola's National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025 and Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025.²⁹

NPA is currently supporting CNIDAH to develop its capacity to better manage the national mine action programme, including in key areas such as information and quality management. This UK Department for International Development (DFID)-funded consortium project, alongside the HALO Trust and MAG, has been extended to run to March 2021.³⁰ In 2019, NPA in partnership with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) supported CNIDAH in developing Angola's new National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025 and Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025. According to NPA, there has been visible involvement in programme ownership, with political buy-in from both the Angolan government and CNIDAH staff since the programme began.³¹ CNIDAH has reported that its internal Quality Management (QM), Information Management, and Planning, Prioritisation and Coordination structures have improved and strengthened.³² The GICHD provided strategic planning support to CNIDAH throughout 2019 through field visits and workshops and delivered an IMAS outreach workshop at the end of the year. The GICHD also completed a study on the impact of anti-vehicle mines in Angola in partnership with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and Kings College London (KCL).³³

International mine action operators continue to report lengthy bureaucratic obstacles in securing visas for expatriate personnel, compounded by a new tax law which added further tariffs to those already applied to the importation of equipment.³⁴ NPA, MAG, and The HALO Trust have met with various government officials, including the Institute for the Promotion and Coordination of Aid to Communities (IPROCAC), the government entity responsible for coordinating humanitarian activities, to raise these issues. NPA has reported that while some positive steps have been taken, such as tax exemptions for specific demining equipment and support from the new IPROCAC director in simplifying the visa process, the main challenges remain.³⁵

Angola's mine action programme has faced critical challenges in securing financial resources in recent years. While the mine action programme has benefitted from several loyal donors that have funded the programme for many years, many international operators were close to ceasing their operations following the sharp decrease in international funding in 2017. As of November 2019, five international donor countries (Japan, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States) were funding international mine action organisations in Angola. In addition, several private companies and foundations provide financial support to international operators.³⁶

In Angola's Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, based on an estimate of remaining contamination of 92.41km², clearance is budgeted to cost US\$286 million through to completion by 2025. The Angolan government has committed to clear all roads in the country through its budgetary allocations for the CED. This would leave 90.08km² of clearance and a budget projection of \$279 million. A total of \$66 million of funding had been committed to international operators from October 2019 onwards, with Japanese and the United Kingdom also expressing an interest in funding the sector further into the future. Based on these projections, this would leave a funding shortfall of \$213 million for the period through to the end of 2025.³⁷

The Angolan government allocated approximately \$15.7 million to support mine action in 2019 and similar support is expected annually until 2025.³⁸ These funds are split between CNIDAH, the CED, and INAD to cover salaries and administrative overheads and to support the clearance infrastructure across the country.³⁹ Additionally, in 2019, the government committed to fund The HALO Trust in a \$60 million, five-year project to release more than 15km² across 153 minefields in Kuando Kubango province. The project is designed to release land in Angola's portion of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Region (KAZA), which spans parts of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, and which is home to the Okavango Delta. It will employ 840 Angolans and allow the government to develop the area for conservation and eco-tourism. This is an unprecedented commitment by the Angolan government to support demining.⁴⁰

In 2019, a draft resource mobilisation strategy was developed and, as at April 2020, was still under review.⁴¹ According to the National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025 Objective 5 the resource mobilisation strategy will be developed and approved before the end of 2020 with CNIDAH taking the lead in its development.⁴²

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Gender and diversity are integrated into Angola's National Mine Action Strategy 2020–25 as a cross-cutting issue. The strategy recognises that mine action activities need to reflect the distinct needs of different ages, genders, and other diverse groups through targeted design with the collection, analysis and reporting of data disaggregated by sex and age a key precursor for this. Disaggregated data collection requirements have been integrated into all relevant standing operating procedures, forms, and other data collection tools.⁴³ However, while the Strategy pledges that Angola's mine action programme will ensure that gender and diversity considerations are taken into consideration in the planning, implementation and monitoring phases of all mine action projects, it does not say how this will be done and there is no mention of gender or diversity in Angola's Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025.

International non-governmental organisation (NGO) operators stated that gender-, age-, and diversity-related concerns are taken into account during survey and clearance to ensure the different groups are reflected in demining operations. They further reported taking into consideration gender balance in the hiring of staff in mine action operations, ensuring that a mix of male and female staff were employed in operational roles in the field including in survey and community liaison teams, as well as in managerial positions.⁴⁴

For example, at The HALO Trust, pre- and post-clearance household surveys allow HALO to obtain the perspective of diverse groups within the local communities about the obstacles they face due to mine contamination, as well as determining the main areas of relevant impact for women, men, boys, and girls. The HALO Trust also reported that due to its “100 Women in Demining in Angola” project introduced in 2017, there has been a huge increase in the number of women in its workforce across a variety of positions, including deminers, medics, section commanders, drivers, logisticians, minefield supervisors, and administrators.⁴⁵ NPA organises gender sensitivity training for its staff and, whenever possible, gender equality is raised with the national and provincial authorities. NPA ensures that job opportunities are accessible to women and men and do not contain requirements that unnecessarily discourage female applicants or preclude their employment.⁴⁶ APOPO also strongly encourages women to apply for roles and

include gender and diversity perspectives when planning and implementing its demining operations as one of its core values.⁴⁷ When new survey and clearance teams are recruited MAG actively engages with women who make up about half of the newly trained recruits. As there are more men who come into the training with previous experience, they have an advantage when progressing to the final recruitment stage but the number of women within MAG’s workforce is increasing.⁴⁸

In 2019, 28% of operational roles at The HALO Trust were held by women; at NPA the figure was 21%; at MAG, 23% and they expect this to increase to 28% in 2020; and at APOPO, of the six deminers three (50%) were women. While in managerial positions at The HALO Trust 13% were women, the figure was 4.2% at NPA, and it was 2% at MAG, no percentage was given at APOPO, but they informed Mine Action Review that their Regional Manager is a woman.⁴⁹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Angola’s mine action programme has long suffered from significant problems with information management, in particular the poor quality of the CNIDAH national database. This is exacerbated by the lack of integration of mine action data held by the CED. CNIDAH reported in 2019 that progress in integrating data held by the CED was hampered by financial constraints that prevented the CED from being fully operational during the year.⁵⁰ According to the National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, all CED-coordinated tasks will be reported to CNIDAH, disaggregated by survey and clearance, as of 2020.⁵¹

As noted above, since 2018 an NPA Capacity Development Adviser has been embedded in the CNIDAH team focused on establishing an up-to-date and more accurate mine contamination database, with assistance from operators. As part of the improvements to information management a monthly data-sharing mechanism between CNIDAH and operators has been in place since 2018 as part of the mine action and information management coordination

meetings.⁵² Throughout 2019, the database was reconciled, updated, and quality assured; information management staff received further training; and an information sharing policy was established. In addition, with GICHD support, CNIDAH held workshops for operators in 2019 on Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) and broader mine action information management, to ensure all operators were recording information and reporting activities in the same way.⁵³ CNIDAH reported that, as at November 2019, the national IMSMA database had been fully reconciled with operators’ data, and the previous data backlog and overinflated contamination figures have been cleared. As a consequence, CNIDAH now considers the national database to be a reliable source of information.⁵⁴

Transparency and reporting of mine action activities in Angola has certainly improved in recent years with timely and accurate submission of its most recent Article 7 reports and Article 5 statements at APMB meetings.⁵⁵

PLANNING AND TASKING

Angola’s National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025 was developed by CNIDAH, in 2019, with support from the GICHD. Two strategy workshops were held during the year with the involvement of government ministers, the CED and its coordinated entities, the Association of Demining Professionals (APACOMINAS), disability and mine survivor networks, and civil society organisations, as well as international mine action operators.⁵⁶ The strategy is aligned with the Oslo Action Plan and will be externally reviewed in 2022 to take stock of achievements, assess the remaining challenges, and make necessary modifications to ensure the strategy remains relevant.⁵⁷

There are five objectives within the strategy, three of which relate to completion of Angola’s Article 5 obligations and which contain specific outcomes and targets:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: LAND RELEASE

That appropriate land release activities result in the release of safe land and the facilitation of sustainable development. All hazardous areas are to be addressed by 31 December 2025 in line with the Article 5 extension request work plan. The programme’s key strategic orientation for achieving its land release objective will focus on developing and fully implementing IMAS-compliant NMA on land release, including by defining “all reasonable effort”.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

A national strategy on the management of residual contamination will be developed by the end of 2020 under the lead of CNIDAH and the CED with the participation of all relevant actors. A national capacity to manage residual contamination will be trained within the first quarter of 2021.⁵⁸

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Effective coordination and information sharing are stated to be pre-conditions for achieving all strategic objectives. In addition to the bi-annual coordination meetings with relevant stakeholders that began in 2019, CNIDAH will take the lead in developing a communications plan on the completion process by the middle of 2021, to facilitate effective information sharing.⁵⁹

The Article 5 implementation Work Plan 2020–2025 contains updated land release targets, and projected milestones for Malange, Huambo and Namibe provinces and on the standardisation of road contamination, establishment of comprehensive national mine action standards and a national residual contamination management plan.⁶⁰ In 2020, the majority of land release was planned to take place in Kuando Kubango, Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul, Lunda Sul, Moxico, Uíge, and Zaire, with a land release target of 17.2km².⁶¹ Survey and clearance operations were suspended in Angola in March and April 2020, following the declaration of a State

of Emergency, which was replaced by the State of Public Calamity, from 26 May 2020 due to the outbreak of COVID-19. At the end of April, CNIDAH authorised operators to resume demining activities at 50% capacity. Operators resumed working at full capacity from July 2020 following a national downgrading of the State of Emergency, but this was reduced to 75% capacity from 9 August.⁶² According to operators they anticipate that they will be able to make up the reduction in output in the coming months and, providing there are no major changes, should be able to meet land release targets for the year.⁶³

CNIDAH has acknowledged that its tasking, prioritisation, and planning procedures are inadequate, and that the effective implementation of the work plan depends heavily on these processes being strengthened.⁶⁴ In 2020, CNIDAH plans to re-establish its authority regarding the coordination of tasking in individual provinces, working closely with operators to ensure that there is no multiplication of effort in any areas of the country, and that all operators are clearly tasked.⁶⁵ As at April 2020, CNIDAH, in discussion with operators, was finalising the operationalisation of a new tasking and prioritisation system for Angola, the first of its kind in the country. Initially, a pilot system was due to be implemented in May 2020 and evaluated in September. However, this has been put on hold due to the COVID-19 outbreak and a discussion with operators on how to proceed is planned for September 2020.⁶⁶ The initial aim will be to align the tasking system across the sector and then incorporate a prioritisation system based on lessons learned.⁶⁷

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

There is no specific national mine action legislation in Angola.⁶⁸

While NMAS are in place in Angola, they are not up to date and are not IMAS-compliant. This has resulted in a lack of standardisation for activities, and consequently, operators have been relying on their own standing operating procedures.⁶⁹ With support of NPA's capacity development project, the standards are in the process of being reviewed and new NMAS will be developed by March 2021. Throughout 2019, CNIDAH led a process of updating, reviewing, and translating three IMAS-compliant standards on information management, quality management, and post-land-release documentation. An NMAS Review Board, chaired by CNIDAH and with representation from every operator, has been established to oversee all aspects of standards. A Technical Working Group has also been set up to advise the Review Board.⁷⁰

CNIDAH is responsible for undertaking external quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) of mine action activities, including QC of all completed tasks prior to handover of land to beneficiaries. However, CNIDAH lacks the financial resources to mobilise its quality management capacity across provinces, which has resulted in very limited QA and significant delays in QC on completed tasks. This has also impacted negatively on handover procedures, with significant delays at the provincial levels.⁷¹ CNIDAH has relied on operators to fund its transport and, sometimes, even provide accommodation and per diem. This allowed CNIDAH to produce completion reports and remove completed tasks from the IMSMA database.⁷² In 2019, NPA conducted quality management training for 10 CNIDAH officers and intended to run similar trainings in 2020.⁷³ According to APOPO, co-operation between CNIDAH and the operators has improved, which has facilitated the improvement of quality management processes.⁷⁴

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Four international NGOs conducted demining for humanitarian purposes in Angola in 2019: APOPO, The HALO Trust, MAG, and NPA. This was the same as in 2018.

The CED's four operators—the Armed Forces, the Military Office of the President, INAD, and the Police Border Guard — were not operational across Angola in 2019 due to a reduction in government funding but they did undertake some commercial demining. A number of national commercial companies have been accredited by CNIDAH but none was active in 2019. APACOMINAS, the only national operator was not operational in 2019.⁷⁵

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁷⁶

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Animal detection capacity	Machines**	Comments
APOPO	1	6	6 handlers, 14 rats	0	Unchanged from 2018
HALO	28	238	0	1	Increase from 2018
MAG	4	37	0	3	Unchanged from 2018
NPA	2	20	0	1	Reduction from 2018
Totals	35	301	6/14	5	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

Table 3: Operational survey capacities deployed in 2019⁷⁷

Operator	NTS teams	NTS personnel*	TS teams	TS personnel*	Comments**
APOPO	0	0	2	12	
HALO	2	5	N/A	N/A	TS personnel are also deminers
MAG	2	8	N/A	N/A	TS personnel are also deminers
NPA	1	2	0	0	NPA has no dedicated TS teams
Totals	5	15	2	12	

NTS = Non-technical survey TS = Technical survey

According to CNIDAH, there was a general increase in the number of operational personnel across most organisations in 2019, which can be attributed an increase in funding for the year. There has been a significant increase in funding into the mine action sector in 2020 and it is expected that this will translate into further increased capacity for most operators. It was expected that the HALO Trust, NPA, and MAG will double their survey and clearance capacity during the 2020 operations cycle and that APACOMINAS will become operational throughout the year.⁷⁸

In 2019, NPA introduced Vallon detectors, which increased productivity and operational safety. NPA also improved the quality and efficiency of reporting from its internal information management systems by introducing "Survey123" software, which is closely aligned to the national IMSMA database. The HALO Trust has introduced tablets and Fulcrum software to its non-technical survey teams, which helps standardisation and reduces human error in data collection and entry.⁷⁹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 13.5km² of mined area was released in 2019, including more than 1.5km² through clearance, less than 0.8km² through technical survey, and just under 11.2km² through non-technical survey.⁸⁰ Clearance was up by more than 50% compared to 2018.

SURVEY IN 2019

CNIDAH reported that international operators released a total of 11.95km² through survey in 2019: cancelling 11.20km² through non-technical survey (see Table 4) and reducing 0.75km² through technical survey (see Table 5).⁸¹ This represents a 28% decrease on the 16.52km² of mined area released by survey in 2018.⁸²

This is a significant decrease from 2017, when international operators reported cancelling more than 138km² of SHA through non-technical survey and reducing a further 2.4km² through technical survey.⁸³ This was due to the fact that the nationwide re-survey, which accounted for huge cancellation, was largely concluded by the end of 2018.⁸⁴

Table 4: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁸⁵

Province	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Uige	NPA	4,845
Kwanza Norte	NPA	3,581,810
Moxico	MAG	29,051
Cabinda	HALO	7,583,867
Total		11,199,573

Table 5: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁸⁶

Province	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Uige	NPA	417,625
Moxico	MAG	90,152
Uige	APOPO	246,839
Total		754,616

CLEARANCE IN 2019

According to CNIDAH, international NGO operators cleared a total of 1.56km² of mined area in 2019, destroying in the process 1,943 anti-personnel mines, 96 anti-vehicle mines, and 807 ERW (see Table 6 for details).⁸⁷ This is a 51% increase from the 1.04km² of mined area cleared in 2018.⁸⁸ However, the number of square metres cleared for every anti-personnel mine found has also increased from 633m² per mine in 2018 to 811m² per mine in 2019.

Table 6: Mine clearance in 2019⁸⁹

Province	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Benguela	HALO Trust	243,211	474	1	147
Bié	HALO Trust	1,572	1	0	6
Huambo	HALO Trust	657	2	0	0
Kuando Kubango	HALO Trust	527,550	675	29	78
Kwanza Sul	HALO Trust	78,957	590	0	120
Moxico	MAG	619,984	199	66	66
Uige	NPA	100,723	1	0	46
Uige	APOPO	3,251	1	0	349
Totals		1,575,905	1,943	96	812

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

In addition, CNIDAH reported that 69 anti-personnel mines were destroyed during spot tasks: 34 by MAG and 35 by the HALO Trust.⁹⁰

There was an overall reduction in land release productivity in 2019 compared to 2018. This was mainly because there was less non-technical survey in 2019 that resulted in large area cancellation. Also, clearance and technical survey are now being implemented mainly on CHAs, which means there is a reduction in the pace of clearance.⁹¹

There are four provinces, Malange, Huambo, Namibe and Luanda, which are very close to completion and which will be prioritised in 2020 and 2021. Following protracted years of clearance operations in Malange province by both national and international operators, it was thought that Malange had been cleared of all known minefields. However, CNIDAH received reports at the beginning of 2020 of newly discovered minefields. Preliminary investigations by CNIDAH, the CED and NPA indicated that some of the reports are credible and warrant further non-technical survey. However, as this was not within the plans for 2020, additional resources will need to be identified before non-technical survey can be implemented.⁹²

With only one minefield remaining in Huambo province, it remains close to being declared free of known minefields. Unfortunately, lack of access due to the single minefield being around an active military base has impeded its clearance despite Angola's obligations under Article 5 of the Convention. The HALO Trust and CNIDAH continue to engage the national and provincial military leadership to secure access to the minefield for clearance.⁹³

With only three minefields remaining in Namibe, CNIDAH is prioritising their clearance and is in discussion with the CED and Namibe provincial leadership to complete clearance before the end of 2020.⁹⁴ Clearance of the last nine minefields in Luanda province will be prioritised by the CED in 2020 with expected completion in 2021.⁹⁵

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMB (and in accordance with the eight-year extension granted by States Parties in 2017), Angola is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025. It is not on track to meet this deadline.

Angola was 4.5km² shy of its Article 5 work plan target for land release of 17.5km² in 2019.⁹⁶ Based on the figures provided by CNIDAH, at the end of 2019, 88km² of anti-personnel mined area remained. Its release would need to average 14.67km² of land release per year for the next six years to the end of 2025. With the completion of the nationwide re-survey, it is expected that there will be a drop in the amount of annual land release as productivity is expected to mainly result from clearance and technical survey rather than the large amounts of cancellation from non-technical survey.⁹⁷

Table 7: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	1.6
2018	1.0
2017	1.2
2016	4.1
2015	2.2
Total	10.1

With these considerations, and the current demining capacity in the country, Angola stated in its Article 5 implementation work plan that it will be ambitious for it to achieve its end of 2025 Article 5 deadline.⁹⁸ Operators and CNIDAH maintain that the main challenge for mine action in Angola is the lack of funding. While funding rose in 2019 and 2020, collectively in the past decade, the resources of the three largest operators, HALO Trust, MAG, and NPA, declined by nearly 90%.⁹⁹

As at November 2019, Angola estimated that alongside its own government's financial contributions, including the 2019 \$60 million commitment made to fund the HALO Trust over five years, a further \$213 million is needed to complete clearance by 2025 (or just under \$36 million per year).¹⁰⁰ This was adjusted to \$211 million in Angola's latest Article 7 report.¹⁰¹ In addition to the funding gap Angola has stated that it requires investment in more efficient mechanical assets to increase land release output, for operations to be conducted in line with IMAS-compliant NMAS and SOPs, and for land release to be fully implemented.¹⁰²

CNIDAH has reported that the completed re-survey has meant that demining resources are more likely to be deployed for clearance and technical survey on land that is actually contaminated and that CNIDAH will continue to impress upon all operators the importance of applying proper land release principles to reduce clearance of uncontaminated areas.¹⁰³ In 2019, however, NPA worked on seven tasks covering 100,000m² and only found one anti-personnel mine.¹⁰⁴ In light of this, NPA restructured their programme in 2019 following an assessment of their clearance operations and have re-established a dedicated non-technical survey capacity from 2020 onwards that focuses on evidence-based survey before clearance is undertaken. NPA also expects that the comprehensive database review and re-survey efforts over the past few years will increase the efficiency of land release and avoid clearance taking place in areas with no contamination.¹⁰⁵ The HALO Trust cleared six minefields which proved to contain no anti-personnel mines while APOPO cleared two minefields and found only one anti-personnel mine.¹⁰⁶

Angola has also stated that going forward it is also vital for authorities to declare provinces "completed" in a timely manner, that there is an improvement in collaboration between CED and CNIDAH, and that CNIDAH continues to be supported to build capacity.¹⁰⁷

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

With the provinces of Huambo, Malange, and Namibe all approaching completion, and in accordance with the National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, CNIDAH and the CED, with the participation of all relevant actors, aim to establish a national strategy on the management of residual contamination by end of 2020. The strategy will clarify roles and responsibilities, information management processes and reporting systems and will be formally launched and disseminated at the national and provincial levels. There are also targets for Angola to have a trained national capacity that can efficiently address residual contamination by the first quarter of 2021.¹⁰⁸

1 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C; and email from Robert Iga Afedra, Capacity Development Advisor, NPA, on behalf of CNIDAH, 1 April 2020.

2 Ibid.

3 At the beginning of 2020, CNIDAH received reports of newly discovered minefields in Malange which preliminary investigations indicate warrant further non-technical survey. However, resources will need to be identified before this can be implemented.

4 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 3 June 2019.

5 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.

6 Ibid.

7 CNIDAH, Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, November 2019, p. 16.

8 Emails from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020; Ralph Legg, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; Jeanette Dijkstra, Country Director, MAG, 20 May 2020; and Miroslav Pisarević, Country Director, NPA, 28 March 2020.

9 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.

10 CNIDAH, Article 5 implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, November 2019, p. 6.

11 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020.

12 Ibid.

13 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.

14 Email from Manuel João Agostinho, Programme Manager, APOPO, 9 March 2020.

15 Email from Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 20 May 2020.

16 CNIDAH, Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, November 2019, p. 4.

17 Comprising 2,314,177m² across 94 CHAs and 84,235m² across 21 SHAs.

18 Email from Llewelyn Jones, Director of Programmes, MAG, 7 September 2020.

19 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; and from Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020.

- 20 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 24 July 2020.
- 21 Questionnaire response by Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 22 May 2017; and email, 17 May 2016.
- 22 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, pp. 5–6.
- 23 Email from Robert Iga Afedra, (on behalf of CNIDAH), 14 July 2020.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid., p. 10.
- 26 Wilton Park, "Landmine clearance in Angola: experiences, challenges and implications for national development and international reputation", Report on event organised in association with the British Embassy in Luanda and MAG, 4–7 November 2019, at: bit.ly/31U3VGo.
- 27 Emails from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.
- 28 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; and Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020; and Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 29 Email from Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020.
- 30 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 CNIDAH, Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, November 2019, p. 6.
- 33 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 34 Email from Joaquim da Costa, Deputy Programme Manager, NPA, 6 May 2019.
- 35 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 20 May 2020; Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020; and Joaquim da Costa, 27 July 2020.
- 36 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, p. 29.
- 37 CNIDAH, Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, November 2019, p. 7.
- 38 Ibid, p. 6.
- 39 Emails from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.
- 40 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020.
- 41 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 42 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, pp. 29–31.
- 43 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 44 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020; Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020; and Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 45 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020.
- 46 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.
- 47 Email from Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020.
- 48 Email from Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 49 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020; Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 20 May 2020; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.
- 50 Email from Robert Iga Afedra, NPA, 3 June 2019.
- 51 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, pp. 18–22.
- 52 Emails from Robert Iga Afedra, NPA, 3 June 2019; Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; and Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 53 Emails from Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020; and GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 54 Statement by Angola on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, November 2019.
- 55 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form J.
- 56 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, p. 2.
- 57 Ibid, p. 32.
- 58 Ibid., pp. 27–29.
- 59 Ibid., pp. 29–31.
- 60 CNIDAH, Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, November 2019, p. 8.
- 61 Ibid., p. 11.
- 62 Email from Eva Veble, on behalf of Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 9 September 2020.
- 63 Emails from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2020; and Ian Topping, Technical Operations Manager, MAG, 24 June 2020.
- 64 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, p. 10.
- 65 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020.
- 66 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 14 July 2020.
- 67 Emails from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.
- 68 Email from Robert Iga Afedra, NPA, 3 June 2019.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 71 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, pp. 11–12.
- 72 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO, 21 May 2019; Shadreck Njamba, MAG, 22 May 2019; Joaquim da Costa, NPA, 6 May 2019; and Ashley Fitzpatrick, Programme Manager, APOPO Zimbabwe, 27 July 2019.
- 73 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.
- 74 Email from Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020.
- 75 Skype interview with Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 26 May 2020.
- 76 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020; Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 20 May 2020; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 28 March 2020.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020; and Skype interview with Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 26 May 2020.
- 79 Email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020.
- 80 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Emails from Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 15 June 2018; Joaquim da Costa, NPA, 10 May 2018; and Jeanette Dijkstra, MAG, 24 April 2018.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Email from Robert Iga Afedra, NPA, 3 June 2019.
- 85 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 88 Email from Robert Iga Afedra, NPA, 3 June 2019.
- 89 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 90 Ibid.; and email from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020.
- 91 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 Ibid.
- 94 CNIDAH, Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, November 2019, p. 8.
- 95 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 96 CNIDAH, "Detailed work plan for the implementation of Article 5 of the Convention (2019-2025)", Annex 1.
- 97 CNIDAH, Article 5 Implementation Work Plan 2020–2025, November 2019, p. 11.
- 98 Ibid.
- 99 Chris Loughran and Camille Wallen, "State of Play: The Landmine Free 2025 Commitment", MAG and HALO Trust, December 2017; and email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 100 Wilton Park report "Landmine clearance in Angola: experiences, challenges and implications for national development and international reputation", From a Wilton Park event in association with British Embassy Luanda and MAG, 4–7 November 2019, at: bit.ly/31U3VGo.
- 101 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form J.
- 102 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, p. 17.
- 103 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form J.
- 104 Email from Robert Iga Afedra (on behalf of CNIDAH), 1 April 2020.
- 105 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2020.
- 106 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO Trust, 30 March 2020; and Manuel João Agostinho, APOPO, 9 March 2020.
- 107 Angola National Mine Action Strategy 2020–2025, p. 17.
- 108 Ibid., pp. 27–29.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2023
ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Argentina should continue to monitor the situation and provide updates if there are any changes to the status of control of mined areas.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Argentina reports that it is mine-affected by virtue of its claimed sovereignty over the Malvinas/Falkland Islands.¹ On ratifying the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), Argentina submitted a declaration reaffirming “its rights of sovereignty over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich and the surrounding maritime areas which form an integral part of the territory.”² It reiterated this declaration most recently at the Fourth Review Conference in November 2019.³

The islands were mined, mostly by Argentinian forces, during its armed conflict with the United Kingdom in 1982. Argentina has reported that no other territory under its jurisdiction or control is mine-affected.⁴

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Argentina has a Humanitarian Demining Working Group (Grupo de Trabajo Desminado Humanitario) established by a Ministry of Defence Resolution, to which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is invited, and a Humanitarian Demining Training Centre (Centro de Entrenamiento de Desminado Humanitario).⁵

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Argentina has stated that it is unable to meet its Article 5 obligations because it has not had access to the Malvinas due to the “illegal occupation” by the United Kingdom. It did, however, make an offer more than a decade ago to support demining of the islands. In November 2018, Argentina reiterated its claim of sovereignty over the islands and declared that if the United Kingdom entered into negotiations over sovereignty, an agreement on demining could be reached between the two states.⁶

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, and in accordance with the three-year and three-month extension granted in 2019 (the second extension granted since Argentina became a State Party in 2000), Argentina is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2023. In the request and in its statement at the Fourth Review Conference, Argentina has indicated its readiness to elaborate a new provisional agreement on the basis of a form of joint sovereignty with the United Kingdom, which would enable the full clearance of anti-personnel mines.⁷

In 2018, the United Kingdom submitted and was granted a request to extend its Article 5 deadline by an additional five years until 1 March 2024, which includes a plan to complete the demining of the Malvinas/Falkland Islands.⁸ By the end of March 2020, only four remaining mined areas remained, totalling an estimated 226,958m², and the United Kingdom planned to completed clearance by the end of 2020.⁹

At the Fourth Review Conference, the United Kingdom responded to Argentina’s Article 5 extension request, stating that there could be no dialogue with Argentina on sovereignty unless requested by the Falkland Islanders and that the 2013 referendum made it clear that the people of the Islands do not want dialogue on sovereignty.¹⁰

1 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form A.

2 Article 7 Report (covering 1999), Form A.

3 Statement of Argentina, Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.

4 Statement of Argentina, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.

5 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form A.

6 Statement of Argentina, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 27 November 2018.

7 Argentina 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 19 March 2019, at: bit.ly/2JBbkAM; Statement of Argentina, Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.

8 UK 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.

9 UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, pp. 3–4.

10 Statement of United Kingdom, Right of Reply in response to Argentina’s Article 5 Extension Request, Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



CLEARING THE MINES 2020

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2021
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 1 MARCH 2027

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

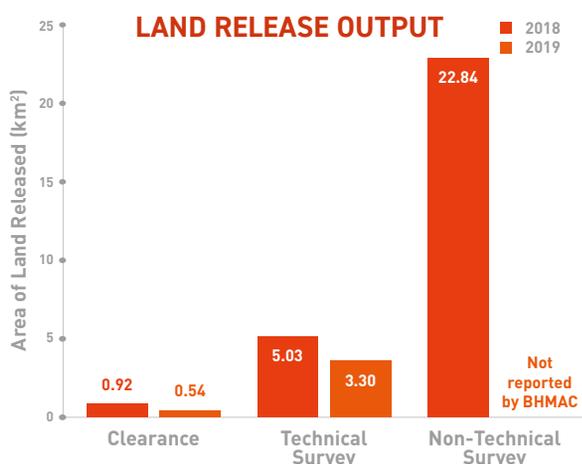
HEAVY, 50 KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0.54 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

963



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)'s new national mine action strategy for 2018–25 was adopted by the Council of Ministers in January 2019.

The European Union (EU)-funded country assessment project, which took place from July 2018 to May 2020, consisted of non-technical survey of all remaining areas suspected to be mined. The aim of the project was to improve BiH's baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination and to group together suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) and confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) into logical units/polygons based on economic, cultural, geographical, or other reasons, encompassing one or more impacted communities, in what the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMAC) terms "Mine Suspected Areas" (MSAs). The MSAs will then be assigned as single organisational tasks to clearance operators for land release. BHMAC has used the results of the country assessment to inform mid-term planning and elaboration of its 2020 request to extend its Article 5 deadline by six years to 1 March 2027.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- BiH should adopt, without further delay, the amended demining law drafted in 2017.
- BiH should implement the recommendations of both the 2015 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment, and the 2016 performance audit report of the Audit Office of the Institutions of BiH,¹ which remain valid. In particular, BiH should continue reforming and strengthening the governance and management of the mine action programme.
- BHMAC should fully adopt international best practice in land release and ensure that all implementing partners, in all parts of BiH, are conducting evidence-based survey to more accurately identify and delineate areas of actual contamination prior to clearance, releasing areas found not to be contaminated.
- As part of efforts to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of land release operations, BHMAC should review relevant national mine action standards, in collaboration between demining organisations and other implementing partners. To facilitate this process, BHMAC should consider re-establishing technical working groups (TWGs).

- BHMAC should develop a detailed, costed, and multi-year Article 5 work plan, informed by the results of the country assessment project, and update its national mine action strategy for 2018–25 accordingly.
- BiH should fully embrace the “Country Coalition” approach, in partnership with Germany, which can provide a forum for regular dialogue among all mine action stakeholders to strengthen coordination and identify and overcome challenges.
- BHMAC should report more accurately and consistently on the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination, including using the classification of SHA and CHA in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).
- BHMAC should strive to improve gender balance in the sector, at the least by meeting the target of 40% female staff set by the 2003 Law on Gender Equality.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	5	The EU-funded “country assessment” project, which was completed in May 2020, groups SHAs and CHAs together into logical units/polygons known as “MSAs”, which are then each tasked for land release. However, while the results of the country assessment were expected to facilitate planning and tasking, the understanding and accuracy of BiH’s baseline of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination have not markedly improved. It is expected that many of the SHAs contained within the MSAs are still inflated and will be further reduced, in particular through technical survey (see also, criterion on Land release system below).
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	5	National ownership of mine action in BiH falls under the responsibility of the Demining Commission and BHMAC. BiH’s National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 was adopted in January 2019. BiH’s Article 5 deadline extension request was submitted in June 2020 and then a revised submission in August 2020. Governance of the national mine action programme needs to be strengthened and Article 5 implementation better coordinated. As at June 2020, the amended demining law (2017) was still awaiting parliamentary adoption.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	5	The National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 supports the 2003 Law on Gender Equality. BHMAC has stated that, under its leadership, relevant actors will include gender in all phases of all mine action activities. Two of the three members of the newly appointed Demining Commission are women. However, within BHMAC’s own programme, and those of clearance operators too, women make up only a small proportion of the total number of staff, and an even smaller proportion of operations staff in the field.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	6	BHMAC is in the process of migrating from its own information management system, to a new web-based system, IMSMA Core, with the support of UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). BHMAC does not report accurately and consistently on the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination and survey and clearance output.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	6	The EU-funded “country assessment” project resulted in the creation of 488 “MSAs” (plus another 10 in progress) which will be tasked as single units for land release. The results of the project will inform the planning, prioritisation, and realisation of the Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 and of BiH’s future Article 5 implementation, as outlined in its 2020 extension request.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	8	8	BiH has land release standards in place, but planned to review them in 2020 to help ensure the efficiency of survey operations and in particular the use of technical survey to confirm and better delineate mined areas prior to clearance. There is also strong national and international demining capacity, and the full demining toolbox is deployed. It is now essential that all implementing partners, in all parts of the country, routinely apply evidence-based land release survey in accordance with IMAS.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	5	6	BiH is requesting a six-year extension to its Article 5 deadline to 1 March 2027. This target is achievable, with existing capacity, if efficient land release methodology is applied routinely by all clearance operators and annual targets are met. However, in 2019, BiH cleared under 0.54km ² of mined area, less than the 0.92km ² cleared the previous year and considerably below the 1km ² planned for clearance in 2019. Furthermore, the 3.3km ² reduced through technical survey in 2019 was also significantly less than the 13km ² planned. BiH did not report its annual cancellation output for 2019.
Average Score	5.9	6.0	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- The Demining Commission (representatives from three ministries (Civil Affairs, Security, and Defence) elected to represent BiH's three main ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs))
- Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Armed Forces of BiH
- BHMAC
- Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska
- Federal Administration of Civil Protection (FACP)
- Non-governmental organisations:
 - Association UEM
 - DEMIRA
 - Mine Detection Dog Centre (MDDC)
 - Pro Vita
 - Stop Mines
 - Udruga "Pazi Mine Vitez"
 - WBE

- Commercial demining companies:

- Detektor
- N&N Ivsa
- In Demining N.H.O

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- European Union Force Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

BiH is heavily contaminated with mines, primarily as a result of the 1992–95 conflict related to the break-up of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. All warring factions in BiH laid mines, primarily between confrontation lines.² Twenty-five years after the end of the conflict, BiH is still one of the most heavily mined countries in Europe. BiH is also contaminated with explosive remnants of war (ERW), including cluster munition remnants (CMR) (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2019* report on BiH for further information).

Minefields in BiH generally contain relatively small numbers of mines, which are typically either "in groups or randomly laid". The quality of approximately 30% of minefield records was not sufficiently accurate for the identification of the precise minefield location and shape. Furthermore, approximately 40% of minefield records were reportedly never made or handed over, and records were often destroyed or lost for several reasons, such as the death or emigration of the persons who created the minefield records.³ Physical changes to mined areas (such as in vegetation), and a lack of witnesses to the laying of the mines, pose additional challenges.⁴

As at end of 2019, BiH reported that the total mined area at the end of 2019 was 965km². It also reported that 488 "locations" (assumed to be synonymous with mine suspected areas "MSAs"), totalled an estimated 95km².⁵ While not clear from BiH's Article 7 report, Mine Action assumes that the 95km² refers to an estimate of actual confirmed mined area within the 965km² total. The 965km² of mined area as at the end of 2019 represents a decrease compared to the 1,018km² of mined area as at the end of 2018.⁶

In its revised Article 5 extension request submitted in August 2020, BiH provided a more detailed breakdown of remaining mined area which totalled a slightly higher 967km² of mined area (see Table 1).⁷

A 2016 national audit office report on the efficiency of the demining system in BiH concluded that: "Twenty years after the war ended, the Mine Action Centre still does not have complete information on the locations of landmines in BiH, which is to say it does not know the total suspected hazardous area."⁸ Similarly, a 2015 UNDP evaluation reported that BHMAC is aware that not all of the SHA is actually mined, but "without more efficient non-technical survey and technical survey procedures the exact extent of the problem cannot be quantified."⁹

During 2017, plans were formalised between BHMAC, clearance operators, and the EU for a country assessment to establish a more accurate baseline of mine contamination and improve the efficiency of clearance operations.¹⁰ The resultant "Country assessment of mine-suspected areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2019" project (hereafter, the "country assessment" project), was conducted between July 2018 and May 2020, and involved nationwide non-technical survey of mined areas conducted by BHMAC (9 non-technical survey teams), the Armed Forces of BiH (2 teams), and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA, 3 teams). The remaining mined area was subdivided into 488 "Mine Suspected Areas" (MSAs), plus a further 10 MSAs in progress.¹¹ It is unclear how much land was cancelled during the country assessment.¹²

MSA is a BiH-specific term, not consistent with IMAS. It is defined by BHMAC as "an area made up of SHAs and CHAs which encompasses one or more impacted communities and due to economic, cultural or geographical and other reasons is selected as a logical unit".¹³ MSAs have been selected by BHMAC in close cooperation with municipal authorities. It is hoped that their creation will simplify the tasking process by assigning clearance operators a larger geographical area in which to conduct land release operations (i.e. survey and clearance of the SHAs and CHAs within the MSAs), with MSAs each averaging 1.7/2.5km² in size.¹⁴

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area (at start of 2020)¹⁵

Administrative level	CHAs	CHA area (m ²)	SHA area (m ²)	Total area of MSA (m ²)	Number of MSAs
Unsko-Sanki	125	2,603,992	95,806,345	98,410,337	49
Posavski	6	211,251	13,571,234	13,782,485	7
Tuzlanski	60	1,469,127	79,770,718	81,239,845	43
Zanicko-Dobojski	63	1,879,721	112,223,720	114,103,441	50
Bosansko-Podrinjski	14	785,051	46,015,957	46,801,008	19
Srednje-Bosanski	94	2,863,902	108,829,348	111,693,250	57
Hercegovačko-Neret	68	2,841,534	146,774,680	149,616,214	77
Sarajevo	24	889,543	64,764,311	65,653,854	30
Canton 10	36	1,001,512	75,717,329	76,718,841	32
BiH Federation	0	0	13,101,196	13,101,196	6
Republika Srpska	309	6,201,958	189,363,657	195,565,615	118
Totals	799	20,747,591	945,938,495	966,686,086	488

The country assessment was entirely based on non-technical survey and did not include any technical interventions, so technical survey of hazardous areas within each MSA will still be required to more accurately delineate mine contamination for clearance and reduce (or cancel) area found not to be contaminated. Non-technical survey field activities under the country assessment project were completed in December 2019. The overall project had originally planned to be completed in February 2020, but was subsequently extended until 15 May 2020 to allow sufficient time for verification and analysis of the large quantities of data generated.¹⁶ Additionally, the mapping of the MSAs created during the country assessment, preparation of assessment reports

for individual MSAs for affected communities, and quality assurance (QA) of documents/reports also required more time than originally planned.¹⁷

As a result of the non-technical survey, the GEO position of 1,151 minefields was corrected, 300 new minefield records were collected, and 6,023 minefield records were deleted from the database.¹⁸ The project did not involve any technical interventions, so no area was reduced or cleared as part of it.

The intended use of the remaining mined area in BiH is as follows: 70% forest, 19% agriculture, 2% infrastructure, 1% water resources, and 8% other usages.¹⁹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Demining Commission, under the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs, supervises the state-wide BHMAL and represents BiH in its relations with the international community on mine-related issues.²⁰ The Demining Commission is composed of representatives from three ministries (Civil Affairs, Defence, and Security) elected to represent BiH's three main ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs). Whereas the Minister for Civil Affairs remains ultimately responsible for mine action, the Demining Commission is the strategic body responsible for setting mine action policy, and it proposes the appointment of BHMAL senior staff, for approval by the Council of Ministers.²¹

While parliamentary elections in BiH were in October 2018, a new state-level government was only formed in December 2019. During this period, the mandate of the Demining Commission (the only body in BiH authorised to accredit and re-accredit demining organisations and to approve draft demining laws, work plans, and Article 5 deadline extension requests) expired in October 2019, affecting BiH's internal and external political representation. As there was no Demining Commission in place from late October 2019 to 19 April 2020, accreditations of clearance organisations that expired could not be renewed during this six-month period, thereby having a direct impact on survey and clearance efforts. By the time the new Demining Commission was commissioned on 30 April

2020, the accreditation for much of BiH's demining capacity had expired and required renewal, including that of the BiH Armed Forces.²²

Furthermore, a problem posed by the structure of the Demining Commission is that each of the three represented ministries has separate portfolios in their respective ministries; and their work on the Demining Commission is only part-time in addition to their other responsibilities.²³ In addition, according to the 2016 audit office report, "The Commission has not developed a methodology on how to monitor the work of the BHMAL".²⁴

BHMAL, established by a 2002 Decree of the Council of Ministers, is responsible for regulating mine action and implementing BiH's demining plans.²⁵ BHMAL operates from its headquarters in Sarajevo, and two main offices in Sarajevo and Banja Luka, and eight regional offices (Banja Luka, Bihac, Brčko, Mostar, Pale, Sarajevo, Travnik, and Tuzla).²⁶

Since 2008, efforts have been made to adopt new mine action legislation in BiH with a view to creating a stable platform for mine action funding by the government and local authorities. BiH demining authorities are following the 2015 recommendation of the Council of Ministers to amend the existing law, instead of adopting a new law,²⁷ and a working group which consisted of representatives from the Ministry

of Civil Affairs, the Demining Commission, BHMAC, the Armed Forces, and the entity Civil Protections, created a first draft of the amended demining law.²⁸ As at June 2020, however, the amended text from 2017 was still awaiting parliamentary adoption. Clearer legislation on liabilities related to mine action activities would be beneficial to all mine action stakeholders in BiH.

After a 10-year hiatus, Board of Donor meetings resumed in September 2015.²⁹ As at July 2020, however, the last Board of Donor meeting had taken place in Sarajevo in November 2017.³⁰ BiH's new National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 specifies that at least two such meetings should be organised every year.³¹ However, while official Board of Donor meetings have not taken place recently, a number of important multi-stakeholder workshops have. A workshop on 28–30 January 2020, convened by BHMAC, and attended by operators, expert organisations, and donors, was convened to present the provisional results of the country assessment, discuss mid-term planning, and help inform the elaboration of BiH's Article 5 extension request.³² A further workshop on BiH's Article 5 planning took place on 6 March 2020, organised by BHMAC in cooperation with the Implementation Support Unit of the APMBC, and attended by state institutions, clearance operators and non-government organisations (NGOs), and representatives of international and domestic organisations.³³ Furthermore, on 28 April 2020, BHMAC convened an online meeting with donor representatives, in which it provided updates on recent progress in mine action, including plans to amend the NMAS. During the meeting, donors expressed concern because of the delay in demining process caused by the failure to form the Demining Commission;³⁴ something which has subsequently been corrected.

The governance of BiH's mine action programme needs to be strengthened and would benefit from improved communication and coordination with clearance operators, including through the re-establishment of TWGs, which provide a platform for operators to discuss, learn from each other, and work in synergies on matters related to operations. In addition, it is hoped that the "Country Coalition" established between BiH and Germany, on which there was an introductory meeting in February 2020,³⁵ will provide a forum for regular dialogue among all mine action stakeholders, help demonstrate national ownership, strengthen coordination of Article 5 implementation, and identify and overcome challenges, and monitor progress against the 2018–25 strategy. In its 2020 Article 5 extension request, BHMAC and the Demining Commission committed to strive to increase their interaction with the donor community to ensure that partners are kept informed of progress in implementation of plans.³⁶

BiH's second goal, in its National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, is that the "Mine action programme in BH is promoted on both national and international level to increase its visibility and improve liability, commitment and support of the state", and the strategy includes operational goals linked to this strategic goal.³⁷ As committed to in its national mine action strategy, BiH published a separate financial plan for implementation of the BiH mine action strategy for 2018–25. The plan sees BiH commit a national budget of 4.5 million BAM (over US\$2.5 million) per annum for the Armed Forces and 5.945 million BAM (US\$3.4 million) per annum for BHMAC, for 2019 and 2020; which is forecast to increase to a total of 21.55 million BAM (over US\$12.3 million, at current exchange rates) per annum in 2025.³⁸ This national funding is in addition to forecast international funding, which is also budgeted in BiH's financial plan.³⁹

According to BiH, as at 2020, available financial resources had not met the projected funding of the Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, which may not allow "full realisation" of the goals set.⁴⁰ During the two-year interim extension period, 2018–19, BiH only obtained BAM 77.84 million of the planned BAM 82.84 million; of which BAM 56.88 million was from the budgets of the state, entities, cantons, municipalities, and public and private sector budgets and BAM 20.96 million was from international cooperation and assistance.⁴¹

In order to fulfil its Article 5 obligations by 1 March 2027, BiH claims to require a total of BAM 336 million.⁴² Of the national funding contributions, funds for non-technical survey activities by BHMAC will be ensured from the budgets of BiH's institutions, and implemented through operational activities of BHMAC. Budgets of BiH's institutions will also ensure funds for technical survey and mine clearance activities, to be implemented by Armed Forces. Entity governments' budgets will also ensure funds for technical survey and mine clearance operations, to be implemented by entity civilian protections. In addition, national funding will also be provided from Brčko District, cantons and municipalities, and public and private companies.⁴³

On 7 April 2020, it was announced that €10 million of EU funding under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) 2018–20 programme, which had been intended for humanitarian demining, was diverted to COVID-19 and migration issues. The EU funds had been intended for support of mine action in BiH, including the procurement of protective equipment and supplies for BHMAC's work, Directorate for Civil Protection and Federal Directorate for Civil Protection, as well as financing of demining projects of priority areas.⁴⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 specifies that: "Under the leadership of BHMAC, relevant actors will include gender and diversity into all phases of planning, realisation and follow-up of all mine activities".⁴⁵ The mine action strategy considered and supported the 2003 Law on Gender Equality in BiH, which includes equal treatment of the genders and equality of opportunity, and prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of gender. The Law on Gender Equality determines that equal representation of men and women exists when the percentage of either

gender in bodies at all levels in BiH (state, entity, cantonal, and municipality level) is at least 40%. BiH's national mine action strategy also considered the 2017 Gender Equality Action Plan.⁴⁶ However, as at April 2019, out of BHMAC's 171 employees, only 42 were women (25%). Of BHMAC's 107 operations staff in the field, 10 were women (9%).⁴⁷ BHMAC reported that it has a gender and diversity policy and that BHMAC upholds the Law on Gender Equality and routinely includes it in the development of strategies and standards.⁴⁸

BHMAC has reported that it consults all groups affected by mines, including women and children, during survey and community liaison activities, and BHMAC's survey and community liaison teams are inclusive with a view to facilitating this. BHMAC also reported that relevant mine action data is disaggregated by gender and age.⁴⁹ BiH's Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in 2020, did not contain information on what steps BHMAC plans to mainstream gender and diversity within its survey and clearance programme.

In a welcome development, however, two out of three of the new members of BiH's Demining Commission, adopted on 30 April 2020, are women.⁵⁰

The Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska reported that nearly 22% of its staff were female, including 20% of managerial/supervisory positions, but only 5% of operational roles. It reported that during survey and community liaison activities, it cooperates with the local population, regardless of ethnicity; and where needed has representatives from different ethnic groups.⁵¹

Mines Advisory Group (MAG) has a gender policy and equal employment opportunities for suitably qualified females and males. However, of MAG's 67 staff in BiH, only 6 are women (9%), including 3 of 54 (6%) of its survey and clearance personnel (including medics). Three women were in managerial/supervisory positions.⁵² MAG's survey and clearance teams consult with women and men in communities neighbouring its operations, to obtain as much relevant data as possible for the conduct of land release activities.⁵³ MAG also conducts regular informant interviews with all entity groups, and its teams are mixed and include all three entity groups (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs).⁵⁴ MAG was planning to recruit a mixed community liaison capacity in 2020, which will support it to better take into consideration gender dynamics its land release work.⁵⁵

NPA reported that it promotes gender equality in all aspects of its programme activities in BiH. Mixed gender representation is an obligation for NPA teams conducting community liaison and risk education.⁵⁶ NPA reported that the overall gender split of its staff as at March 2020 was 118 men and 10 women, which represents 8% female staff. Of its 82 operational staff deployed in the field, three medic positions and one community liaison position are held by women. NPA reported that it rarely received applications from women for vacant operational roles.⁵⁷ NPA reported that it is driving to achieve a gender balance, and that the programme encourages the employment of women, including into managerial and operational staff positions. Five managerial positions in the NPA BiH programme are held by women.⁵⁸

NPA seeks input from individuals representing all gender and age groups in each mine-affected community, during survey, clearance, and community liaison activities, including handover of released land. This includes collection and analysis of good quality gender and age-disaggregated data, and the active involvement of women, girls, boys, and men in the decision-making process for establishing preferences that influence priority-setting. During the implementation of its activities, NPA teams organise meetings with female representatives in smaller groups, to provide a forum in which women may feel more comfortable to talk about potentially contaminated areas in their community and NPA's interventions.⁵⁹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

As at June 2020, BHMAC was using its own information management system, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Information System (BHMAIS), but with the support of UNDP and the Geneva Institute for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and with financing from the EU, BHMAC was in the process of migrating to a new web-based information management system, IMSMA Core.⁶⁰

The joint development of IMSMA Core began in 2019. Data from the country assessment project was originally expected to be transferred in March/April 2020 and the new database operational by mid-2020.⁶¹ As at May 2020, the transition from BHMAIS to IMSMA Core was approximately 50% complete and was planned to be completed by the end of the year.⁶² The results of the country assessment project will be imported as the baseline dataset, after which records of operational activities will also be transferred.⁶³ GICHD training in the new system was also planned for BHMAC staff, but due

to the situation with COVID-19 in-person training will not be possible in 2020. Instead, options were being explored for internal BHMAC training with remote support from the GICHD.⁶⁴ Once in place the database should be sustainable; through the programme will still be susceptible to potential challenges stemming from turnover of key staff positions in the BHMAC IM department.⁶⁵

In addition, UNDP has developed a GIS mobile application which was also expected to be released in 2020.⁶⁶

MAG planned to roll out its new global Information Management System (GIS, and compatible with IMSMA-core) in BiH in mid-2020.⁶⁷

At present, BHMAC does not report consistently on mine contamination by SHAs and CHAs, in a manner consistent with IMAS. In addition, there are frequent inaccuracies in BHMAC reporting on land release.

PLANNING AND TASKING

In 2017, BiH developed a new national mine action strategy for 2018–25, with support from the GICHD, which addresses all mine and cluster munition remnant contamination. The strategy was formally adopted in January 2019.⁶⁸ The BiH previous Mine Action Strategy for 2009–19, adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2008,⁶⁹ set the target of the country becoming free of mines by 2019. It failed by some distance to meet this target.

The new Strategy contains a general plan and timeframe for the completion of mine clearance, as well as for cluster munition remnants. BHMAC planned to have the first revision of the Strategy at the end of 2020, based on the results of the country assessment project and progress in implementation of the strategy to date.⁷⁰ The strategy revision should also reflect BiH's new Article 5 deadline of 1 March 2027. A second revision was planned for 2023.⁷¹

BHMAC also develops and implements annual work plans, which are adopted by the Demining Commission. Political issues can result in delay in adoption of annual work plans, for example the six-month delay in the appointment of the new Demining Commission.

A three-day multi-stakeholder workshop took place on 28–30 January 2020 in Sarajevo, to present the preliminary results of the EU-funded country assessment project and discuss how they inform mid-term planning for Article 5

implementation.⁷² During the workshop, working groups elaborated three mid-term action plans for 20–2025, based on low, medium, and high scenarios for Article 5 implementation (with completion targets of 2029, 2027, and 2026 respectively), based on different projected capacities.⁷³

In June 2020, BiH submitted an extension request to extend its Article 5 deadline to 1 March 2027. However, the extension request lacked a multi-year work plan for the extension period.

The 488 MSAs (plus an additional 10 MSAs in progress) created through the country assessment project, are intended to enable mine action operations to better respond to the needs of the community through the strengthening of community liaison and by ensuring that community needs are better prioritised and addressed.⁷⁴ During the country assessment, local administrations and BHMAC agreed upon the size and priority of MSAs. In its extension request, BiH describes its prioritisation system for releasing MSAs, which is said to accord with humanitarian, developmental, and safety needs of municipality and local communities, as well as the level of threat (high, medium, or low).⁷⁵

MAG would like to see the availability of information regarding MSAs made more easily accessible to clearance operators to enable long-term planning and for the prioritisation of tasks to be made more transparent, in line with good practice in the sector.⁷⁶

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Results of mine action in BiH show that the applied land release model was efficient in the period 2005–09, and prior to 2009, BHMAC cancelled significant amounts of land annually through non-technical survey.⁷⁷ Since then, however, non-technical survey output has declined, but there remains very significant potential for further reduction in the size of the SHA through survey.

In December 2012, having recognised the need for more efficient land release in BiH, the EU, with pre-accession funding, started a pilot “land release” project with BHMAC.⁷⁸ The resulting “IPA 2011 Land Release” was implemented from 2013 to 2016, with EU funding.⁷⁹ The project enabled efficient tasking of systematic technical survey and technical survey with targeted investigation, helping ensure clearance assets were only directed into CHAs.⁸⁰ Results from six completed tasks in the EU pilot project revealed that 91% of the total land released was cancelled through non-technical survey, 8.5% was reduced through technical survey, and 0.5% was cleared.⁸¹ More recently, of the nearly 95km² released in 2018–19, over 89% was cancelled through non-technical survey, with almost 9% of the remainder reduced through technical survey, and less than 2% released through clearance.⁸² This and previous land release data indicate that actual anti-personnel mine contamination in BiH is only a small proportion of the total hazardous area currently on the database and deployment of clearance assets will therefore only be required for relatively small areas.⁸³

BHMAC planned to review and update the national standards and standing operating procedures (SOPs) in 2020, as well as develop missing chapters.⁸⁴ There is broad support among both international and national clearance operators for a review of standards, especially those relating to land release.⁸⁵ The GICHD believes that, following completion of the country assessment, it would be beneficial to focus on improving the efficiency of technical survey in BiH.⁸⁶ Similarly, MAG and NPA believe that further development of the land release process and the use of advanced techniques for the assessment and identification of minefields in BiH is crucial to the country meeting its Article 5 obligations.⁸⁷ MAG also believes that there is scope to improve efficiency and effectiveness through a more integrated approach to land release, including on chapters governing the use of mechanical and animal assets, in addition to survey and clearance.⁸⁸ BHMAC has publicly stated that it is “fully engaged and committed towards improving the efficiency and effectiveness” of its efforts.⁸⁹

BHMAC has stated that it will ensure through quality management that all organisations accredited for technical survey and clearance comply with the principles of land release.⁹⁰

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Non-technical survey in 2019 was conducted by the BiH Armed Forces, BHMAC, and NPA.⁹¹ Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) (colloquially called drones) were used by NPA and the BHMAC for non-technical survey during the country-wide assessment of mined areas. MAG planned to deploy community liaison, starting in 2020.⁹²

A total of 26 organisations are accredited for mine action in BiH: four government organisations (Armed Forces of BiH, Federal Administration of Civil Protection (FACP), Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, and Brčko District Civil Protection), the Red Cross Society of BiH; seven commercial organisations (all national); and 14 NGOs (11 national and 3 international).⁹³ Overall demining capacity totalled 1,200 persons in accredited organisations, comprising 900 deminers and 300 others (including team leaders, site leader, operational officers, QA officers, and dog trainers). The accredited organisations also have at their disposal a total of 33 accredited machines (for vegetation removal, ground disturbance, and removal of debris), 1,166 metal detectors, and 68 accredited explosive detection dogs (MDDs). In addition, BHMAC has at its disposal 44 surveyors (i.e. 22 survey teams for non-technical survey and emergency marking), 8 officers for planning non-technical survey operations, and 12 inspectors and 28 senior clerks for QC/technical supervision/inspection.⁹⁴

During 2018, technical survey and/or clearance of anti-personnel mines was conducted by the BiH Armed Forces, the Federal Administration of Civil Protection, the Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, and twelve other clearance organisations, comprising nine NGOs (Association UEM, DEMIRA, Mine Detection Dog Centre (MDDC), MAG, NPA, Pro Vita, Stop Mines, Udruga "Pazi Mine Vitez", and WBE) and three commercial organisations (Detektor, N&N Ivsa, and In Demining N.H.O).⁹⁵ BHMAC had not expected any major changes to demining capacity in 2019.⁹⁶

Both technical survey and clearance methodology in BiH will include deployment of manual, mechanical, and MDD assets.⁹⁷ BiH reported a decrease in operational capacity over recent years, with an average of 52 teams deployed in 2014–17 and 36 teams deployed in 2018 and 2019.⁹⁸ According to BiH, the problem of the ageing workforce is compounded by the reluctance of younger people to seek employment as deminers.⁹⁹ Clearance and technical survey operations in BiH include mechanical preparation of land, manual clearance, and the use of MDDs and special detection dogs (SDDs) depending on the geographical conditions.¹⁰⁰ Much of the remaining mined area is in hilly or mountainous terrain, which restricts the use of machinery.

The BiH Armed Forces' survey and clearance operations, which include use of machinery and explosive detection dogs, are fully engaged from March to November, and with reduced activity, predominantly in southern BiH, from December to February.¹⁰¹ Since 2010, NPA has increasingly focused on building the capacity of the Army's Demining Battalion. This involves transfer of knowledge through operational planning of clearance and technical survey operations; direct operational support; and provision of MDDs and equipment, among other things.¹⁰² The BiH Armed Forces require ongoing support to secure personal protective equipment, batteries for detectors, and fuel for demining machinery, since the Army's own complex procurement

system often cannot deliver such items in sufficient time.¹⁰³ NPA supported the Demining Battalion with the provision of eight magnetic locators/detectors, under a Swiss-funded contract, enabling the Battalion to establish a third team within its organisational set-up. This is now fully operational for technical survey and clearance of areas contaminated with CMR. NPA also loaned the Demining Battalion its Digger D-250 and provided direct operational support for mechanical ground preparation.¹⁰⁴ The Demining Battalion also receives support from Austria, France, Italy, and the United States, as well as European Union Force Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR), which alone provides 90% of total support.¹⁰⁵

The state operators, the BiH Armed Forces' Demining Battalion and the Civil Protections, are both good partners and have effective capacities, but have suffered from logistical challenges and equipment deficits, which can prevent them from working at full capacity.¹⁰⁶ Deminers in the BiH Armed Forces, however, are forced to stop demining at the age of 38 (this upper limit, until recently, had been 35). This results in experienced deminers being forced to retire at a very early age and results in a high turnover of personnel.¹⁰⁷ In the opinion of a UNDP expert, the BiH Armed Forces have sufficient demining equipment, but could benefit from stronger management and better oversight of demining operations.¹⁰⁸

Federal administration of civil protection (FACP) teams are spatially distributed to cover the entire territory of the Federation of BiH and are located in Bihac, Busovaca, Gorazde, Livno, Mostar, Orasje, Sarajevo, Travnik, Tuzla, and Zepce. Capacity as at August 2019, included 11 demining teams with 95 employees, 8 UXO teams with a total of 27 employees (solely responsible for removing UXOs in the Federation of BiH following reports from citizens and institutions), four MDD handlers with four dogs, a mechanical debris removal team that has one armoured excavator and two armoured trucks to remove UXO contaminated debris, and a demining team with two demining machines and four operators.¹⁰⁹ FACP believes the training system for explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) would benefit from being strengthened in BiH's national standards, to make it in line with CWA 15464: 2005 system.¹¹⁰

The teams of the FACP are trained in fast response to remove injured persons (both civilians and deminers) from mined areas. The FACP believes that accident and incident investigation, which is currently only conducted by BHMAC staff, should be expanded to include representatives from the wider demining community, such as the entities civil protection authorities, the Armed Forces, and EUFOR, to help improve the safety and quality of operations.¹¹¹ During 2019, the FACP said it sent four reports to BHMAC of mines detected in locations not classified as suspected to contain mines. However, FACP did not receive feedback from BHMAC on what activities were undertaken as a consequence of the reports, which it believes highlights inadequate communication between BHMAC and FACP. The FACP thinks it is necessary "to establish two-way communication and exchange of information in order to treat the newly discovered mine contaminated area as efficiently as possible, without burdening the existing demining resources."¹¹²

The Civil Protection of Brčko District only conducts removal and destruction of ERW, and not demining.

The Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska conducts survey and clearance of mines, CMR, and other ERW. It deployed six manual teams, totalling thirty-six deminers, and two MDDs and dog handlers, for technical survey and clearance of mined areas in 2019. In terms of capacity development received, it reported that it used a demining machine from NPA and also that a number of its deminers were trained by the BiH Armed Forces.¹¹³

MAG received operational accreditation in April 2017 and began technical survey and clearance operations in mid-May 2017.¹¹⁴ MAG deployed 6 manual teams, totalling 42 deminers, and 2 MDDs and dog handlers technical survey and clearance of mined areas in 2019.¹¹⁵

NPA is, according to the 2015 UNDP evaluation, well respected in BiH and is treated almost like a national asset, even though it is international and independently donor funded.¹¹⁶ NPA deployed 6 manual teams, totalling 36 deminers, and 6 MDDs and dog handlers, and two machines.¹¹⁷ NPA uses MDD and SDDs for clearance and technical survey tasks, including targeted technical survey.¹¹⁸ As mentioned above, since 2010, NPA has also focused on building the capacity of the Armed Forces Demining Battalion.

With the exception of MAG and NPA, clearance operators in BiH typically compete for international tenders in order to secure their funding. The UNDP evaluation suggested that this resulted in considerable capacity being underused and recommended alternative contracting models more appropriate for land release (either by having longer term contracts or being contracted for the clearance of larger areas), which could be more attractive to the demining organisations in terms of security and could also make best use of capacity in the long run.¹¹⁹ National demining NGOs, such as STOP Mines or PROVITA, which are registered in a similar way to companies, potentially have capacity to quickly mobilise additional resources and up-scale operations.¹²⁰

The Demining Commission is responsible for considering the periodic re-accreditation of field operators, following the recommendation from BHMAC. Any delay in the appointment of the Demining Commission can therefore impact the re-accreditation process and have a knock-on impact on survey and clearance operations.¹²¹ This was the case from late October 2019, when the previous Demining Commission's term expired, until April 2020, when the new Demining Commission was put in place and accreditations could again be renewed or approved.

Quality control (QC) and QA is conducted by BHMAC.¹²²

DEMINER SAFETY

In 2019, two demining accidents in BiH resulted in two deaths and four people injured. The first accident occurred in Goražde municipality in June 2019, injuring two MAG personnel, and the second accident was in Kupres municipality in August 2019, injuring two personnel from the association "Pazi Mine" and killing two others.¹²³ The former accident involved clearance of a M60 HEAT rifle grenade (i.e. an item of ERW, not an anti-personnel mine), and the accident was investigated first by the police, then by BHMAC with a three-member board, and lessons learned were developed and shared by BHMAC with all operators in-country.¹²⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of at least 3.84km² of mined area was released in 2019, of which almost 0.54km² was cleared and 3.30km² was reduced through technical survey. BHMAC did not report on the amount of land cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019.¹²⁵

However, the above figures reported by BiH in its Article 7 report covering 2019, are not in keeping with the land release output reported by BiH in its 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in June 2020, in which it reported that in 2018–19, a total of nearly 84.5km² was cancelled through non-technical survey, over 8.3km² was reduced through technical survey, and nearly 1.6km² was released through clearance.¹²⁶

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, 3.30km² was reported to have been reduced through technical survey,¹²⁷ but no breakdown was provided by geographical region or operator. This is a decrease on the 5.03km² reduced through technical survey in 2018.

According to data provided to Mine Action Review for 2019, the Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska reduced a total of 259,779m² through technical survey in 2019; of which 227,109m² was in the Republika Srpska and 32,670m² in the Hercegovacko-Neretvanski Canton of FBiH.¹²⁸ MAG reported reducing a total of 1,225,004m² through technical survey in 2019, across four cantons.¹²⁹ NPA reported reducing a total of 802,855m² through technical survey in 2019, across four cantons.¹³⁰

In its Article 7 report covering 2019, BHMAC did not report on the amount of land cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019.¹³¹ However, NPA reported to Mine Action Review, that as part of the EU-funded country assessment it conducted non-technical survey in 28 municipalities in 2019 over a total area of 179.95km², of which 3.91km² was cancelled, and 95 MSAs created.¹³² In addition, outside of the country assessment project, and jointly with BHMAC, NPA cancelled a further 3.55km² across three cantons (Unsko-Sanski, Hercegovacko-Neret and Zanicco-Dobojski).¹³³

CLEARANCE IN 2019

A total of almost nearly 0.54km² was cleared in 2019, during which 963 anti-personnel mines, 19 anti-vehicle mines, and 2,297 ERW were destroyed.¹³⁴ However, there was a discrepancy in BiH's Article 7 form covering 2019, in that the totals of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines listed in the table in the Article 5 form (580 anti-personnel mines and 28 anti-vehicle mines; see Table 2) were different to the totals listed in the text of the form (963 anti-personnel mines, 19 anti-vehicle mines, and 2,297 ERW destroyed). Mine Action Review has used the latter in the key data section.¹³⁵

The 2019 clearance output is a decrease on the 0.92km² of mined area cleared and 12,101 anti-personnel mines destroyed in 2018.

Table 2: Mine clearance in 2019¹³⁶

Canton	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Unsko-Sanski	5	63,047	97	0
Posavski	1	55,931	12	0
Tuzlanski	3	40,028	27	0
Zanicko-Dobojski	1	3,791	20	0
Srednje-Bosanski	6	42,417	79	6
Hercegovačko-Neretvanski	2	8,584	23	0
Sarajevo	2	67,722	56	5
Bosansko-Podrinjski	1	11,343	1	0
Canton 10	1	1,820	97	1
Total BiH Federation	22	294,683	412	12
Total Republika Srpska	16	191,193	152	1
Total Brčko district	1	49,188	16	15
Sum totals	39	535,064	580	28

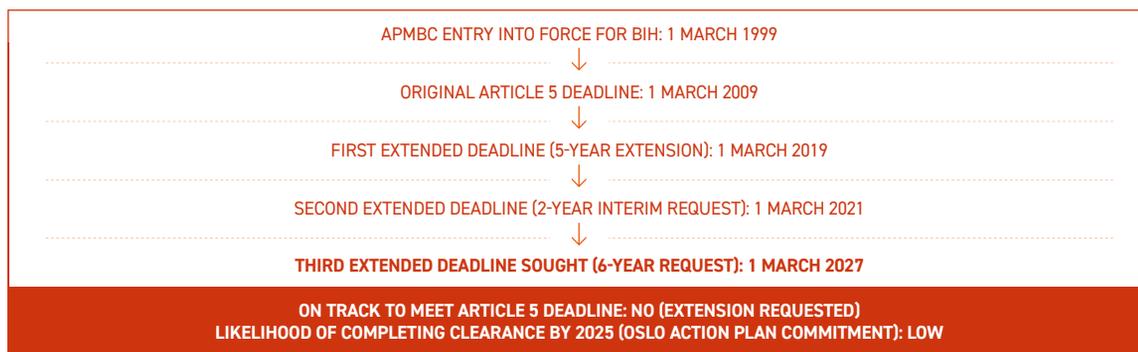
AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

The Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska reported clearing a total of 51,782m² in 2019; of which 48,981m² was in the Republika Srpska and 2,801m² in the Hercegovačko-Neretvanski Canton of FBiH, during which a total of 71 anti-personnel mines, 6 anti-vehicle mines, and 26 items of UXO were destroyed.¹³⁷

MAG reported clearing a total of 431,603m² through clearance in 2019 (134,621m² during clearance tasks and the remainder as clearance during technical survey), across four cantons, with the destruction of a total of 528 anti-personnel mines and 66 items of UXO. It reported a 38% increase in area cleared in 2019 compared to the previous year, and a 71% increase in area reduced through technical survey, which it said was due to a 45% increase in "team-months" in 2019 and an increased use of MDDs.¹³⁸

NPA reported releasing a total of 43,993m² through clearance in 2019, across four cantons, with the destruction of a total of 259 anti-personnel mines, 13 anti-vehicle mines, and 26 items of UXO. In NPA's 2019 operations, only 1% of mined area was released through clearance, 19% was reduced through technical survey, and 80% was cancelled through non-technical survey. On average, NPA BiH found 62 mines per hectare (0.01km²) in 2019, broadly the same as the previous year.¹³⁹

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC, BiH has requested a six-year extension to its Article 5 deadline up to 1 March 2027. The request is said to be for the purpose of non-technical and technical survey “to better define the precise perimeter of mined areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina”.¹⁴⁰ It is, however, assumed that there was an accidental omission of land release through clearance, and that BiH intends to complete both survey and clearance of remaining mined areas by the requested deadline. Prior to this, BiH had been granted a second extension request in 2018, for an interim two-year extension to 1 March 2021, during which it conducted a “country assessment”, to better understand the remaining anti-personnel mine contamination and plan more effectively for its release.¹⁴¹

Over the last five years, BiH has released just over 5km² thorough clearance (see Table 3). Since the ten-year extension to its initial Article 5 deadline, granted in 2008, BiH has continuously fallen far short of its annual land release targets. The painfully slow pace of survey and clearance has resulted in lack of confidence in the national mine action programme from donors but also from people living in mine-affected communities, who felt disillusioned that the mines have not been cleared.¹⁴²

In 2019, BiH cleared almost 0.54km² of mined area, considerably less than the 1km² planned for 2019, according to its 2018 interim Article 5 deadline extension request. In addition, the 3.3km² reduced through technical survey in 2019 was significantly less than the 13km² planned. BHMACH did not include in its Article 7 report the amount of land cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019, although it did report in its 2020 extension request that nearly 84.7km² was cancelled through non-technical survey in 2018–19.¹⁴³

In 2020, BiH planned to release 104km² of mined area through non-technical methods; reduce 4km² through technical survey, and clear 2km².¹⁴⁴ In order to achieve these 2020 targets, land release output will need to increase substantially compared to 2019. Furthermore, as at June 2020, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to-date had hindered demining operations in March to June 2020, which will impact land release outputs.¹⁴⁵

Table 3: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	0.54
2018	0.92
2017	0.69
2016	1.34
2015	1.64
Total	5.13

With the completion of the country assessment in 2020; a strong national mine action strategy; updates underway to the national mine action standards; migration to a new information management system; and the establishment of a country coalition, supported by Germany, to help assist coordination of mine action, BiH is well placed to fulfil its Article 5 commitments by the requested March 2027 deadline. However, along with continued funding, the element that will truly determine BiH's success is political will and national ownership. Successful Article 5 implementation will require strong oversight and commitment from BHMACH, the Demining Commission, and their superiors in the government.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

The National Mine Action Strategy for 2018–2025 includes a section on management of residual contamination, which requires the development of a strategy for the management of residual contamination by 2022.

- 1 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015; and Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", No. 01-02-03-10-16-1-1101/16, 4 November 2016, p. 22.
- 2 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 4.
- 3 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.
- 4 Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", 4 November 2016, p. 26.
- 5 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 6 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, Interpreter, BHMAC, 23 July 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.
- 7 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 16.
- 8 Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", 4 November 2016, p. 5.
- 9 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13 May 2015, p. 17.
- 10 Interviews with Darvin Lisica, then Programme Manager and Regional Director, NPA, Sarajevo, 8 May 2017; Fotini Antonopoulou, EU, Sarajevo, 8 May 2017; and Tarik Serak BHMAC, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017.
- 11 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 5 and 10–11.
- 12 In BiH's 2020 Revised Article 5 extension request, August 2020, the amount of mined area cancelled was reported to be nearly 966.7km² (p. 5), but this figure is believed to be an error, given that 1,030km² mined area was addressed during the country assessment (p. 11) and remaining mined area as at the beginning of 2020 was nearly 966.7km² (p. 16 and Annex 2). The 966.7km² referred to incorrectly as cancelled on p. 5 is believed by Mine Action Review to refer to the total remaining mined area as at the end of the assessment at the beginning of 2020, as indicated on pp. 7 and 16, and in Annex 2.
- 13 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 6 and 16.
- 14 Ibid. p. 11.
- 15 Ibid., p. 16 and Annex 2. The total CHA area in BiH's 2020 Article 5 extension request was reported in the table as 20,747,593m², but the correct total comes to 20,747,591m²; and total SHA area in BiH's 2020 Article 5 extension request was reported in the table as 945,938,493m², but the correct total comes to 945,938,495m². Also, in BiH's Draft operational plan for Mine Action in BiH for 2020, the amount of remaining mined area as at January is reported as the slightly lower value of 965.26km².
- 16 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, Country Director, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 "Draft Demining plan in BiH for 2020", Annex 5 to the 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline extension request, August 2020, p. 4.
- 20 BHMAC Organisational chart, accessed 17 July 2019 at: bit.ly/2Ycj4xl.
- 21 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 22.
- 22 BHMAC website, "New members of BiH Demining Commission appointed today", 30 April 2020, available at: bit.ly/3dv7nco; "The first session of BiH Demining Commission held today", 27 May 2020, at bit.ly/2B3UdW0; and 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 6 and 7.
- 23 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 22; and Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", No. 01-02-03-10-16-1-1101/16, 4 November 2016, p. 22.
- 24 Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", 4 November 2016, p. 8.
- 25 Bosnia and Herzegovina Official Gazette, Sarajevo, 17 March 2002.
- 26 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 8.
- 27 Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", 4 November 2016, p. 23.
- 28 Statement of BiH, APMBC Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 8 June 2017.
- 29 Interview with Tarik Serak, BHMAC, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017; and emails from Fotini Antonopoulou, EU, 19 June 2017; and Suad Baljak, UNDP, 15 June 2017; and UNDP BiH, "Mine Action Board of Donors Meeting", 31 March 2016, at: bit.ly/300f4lp.
- 30 Emails from Suad Baljak, UNDP, 14 July 2020; and Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 17 July 2020.
- 31 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 20.
- 32 BHMAC website, "Workshop on Definitions of Productivity Indicators and Resources Required for Implementation of the Land Release Method and Development of a Medium-Term Action Plan", 30 January 2020, at: bit.ly/37WS3UN.
- 33 BHMAC website, "Workshop "Article 5 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling and Transfer of AP Mines", 6 March 2020, at: bit.ly/3hVCAZO.
- 34 BHMAC, "Online meeting with donors' representatives for Mine Action in BiH", 28 April 2020, at: bit.ly/2VdFiQA.
- 35 BHMAC website, "Director Sasa Obradovic participated in the Country Coalition meeting, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Germany", 12 February 2020, at: bit.ly/3fUjuBz.
- 36 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 25.
- 37 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, pp. 1 and 19–20.
- 38 BiH, Financial Plan for Implementation of the BiH Mine Action Strategy 2018–25, pp. 6–7.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 7.
- 41 Ibid., p. 12.
- 42 Ibid., pp. 6–7, and 23.
- 43 Ibid., pp. 23–24.
- 44 BHMAC website, "Ten million EUR intended for humanitarian demining projects in BiH diverted to COVID-19 and migration issues", 10 April 2020, at: bit.ly/37X1Wlq.
- 45 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 14.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 24 April 2019.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Emails from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 24 April 2019; and Goran Šehić, NPA, 25 February 2019; and BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 52.
- 50 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 18.
- 51 Email from Dragan Kos, Assistant Director, Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, 2 April 2020.
- 52 Email from Clement Meynier, Country Director, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 53 Emails from Djadranka Gillezen, Regional Director for the Middle East & Europe, MAG, 27 August 2019; and Clement Meynier, MAG, 16 July 2020.
- 54 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 55 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 16 July 2020.
- 56 Email from Goran Šehić, Deputy Programme Manager, NPA, 25 February 2019.
- 57 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 5.
- 61 Email from Suad Baljak, UNDP, 30 March 2020.
- 62 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Email from Stanislav Damjanovic, Advisor, GICHD, 19 August 2020.
- 65 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 66 Email from Suad Baljak, UNDP, 30 March 2020.
- 67 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 68 BHMAC website, "Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Strategy 2019–2025 adopted by the Council of Ministers", available at: bit.ly/2VnPNdj.
- 69 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2015), Form B.
- 70 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 7.
- 71 BiH, "National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025", p. 34.
- 72 BHMAC website, "Workshop on Definitions of Productivity Indicators and Resources Required for Implementation of the Land Release Method and Development of a Medium-Term Action Plan", 30 January 2020, at: bit.ly/37WS3UN.
- 73 Interview with Saša Obradovic, BHMAC, Geneva, 11 February 2020.
- 74 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 11.
- 75 Ibid., pp. 6 and 19–22.

- 76 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 77 Email from Suad Baljak, Mine Action Officer, UNDP, 15 September 2017; and Darvin Lisica, "Application of targeted technical survey in Bosnia and Herzegovina: development of advanced techniques for data collection and assessment, standard operating procedures and building of national capacities", NPA, undated.
- 78 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 19 and 20.
- 79 Statement of BiH, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 8 June 2017; BHMAG, "Analysis of implementation of mine action strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2009–2019) and draft amendments", adopted by the Demining Commission on 28 March 2016, p. 6; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5.
- 80 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5.
- 81 Ibid., p. 10.
- 82 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 7.
- 83 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025", pp. 6 and 11; and 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 17.
- 84 Interview with Saša Obradovic, BHMAG, Geneva, 11 February 2020; Revised Article 5 deadline extension request, August 2020, p. 8; and Draft Demining plan in BiH for 2020, Annex 6 to the 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline extension request, August 2020, p. 14.
- 85 Emails from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020; and Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 86 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 87 Emails from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020; and Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 88 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 89 Statement of BiH, Fourth APMBRC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 90 Draft Demining plan in BiH for 2020, Annex 6 to the 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline extension request, August 2020, p. 20.
- 91 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 92 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 93 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 24.
- 94 Ibid.; and Draft Demining plan in BiH for 2020, Annex 6 to the 2020 Revised Article 5 extension request, August 2020, p. 13.
- 95 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.
- 96 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAG, 9 July 2019.
- 97 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline extension request, August 2020, p. 8.
- 98 Statement of BiH, Fourth APMBRC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 99 Ibid.
- 100 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 11.
- 101 Interview with Lt.-Col. Dzevad Zenunovic, Demining Battalion of the Armed Forces of BiH, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017.
- 102 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 103 Interview with Lt.-Col. Dzevad Zenunovic, Demining Battalion of the Armed Forces of BiH, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017; and email from Goran Šehić, NPA, 18 October 2017.
- 104 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 105 Email from Fotini Antonopoulou, EU, 18 September 2017.
- 106 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 29; and interviews with Darvin Lisica, NPA, Sarajevo, 8 May 2017; Haris Lokvancic, Swiss Embassy, Sarajevo, 9 May 2017; and Tarik Serak, BHMAG, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017.
- 107 Interview with Lt.-Col. Dzevad Zenunovic, Demining Battalion of the Armed Forces of BiH, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017.
- 108 Email from Suad Baljak, UNDP, 15 September 2017.
- 109 Email from the Cabinet, Federal Administration of Civil Protection, 29 August 2019.
- 110 Ibid., 16 July 2020.
- 111 Ibid., 29 August 2019.
- 112 Ibid., 16 July 2020.
- 113 Email from Dragan Kos, Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, 2 April 2020.
- 114 Interview with Josephine Dresner, MAG, Sarajevo, 9 May 2017; and email from Kathy Keary, MAG, 5 April 2018.
- 115 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 116 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 30–31.
- 117 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 118 Emails from Goran Šehić, NPA, 10 July 2017 and 30 March 2018; and interview with Darvin Lisica, NPA, Sarajevo, 8 May 2017.
- 119 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, p. 35.
- 120 Email from Fotini Antonopoulou, EU, 18 September 2017.
- 121 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 122 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 8.
- 123 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C; and Draft Demining plan in BiH for 2020, Annex 5 to the 2020 Article 5 extension request, p. 5.
- 124 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 125 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 126 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 7.
- 127 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 128 Email from Dragan Kos, Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, 2 April 2020.
- 129 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 130 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 131 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 132 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 133 Ibid.; and 17 July 2020.
- 134 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 135 Ibid.
- 136 Ibid.
- 137 Email from Dragan Kos, Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, 2 April 2020.
- 138 Emails from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April and 16 July 2020.
- 139 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 26 March 2020.
- 140 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request estimate, August 2020, p. 17.
- 141 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 19; and "BiH Statement on Interim Request for Extension to the Deadline for Fulfilling Obligations as per Article 5", 7 June 2018, Geneva.
- 142 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 14.
- 143 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request estimate, August 2020, p. 7.
- 144 Draft Demining plan in BiH for 2020, Annex 6 to the 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request, p. 8.
- 145 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 7, 23 and 26.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2025
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

MASSIVE, AT LEAST 400 KM²

(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

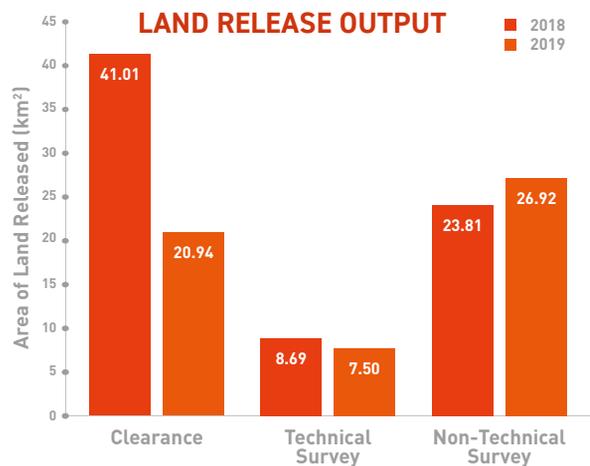
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

20.94 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

8,476

(INCLUDING 4,365 IN
SPOT TASKS)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In November 2019, at the Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties, Cambodia was granted a second request to extend its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) clearance deadline, with a new end date set of 31 December 2025. While progress is being made in planning, prioritisation, and land release, the target of completing anti-personnel mine clearance by 2025 is highly ambitious and could only be achieved with significantly increased funding and capacity.

Cambodia continued to make good progress during 2019 in its ongoing baseline re-survey to more accurately determine the extent of remaining contamination and expected to complete the survey in the course 2020. However, while release through survey in 2019 remained broadly the same as in 2018, clearance output fell significantly compared to previous year. Although not entirely clear, multiple factors are thought to account for the decrease in clearance, including tasking of a larger proportion of difficult-to-access mined areas with more challenging terrain, compared to previous years; clearance of more mixed contamination; and decreased funding to some operators.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) should increase the number of quality assurance (QA) teams and train them to monitor survey activities of operators across the sector, including ensuring that all survey is evidence-based; that cancellation and/or reclassification of mined area is applied wherever appropriate; and that new, previously unrecorded mined areas are verified before entry onto the national database.
- The CMAA should establish a clear timeframe and resource mobilisation strategy for equipping, training, and deployment of the proposed 2,000 additional deminers from the Cambodian Armed Forces. The CMAA could also consider upscaling the number of deminers through other national entities, such as Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC).
- Cambodia should ensure that the pilot border clearance project with Thailand runs to schedule and should seek to conclude a bilateral cooperation mechanism that would enable both countries to survey and clear all mined areas along the shared border.
- Cambodia should continue to improve its information management systems by eliminating discrepancies with operator data and ensuring synchronisation of reporting.

- Cambodia should provide regular progress updates on the implementation of its Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan for 2018–22.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	6	The ongoing baseline re-survey (BLS), which has resulted in significant cancellation of uncontaminated land and release of reclaimed land, was planned to be completed by the end of 2020. However, some polygons identified through the BLS require further investigation to confirm that mines are actually present. Furthermore, along with the type of mine contamination (e.g. anti-personnel or anti-vehicle) based on Cambodia's classification system, the BLS only classifies mined areas as suspected hazardous area (SHA) instead of disaggregating into confirmed hazardous area (CHA) and SHA in line with international best practice.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	8	There is strong national ownership of mine action in Cambodia and an enabling environment for mine action, with good oversight from the CMAA. The Cambodian government contributes to mine action and is seeking additional international assistance to help fund deployment of additional deminers from the Cambodian Army.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	8	7	Cambodia has in place a Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan (GMAP) 2018–22, which is embedded in both its national mine action strategy and implementation plan. Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in mine action were approved in December 2019 and trainings were provided to Mine Action Planning Units (MAPU) and quality management team (QMT) staff on the new guidelines, as well as on implementation of the GMAP 2018–22. The CMAA also has a Gender Mainstreaming Team (GMT) that was established to coordinate with the technical reference group on gender (TRGG), one of five TRGs ensuring coordination of the sector.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	6	Strengthening information management is one of the goals of Cambodia's national mine action strategy and the CMAA has made continued improvements in recent years, setting up a virtual private network to allow operators to input directly into the database. Cambodia's Article 5 deadline extension request, granted in 2019, was detailed, but data inconsistencies remain.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	7	Cambodia has a comprehensive National Mine Action Strategy 2018–25 and a detailed three-year implementation plan 2018–20. The CMAA detailed updated annual clearance targets in its 2019 extension request, but only achieved two-thirds of its annual land release target for 2019, calling into question how realistic the annual targets are. Cambodia has clear criteria and processes for the prioritisation of tasks, involving consultation with key stakeholders.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	7	Cambodia's mine action standards are consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). New standards on animal detection, mechanical demining, information management, and the environment were elaborated in 2019, in collaboration with clearance operators. The CMAA is looking to strengthen its quality management to help ensure mined areas entered into the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database contain mines, and that areas with no evidence of mines are cancelled or reclaimed. Cambodia has estimated an additional 2,000 deminers will be needed to meet its land release targets.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	7	Clearance output in Cambodia fell significantly in 2019 compared to the previous year, while the amount of land released through technical survey and non-technical survey remained broadly the same. Cambodia's annual land release targets are extremely ambitious and will only be possible with significant additional funding and demining capacity, and successful coordination with Thailand to address all mined areas along the border, including those in areas with unclear border demarcation.
Average Score	7.0	6.8	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC)
- Cambodian Self-help Demining (CSHD)
- National Centre for Peacekeeping Forces Management, Mines and Explosive Remnants of War Clearance (NPMEC)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- APOPO
- The HALO Trust
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at December 2019, Cambodia estimated remaining anti-personnel mine contamination as over 817km² across 9,539 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) (see Table 1).¹ This compared to December 2018, when contamination stood at over 890km² across 9,804 suspected SHAs.²

The Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA), which oversees the mine action database, operates its own classification system for anti-personnel (AP) mined area that disaggregates and categorises land as containing: A1 (dense concentration of AP mines); A2-1 (mixed dense AP + AV [anti-vehicle] mines); A2-2 (mixed scattered AP + AV mines); A3 (AV mines); and A4 (scattered or nuisance AP mines).³ Since the start of the BLS in 2009, the CMAA has only recorded mined areas as SHAs, and not disaggregated between confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and SHAs in line with best practice.⁴ CHAs are only stored in the databases of some clearance operators.⁵

The CMAA planned to migrate CHA data resulting from the cluster munition remnant survey (CMRS) process into its national database,⁶ but had no plans to reclassify landmine data into CHAs and SHAs.⁷ In its decision on Cambodia's 2019 Extension Request, the APMBC Committee on Article 5 Implementation highlighted "the importance of Cambodia reporting on its remaining challenge in a manner consistent with IMAS, namely disaggregating by suspect and confirmed hazardous area in order to ensure clarity regarding its remaining challenge."⁸

The baseline survey (BLS) was originally conducted between 2009 and 2012 across 124 districts. The CMAA and demining operators acknowledge that the BLS data are imprecise, with contamination being found outside BLS polygons and substantial areas identified by the BLS now under cultivation.⁹ The CMAA analysed land release data and found that, on average, 32% of land classified as A1 and 51% of land classified as A4 had been reclaimed.¹⁰ In 2015, the CMAA introduced the land reclamation non-technical survey and baseline survey (LRNTS+BLS) methodology, a stand-alone process to re-survey or re-verify SHAs identified during the BLS. The re-survey/re-verification efforts, which are nearly complete, have helped more accurately define the extent of remaining mine contamination and cancel those areas currently on the database that are found to have no evidence of mine contamination and/or which meet the CMAA criteria for reclamation. In 2015–18, the LRNTS+BLS led to release of more than 44.4km² of anti-personnel mined area across 1,076 SHAs.¹¹

The current baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination has been established through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men, including, where relevant, from minority groups.¹³

Fifty-three districts were surveyed in 2019 and as at June 2020 only nine districts remained to be surveyed.¹⁴ The re-survey was expected to be concluded by the end of the year.¹⁵ The majority of the remaining districts are in the eastern and southern parts of the country, where no significant anti-personnel mine contamination is expected.¹⁶ Therefore, the vast majority of Cambodia's anti-personnel mined areas are now known and surveyed.

However, while completion of the re-survey by the end of 2020 looked realistic, some of the hazardous areas added to the database are thought to be overestimated or lack evidence of mines. These will require further investigation, through desktop survey and field data verification, but also in many cases through physical survey to confirm or disregard the existence and size of contamination.¹⁷ The CMAA could also consider using updated satellite images to check which BLS polygons are already in use by communities, facilitating the CMAA to assign operators to investigate and cancel areas where there is no evidence of mines and helping gain a better picture of the remaining areas to be technically surveyed/cleared.¹⁸

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end 2019)¹²

Province	Districts	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Banteay Meanchey	9	2,288	151,127,504
Battambang	13	1,683	166,166,139
Kampong Cham	4	11	979,586
Kampong Chhnang	6	54	4,179,772
Kampong Speu	7	417	47,280,072
Kampong Thom	7	503	49,837,143
Kampot	7	139	12,591,606
Kandal	3	3	64,543
Kep	2	6	641,691
Koh Kong	6	362	24,077,517
Kratie	5	266	33,849,541
Mondul Kiri	3	59	8,687,343
Oddar Meanchey	5	1,064	110,125,909
Pailin	2	476	26,650,537
Phnom Penh	2	14	1,252,348
Preah Sihanouk	1	23	1,737,010
Preah Vihear	8	522	36,100,878
Prey Veng	1	1	5,900
Pursat	5	503	43,312,999
Ratanak Kiri	3	20	2,690,487
Siemreap	12	737	69,644,116
Svay Rieng	6	138	12,384,525
Takeo	1	56	3,770,625
Tboung Khmum	2	194	9,929,596
Totals	120	9,539	817,087,387

Duplication in records of contaminated areas resulted in an extra 144km² being recorded in the database, which had largely been removed as at May 2020.¹⁹ In addition, a data backlog of non-technical survey and land release forms pending quality control (QC) and approval by the CMAA, and also in part because of delayed handover and submission of forms by the operators, impacts how up to date contamination figures are.

Cambodia has extensive contamination from mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) left by 30 years of conflict that ended in the 1990s. It is estimated that four million anti-personnel mines were laid after the fall of the Khmer Rouge in 1979 until the end of the armed conflict in 1998. Cambodia's anti-personnel mine problem is concentrated in, but not limited to, 21 north-western districts along the border with Thailand, which account for the large majority of mine casualties. The K5 mine belt, which was installed along the border with Thailand in the mid 1980s in an effort to block infiltration by armed opposition groups, ranks among the densest mine contamination in the world.²⁰

Cambodia also has significant contamination from cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other ERW (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Cambodia for further information).

NEW CONTAMINATION

The LRNTS+BLS has also led to the identification of 1,363 SHAs of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination, covering a total area of 117.9km².²¹ In 2019, the LRNTS+BLS captured a total of 7.2km² over 117 SHAs of additional contamination, see Table 2.²² This is a decrease on the 39.4km² over 499 SHAs of additional contamination identified the previous year.²³ The CMAA's Database Unit (DBU) is working with operators to investigate all newly added mine contamination.²⁴ The CMAA's Department of Regulation and Monitoring and its quality management teams (QMTs) have been tasked with an increased focus on BLS operations to ensure that previously unrecorded mined areas added to the national database are supported by strong and clear evidence and are of an appropriate size. In addition, the DBU will review newly captured mined areas and verification will be conducted by the QMTs on any questionable polygons.²⁵ International non-governmental organisation (NGO) operators fully support the CMAA deploying survey QA teams to verify hazardous areas before they are accepted onto the database.²⁶

Table 2: Newly added anti-personnel mined area in 2019²⁷

Province	Districts	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Banteay Meanchey	3	4	230,783
Battambang	8	56	4,062,149
Kampong Cham	1	1	64,834
Kampong Chhnang	1	2	21,034
Kratie	1	1	58,066
Mondul Kiri	1	7	488,138
Oddar Meanchey	5	13	688,003
Pailin	1	1	39,645
Preak Vihear	1	20	1,114,964
Pursat	1	9	294,765
Siemreap	2	3	154,485
Totals	25	117	7,216,866

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The CMAA was established by royal decree in 2000 with the mandate to regulate, monitor and coordinate the mine action sector in Cambodia.²⁸ It has been reported that the CMAA has strengthened over the recent years, with roles and responsibilities more clearly defined.²⁹ The Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) was established in 1992. Before the existence of the CMAA, CMAC had the responsibilities to regulate and coordinate the sector as well as undertake clearance. Since 2000, CMAC's activities have been limited to conducting demining, risk education, and training.³⁰ CMAC conducts both humanitarian and commercial demining within Cambodia and is the country's largest operator.³¹

Provincial Mine Action Committees (PMACs) and Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs) were established in 2004, tasked with establishing clearance priorities in consultation with affected communities to ensure that clearance addresses their housing, agricultural, and infrastructure needs.³² MAPU planning and prioritisation units meet regularly with all mine action operators to plan annual mine action activities.³³

The Cambodian government established the Technical Working Group on Mine Action (TWG-MA) as a consultative mechanism between the government and implementing partners.³⁴ It meets on a bi-annual basis and is attended by the CMAA, relevant ministries, operators, and donors.³⁵ The Mine Action Coordination Committee (MACC) and several Technical Reference Groups (TRGs) have been established by the CMAA to facilitate coordination and feedback at a strategic and technical level in areas such as survey and clearance, risk education, victim assistance, information management, gender, and capacity development.³⁶ The TRG on survey and clearance meets on a quarterly basis.³⁷

The operating environment in Cambodia is permissive, with the Cambodian government open to the presence of international operators and supportive in administrative actions such as the granting of visas, approval of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), and importation procedures. The CMAA is open to the trialling and use of innovative clearance methods and tools to improve efficiency.³⁸

The UN Development Programme (UNDP), Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) all support capacity development of the CMAA. NPA, as part of a United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID)-funded partnership that includes Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and The HALO Trust, focuses on information management, planning and prioritisation, gender mainstreaming, quality management, and strategic planning.³⁹

Since 2006, UNDP has been implementing its "Clearing for Results" (CfR) programme in Cambodia. Aspects of the project relating to capacity development include supporting the establishment of a Performance Monitoring System (PMS) that links human development to mine action and strengthening the CMAA's international and national participation in relevant fora.⁴⁰ The third phase of the CfR programme was completed at the end of March 2020. Under Phase Three, capacity development needs assessments of the CMAA and MAPUs were concluded and a management response to the recommendations was developed. The fourth phase (CfRIV), covering 2020–25, is underway, during which the management response from Phase Three will be presented to the CfRIV project board for endorsement. The CMAA, with UNDP support, will then address capacity issues from 2021.⁴¹

The GICHD provides information management and risk management support to the CMAA. In 2019, GICHD support to capacity development included stakeholder workshops on the IMSMA Core migration; initial development of the new database; support on developing residual capacity in line with Cambodia's mine action strategy; and workshops on risk management and NMAS development.⁴²

The Cambodian government contributes funding towards clearance and the management of the sector,⁴³ which includes covering all expenses of the CMAA in 2019 and providing funds to support planning and prioritisation, QA/QC, database management, Cambodia mine victim information service (CMVIS), and risk education activities.⁴⁴ From 2010 to 2018, the Cambodian government has reported contributing just under 30% of the total funding to the mine action sector (US\$99.49 million of US\$340.2 million).⁴⁵ This includes US\$110 million for mine clearance operations in support of public infrastructure projects such as hydropower plants, irrigation system, roads, and bridges. Cambodia has also provided funding to the institutions responsible for managing and delivering mine action in the country. Indirectly, tax exemptions on mine action equipment have contributed to humanitarian demining.⁴⁶

From 2020 to 2025, Cambodia has estimated it will require \$372 million for mine action, of which \$38 million is for sector management and \$165 million for release of anti-personnel mined area. It is expected that the Cambodian government will continue to contribute towards clearance and the management of the sector. It will also settle the importation taxes for mine clearance equipment and provide a 10% in-kind contribution to any new donor funding, and a 10% in-cash contribution to the UNDP CfR programme.⁴⁷ Cambodia funds mine and ERW clearance by CMAC and the National Centre for Peacekeeping Forces Management, Mines and Explosive Remnants of War Clearance (NPMEC) in support of infrastructure development.⁴⁸ Cambodia has a resource mobilisation strategy and intends to secure additional funding from the government, existing and emerging donors, and the private sector.⁴⁹

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The CMAA has developed a Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan (GMAP 2018–2022), an objective of the National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, which consists of six goals. These include:

- Preparation of guidelines to aid gender mainstreaming across all mine action
- Capacity building of relevant stakeholders to implement the GMAP 2018–2022
- Female representation and participation in planning and prioritisation, risk education, and in mine action and advocacy at all levels.

The Three-Year Implementation Plan 2018–2020 sets out activities in support of these goals.⁵⁰ NPA, as part of its capacity development, will support the CMAA with training on gender mainstreaming in mine action, on implementation of the GMAP 2018–22 and the development of associated guidelines, and on how to use gender- and age-disaggregated data in planning and prioritisation processes.⁵¹ Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in mine action were approved in December 2019. Trainings were provided to MAPU and QMT staff on the new guidelines, as well as on implementation of the GMAP 2018–22.⁵² Sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) has been integrated in all reporting forms, which can help inform planning, prioritisation, risk education, and advocacy.⁵³ Furthermore, the GICHD conducted a gender and diversity baseline assessment of the CMAA in 2019 and has a joint action plan to support gender and diversity mainstreaming efforts for the remainder of the GMMAP strategy period.⁵⁴

A CMAA Gender Mainstreaming Team (GMT) was established to coordinate with the TRG on Gender (TRGG), one of five TRGs ensuring coordination of the sector. The TRGG is active and is composed of representatives from UNDP, Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), MAPU, operators, and international and national organisations working in mine risk education (MRE) and victim assistance (VA).⁵⁵ Of CMAA's employees, 23% are female, but only 5% of managerial/supervisory level positions are held by women. Overall in the mine action sector in Cambodia, 876 (25%) of the 3,446 staff are female, an increase from the 15% of female staff in 2015.⁵⁶

Survey and community liaison teams (CL) are inclusive and mixed gender. Women are given access to job announcements and female candidates are given priority during the recruitment process. Women and children in affected communities are consulted during village meetings and community liaison activities, including regarding prioritisation. This commitment is reinforced by the demand for all reporting forms to have SADD and by the provision of training to MAPU and QMT staff.⁵⁷

Of APOPO's staff in Cambodia 40% are women and 10% of CMAC personnel working with APOPO are female. Two of eight (25%) of APOPO's managerial/supervisory-level positions are held by women. APOPO disaggregates relevant mine action data by gender and age.⁵⁸

CMAC provides equal employment opportunities to both men and women. As at May 2020, women made up 12.5% of CMAC's workforce. CMAC operates in accordance with Cambodian Labour Law and is actively recruiting women to reach 15% female employment. Women currently work across all levels of the organisation, including in managerial level/supervisory positions. Two of the six directors were women.⁵⁹

According to CMAA data, as at March 2019, Cambodian Self-help Demining (CSHD) had a total of 26 employees, of whom five of the nine office based staff were women as were four of the seventeen operations staff.⁶⁰

The HALO Trust provides equal job opportunities and some 42% of operational staff in its Cambodia programme are female. While five of HALO's ten senior managers in Cambodia are female, only 9% of HALO Trust's staff in managerial level/supervisory positions across the programme were held by women. Due to low historical levels of women employed until recently, relatively few women have yet acquired the required experience and expertise to take up managerial/supervisory roles in HALO's view. However, the proportion of women employed in senior roles is expected

to increase considerably in the coming years as women gain more experience and rise up the junior ranks from deminer upwards. HALO deploys gender-balanced survey and clearance teams to help ensure access it consults all groups of the local community.⁶¹

During non-technical survey and pre-clearance impact assessments, MAG deploys mixed-gender community liaison teams to gather information on the suspected location of mines and the impact on the community. In its survey and clearance teams, 42% of staff are women as are 24% of their managerial level/supervisory positions.⁶² MAG planned to conduct a detailed gender analysis in 2020, at both the programming and organisational level, in order to promote meaningful gender equity and mainstreaming, and ensure an increased proportion of women in operational supervisory and management roles within the programme.⁶³

According to CMAA data, as at March 2019, NPMEC had a total of 294 employees (290 operational), all of whom were men.⁶⁴

All international operators in Cambodia disaggregate relevant mine action data by gender and age.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The CMAA upgraded to the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation in 2014. As at June 2020, the CMAA was in the process of upgrading its information management system to IMSMA Core.⁶⁵ As part of this process, a significant backlog of data was resolved in 2019/20, before migration of existing data to IMSMA Core could begin in earnest. IMAS minimum data requirements will be incorporated as Cambodia migrates to IMSMA Core.⁶⁶

The CMAA's DBU is responsible for collecting, storing, analysing and disseminating data in support of planning and prioritisation.⁶⁷ Data relating to anti-personnel mine contamination, survey, and clearance in IMSMA are considered relatively accurate and up-to-date.⁶⁸ Improvements to information management are ongoing in Cambodia,⁶⁹ and include the development of tools to allow for mobile data collection in the field and which allow MAPU and QMTs to make online data entries and verify data submitted by operators.⁷⁰

Strengthening the national information management system for mine action is an objective of the National Mine Action Strategy 2018–25.⁷¹ NPA has been conducting capacity development activities with the CMAA under a DFID consortium project.⁷² This included introduction of a web-based application for MAPUs to enable better prioritisation of the tasks for operators' annual work-plans, which is expected to increase the effectiveness of mine clearance across the sector in Cambodia.⁷³ It also included the development of a national mine action standard on Information Management. Regular TRG meetings are held with operators to share progress and challenges.⁷⁴ As part of an information management capacity assessment of the CMAA's DBU, operators (CMAC, HALO, and MAG) agreed that data collection forms are consistent and enable collection of the necessary AP mine data.⁷⁵

The CMAA shares all available data with operators on a monthly basis. In 2018, the DBU set up a virtual private network (VPN), which allows operators to send their daily data input directly into the DBU IMSMA database. The DBU controls the quality of all submitted reports and approves them via this online network.⁷⁶ According to NGO operators, the CMAA has issued clear directives on the submission of data via VPN into the CMAA IMSMA system.⁷⁷

Cambodia submits timely Article 7 transparency reports and gives regular statements on progress at the meetings of States Parties to the APMB. There have, though, been issues with the accuracy of information in Cambodia's reporting in the past, evidenced by discrepancies between data submitted by operators and that offered by the CMAA. To reduce further discrepancies, as at September 2019, the CMAA has officially declared that all relevant mine action stakeholders should only report official mine action data from CMAA.⁷⁸ The CMAA also reportedly still faces some issues with the late submission of reports by some operators, and also some technical challenges with the mapping of polygons, which it is working with operators to address.⁷⁹

In 2019, Cambodia submitted a detailed and well prepared six-year Article 5 deadline extension request from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2025, which was granted by States Parties in November 2019.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Cambodia's National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 was officially launched in May 2018 with eight goals for clearance of mines, CMR, and other ERW. The accompanying Three-Year Implementation Plan 2018–20 sets out the activities and indicators that will need to be completed in order to meet these goals and objectives. The first goal is to release all known mined areas by 2025 through planned land release of 110km² a year in 2020.⁸⁰

In 2019, Cambodia submitted its Article 5 extension request with revised land release targets for 2019–25, as set out in Table 3, with predicted annual land release targets increasing over time as additional deminers are projected to come on board and become operational.⁸¹ The targets assume that significant additional international funding will be secured allowing for deployment of 2,000 additional Royal Cambodian Army (RCA) deminers. The annual targets also assume that no new contamination will be added to the database, a highly questionable supposition. In 2019, Cambodia released a total of nearly 55.5km² through survey and clearance, well short of its target of nearly 84.25km². As at February 2020, no additional RCA deminers had yet been deployed, suggesting there will be a significant gap between the predicted and actual land release output for 2020. Furthermore, many of the remaining mined areas are harder to reach minefields or mined areas which were not fully released previously.

CMAC planned to release 62km² of mined area in 2019.⁸²

Table 3: Annual targets for release of mined area in 2019–25⁸³

Year	Targets (m ²)
2019	84,250,000
2020	110,000,000
2021	110,000,000
2022	146,546,809
2023	146,546,809
2024	146,546,809
2025	146,546,809
Total	890,437,236

The CMAA maintains the annual national clearance work plan made up of all the provincial clearance work plans. MAPUs are responsible for developing their own work plans in accordance with the planning and prioritisation guidelines. The PMACs approve the MAPU's work plans, which are then endorsed by the CMAA. The MAPUs use the provincial work plan to monitor clearance performance and report progress to the PMAC and the CMAA.⁸⁴

The current planning and prioritisation practices in Cambodia follow a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. The top-down approach involves CMAA establishing a list of priority villages based on agreed criteria. The bottom-up approach involves MAPUs coordinating at the provincial level to develop a clearance list, again, using agreed criteria.⁸⁵

In accordance with objective three of goal one of Cambodia's National Mine Action Strategy 2018–25, the CMAA is adopting a mine-free village policy, and has identified 500 priority villages from the most anti-personnel mine contaminated provinces, totalling a mined area of 220km² that will be released by 2021, and the remainder by 2025.⁸⁶ The defined criteria to determine the 500 priority villages was based on the size of the mine contamination in the village, the number of casualties in the village, the number of people in the village, and the levels of poverty of the village in accordance with the revised planning and prioritisation guidelines.⁸⁷ At least 75% of funding and resources are allocated to these priority villages, leaving a maximum of 25% of resources to address clearance needs outside of the priority villages through the MAPU process.⁸⁸ In addition, to maintain government and donor support to mine action by generating publicity and awareness, CMAA will also implement a complementary policy that will prioritise working to declare villages with very low contamination (defined as SHAs with less than 50,000m²) as mine-free.⁸⁹

Within this bottom-up element of Cambodia's approach, the MAPUs, in consultation with operators, then develop a list of priority minefields within the priority villages identified by the CMAA. The following criteria are used by MAPUs for prioritising minefields: BLS land classification; casualty data; intended beneficiaries; level of threat; development needs; and post-clearance land use.⁹⁰ It is hoped that this process will be facilitated by the introduction of the web-based application for MAPUs.

Operators have expressed some reservations about the "mine-free village" approach, with MAG advocating a province-by-province approach and The HALO Trust prioritising clearance of the highest impact, highest density minefields on the border between Cambodia and Thailand. The HALO Trust has expressed concern that the mine-free village approach will lead to clearance of low-impact, low-density minefields in order to declare the village mine-free, diverting resources from high impact areas.⁹¹ MAG's concerns that impact should be taken into account in the prioritisation criteria have been noted by CMAA, which has stated there will be some flexibility in the planning and prioritisation process.⁹² The CMAA has stated it does not believe that high-density minefields should be the deciding factor for prioritisation as they believe prioritisation should be based on addressing the needs of the affected communities.⁹³

While following the CMAA prioritisation processes, HALO also includes the following in its planning and prioritisation matrix with MAPUs: proximity of mined areas to population; nature of threat (grade of type of mines); density of mine laying; accessibility (seasonal); accident history; poverty level of beneficiaries and surrounding area; and compatibility with development projects.⁹⁴

According to NGO operators, the criteria and prioritisation processes in Cambodia are well established and survey and clearance task dossiers are issued in a timely and effective manner.⁹⁵ There was, however, a suggestion that Cambodia should consider categorising infrastructural projects that require formal clearance prior to construction as stand-alone projects agreed between the implementer, mine action operator, and the donor (if applicable), rather than including such projects together with humanitarian mine action.⁹⁶

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Mine action is conducted according to Cambodian Mine Action Standards (CMAS), which are broadly consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). HALO Trust believes the sector would benefit from a review of the CMAS on non-technical survey.⁹⁷ In addition, NPA believes that quality management (QM) still needs to be strengthened and QM capacity developed.⁹⁸

In 2019–21, the CMAA, with support from NPA with DFID funding and in consultation with other mine clearance operators, is in the process of developing new standards.⁹⁹ New standards on animal detection, mechanical demining, information management, and the environment were elaborated in 2019,¹⁰⁰ although final copies had not yet been shared with operators as at April 2020.¹⁰¹ National standards on explosive ordnance risk education, accreditation of demining organisations and licensing of operations and on the monitoring of demining organisations were still in progress as at June 2020,¹⁰² as well as planned review of the BLS and land release chapters in 2021–22.¹⁰³

National standards are reflected in operators' standing operating procedures (SOPs).¹⁰⁴ Updates to the SOPs are conducted as and when required, such as when a need is identified through the CMAA-led TRG. Reviews are conducted in consultation with all operators, and against IMAS and best practice.¹⁰⁵ A comprehensive review of CMAS in 2020 has been mooted; this is also referenced in the National Strategy.¹⁰⁶

The National Mine Action Strategy 2018–25 emphasises the need for more efficient use of demining assets. In a 2018 monitoring visit to Pailin province it was found that one in three of the mined areas could have been released by LRNTS

rather than full clearance. UNDP has now mandated that all minefields in its targeted villages will be assessed before clearance assets are deployed.¹⁰⁷

The CMAA was planning to review the CMAS on baseline survey to strengthen the criteria on the evidence needed to capture polygons with new contamination, but no review had taken place yet as at June 2020. However, the CMAA reported that criteria had been strengthened by operators in the field.¹⁰⁸ In addition, the CMAA will improve efficiency of the QMT to strengthen QA and QC of survey and clearance activities to ensure that any additional mined areas registered in the national database are supported by strong and clear evidence and are appropriately size.¹⁰⁹ The CMAA also plans to organise annual meetings to discuss baseline survey and resurvey activity to ensure that national survey standards are consistently applied by all operators. For example, a mined area reclaimed for productive use must meet certain criteria to be released through non-technical survey without undertaking technical survey.¹¹⁰

HALO Trust believes that the CMAA should conduct more QA of survey reports and that operators should conduct pre-clearance technical verification assessments of previously surveyed minefields to ensure maximum efficiency. This includes releasing land reclaimed through cultivation or incorrectly recorded initially.¹¹¹

The CMAA recognises that for Cambodia to complete clearance by 2025 the full toolbox of land release methodologies must be properly applied and encourages operational efficiency amongst operators.¹¹²

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Mine clearance is undertaken mainly by the national operator, CMAC, and two international mine action NGOs, MAG and The HALO Trust. To a lesser extent, mine clearance is also conducted by national operator the NPMEC, and by national NGO, CSHD. International operator APOPO also conducts clearance in partnership with CMAC.¹¹³

The HALO Trust deployed nine non-technical survey teams in 2019, totalling 27 survey personnel. It planned to increase its non-technical survey and clearance capacity in 2020.¹¹⁴ HALO Trust considers technical survey equivalent to clearance so does not deploy separate personnel. MAG deployed five non-technical survey teams in 2019, totalling ten survey personnel, although these teams were also deployed to undertake other activities.¹¹⁵

In 2018, CMAC deployed 25 non-technical survey personnel across five teams, but there had been no plans to deploy non-technical survey teams in 2019. CMAC also deployed a total of 202 technical survey personnel across 30 teams of between five and seven staff each. In 2019, the number of technical survey personnel was due to increase to 231 across 37 teams.¹¹⁶ Data on CMAC's capacity in 2019 was not provided upon request. APOPO provides CMAC with mine detection rats (MDR).

MAG uses mine detection dogs (MDDs) subcontracted from CMAC to conduct survey and clearance. MAG also continues to trial advanced detection systems, provided by the United States Humanitarian Demining Research and Development programme, and uses drones to conduct non-technical survey, task planning, and post-impact monitoring.¹¹⁷

APOPO, in its partnership with CMAC, deployed a SMART technical Survey Dog (TSD) team for the first time in March 2019 and is currently working under the GICHD Evaluation Project that was expected to end in July 2020. The methodology combines high-quality search dogs with the SMART system, GIS Online, and use of Drones. By the end of April 2020, more than 1km² had already been surveyed by APOPO SMART TSD.¹¹⁸

NPA Cambodia deployed two MDDs in neighbouring Thailand as part of technical survey in 2019 and 2020, as the long-lead MDD methodology has proven to be effective and efficient. In 2019, a total of 56,021m² was covered by the NPA Cambodia MDDs within a two-month period. NPA, in partnership with CMAC, planned to deploy MDDs in 2020 for technical survey on the Cambodia-Thai border, as well as for NPA's own operations at the Cambodian border with Vietnam and Lao PDR.¹¹⁹

UNDP has supported the CMAA through the Clearing for Results (CfR) programme since 2006, awarding contracts funded by international donors through a process of competitive bidding. In 2018, the CFR programme issued four contracts worth a total of \$1.5 million: three going to CMAC and the other to The HALO Trust. CMAC was also awarded land reclamation non-technical survey and baseline survey contracts worth about US\$173,000. In 2019, CMAC was awarded three clearance contracts totalling \$1.7 million dollars with clearance targeted in high-priority villages in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, and Pailin provinces. Phase three of the CfR exceeded the land release target of 47km², and upon completion Phase Three had released nearly 59km² of mined area from March 2016 to February 2020.¹²⁰ For 2020, CfRIV aimed to release 7.9km² with a total contract value of \$1.13 million. Two clearance contracts were awarded to CMAC and one to HALO Trust, all for the seven-month period from June to December 2020.¹²¹

The CMAA has calculated that in order to meet its 2025 land release targets for anti-personnel mined area, an extra 2,000 deminers and 100 support personnel will be needed. The CMAA proposes that these deminers will come from the RCA and that the Cambodian government will cover the

salaries, insurance, uniforms, and operational costs, but that it will require funding from the international community for training, vehicles, and equipment.¹²² It was estimated that during the first year of deployment the deminers will be able to release 35km², rising to 57km² from the second year.¹²³ However, as at February 2020, none of the additional 2,000 RCA deminers had yet been deployed. The CMAA is seeking international financial assistance for training (to be provided by CMAC) and equipment for the planned deminers,¹²⁴ and in August 2020, the Indian government pledged \$1.5 million to help increase the demining capacities of the RCA.¹²⁵

The CMAA is responsible for quality management and since 2016 has deployed eight QMTs.¹²⁶ In 2017, with UNDP support, it developed the PMS, which will track land use and socio-economic changes after release of mined area/ERW-contaminated land as well as monitor the implementation of NMAS as a management tool for the sector.¹²⁷ The CMAA approved the PMS, which was launched in May 2018 and in late 2019 a pilot-test was conducted during which 124 completed minefields were visited and the associated beneficiaries were interviewed by MAPU staff in Banteay Meanchey province. The results of the test were expected to be made available mid-2020.¹²⁸

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019¹²⁹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers	Animal detection capacity	Machines	Comments
APOPO (working in partnership with CMAC)	3	14	16 handlers with 24 rats and 4 dogs		Includes technical survey and clearance capacity.
Armed forces	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	
CMAC	N/K	*1,153	N/K	N/K	*Based on March 2019 data and includes both survey and clearance capacity for mines and ERW.
CSHD	N/K	*17	N/K	N/K	*Based on March 2019 data and includes both survey and clearance capacity for mines and ERW.
HALO Trust	73	657	0	3	Based on an average of 73 teams per month.
MAG	16	128	Three teams, totalling 12 dogs and 12 handlers, contracted from CMAC.	12 deminers/mechanical operators in two units.	Clearance teams are also deployed to conduct technical survey. Excludes MAG's roving EOD capacity.
NPMEC	N/K	290	N/K	N/K	*Based on March 2019 data and includes both survey and clearance capacity for mines and ERW.
Totals		More than 2,250 deminers			

N/K = Not known

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of more than 55.3km² of mined area was reportedly released in 2019, of which more than 20.9km² was cleared, more than 7.5km² was reduced through technical survey, and over 26.9km² was cancelled through non-technical survey. Over the course of the year, however, 7.2km² of previously unrecorded mine contamination across 117 SHAs was added to the database.¹³⁰

Clearance output in 2019 was half the 41km² of clearance reported to Mine Action Review for 2018 (and also down massively compared to the 36.7km² reported in Cambodia's Article 7 report covering 2018). The amount of area reduced through technical survey and cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019 was broadly the same as the previous year when CMAA reported to Mine Action Review 23.8km² as cancelled and 8.6km² as reduced (Cambodia's Article 7 report covering 2018 reports 22.6km² cancelled and 6.5km² reduced).

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, over 34.4km² was released through survey, of which 26.9km² was cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 5) and over 7.5km² was reduced through technical survey (see Table 6).¹³¹ Compared to the previous year, survey output in 2019 was an increase on the 23.8km² cancelled and a small decrease on the 8.7km² reduced in 2018.¹³²

Furthermore, in 2019 the LRNTS+BLS captured an additional total of 7.2km² over 117 SHAs of additional contamination (see Table 2 above).¹³³

HALO Trust reported cancelling nearly 22.84km² of previously known mined area in 2019; an increase of more than 54% increase compared to 2018, which it explained was due to more land reaching the criteria for cancellation since mines were last encountered.¹³⁴

Table 5: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019¹³⁵

Province	Area cancelled (m ²)
Banteay Meanchey	5,822,246
Battambang	3,334,702
Kampong Speu	679,220
Kampong Thom	4,216,406
Oddar Meanchey	7,686,263
Pailin	1,213,841
Pursat	368,326
Siem Reap	3,603,399
Total	26,924,403

Table 6: Reduction through technical survey in 2019¹³⁶

Province	Area reduced (m ²)
Banteay Meanchey	886,134
Battambang	5,949,818
Kampong Thom	289,812
Oddar Meanchey	9,160
Pailin	260,906
Pursat	105,852
Total	7,501,682

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, over 20.9km² of mined area was cleared, with the destruction of 4,111 anti-personnel mines and 4,354 other items of explosive ordnance (see Table 7).¹³⁷ This is a decrease on the 41km² of mined area and 16,019 anti-personnel mines destroyed in 2019 (including 4,301 destroyed during spot tasks).¹³⁸ However, the 4,111 anti-personnel mines reported to have been destroyed in 2019 in Cambodia's Article 7 report, appears to be under reported, as HALO and MAG alone reported clearing 5,439 anti-personnel mines in 2019, excluding EOD call-outs.

Table 7: Mine clearance in 2019¹³⁹

Province	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Banteay Meanchey	4,895,519	232	1,778
Battambang	8,354,500	1,314	1,490
Kampong Thom	526,789	49	100
Koh Kong	16,769	12	0
Oddar Meanchey	1,263,747	196	103
Pailin	2,605,897	1,411	341
Preah Vihear	1,150,211	284	153
Pursat	768,044	527	112
Ratanak Kiri	4,209	0	0
Siemreap	744,253	82	192
Tboung Khmum	606,768	4	85
Totals	20,936,706	4,111	4,354

In 2019, during EOD spot tasks/call-outs, a further 4,365 anti-personnel mines were destroyed: 1,468 by CMAC; 543 by CSHD; 1,219 by HALO Trust; 1,134 by MAG; and 1 by NPA.¹⁴⁰

Of the total anti-personnel mined area cleared in 2019, 43 minefields totalling over 1.7km² were cleared in which no anti-personnel mines were found.¹⁴¹ This is an improvement on the 3.8km² that was cleared in 2018 without any anti-personnel mines being found.¹⁴²

HALO Trust cleared over 5.63km² of mined area in 2019, during which it destroyed a total of 3,562 anti-personnel mines (excluding EOD call-outs), 177 anti-vehicle mines; and 292 items of UXO; broadly comparable to the 6.82km² cleared in 2018.¹⁴³ Of the 315 minefields cleared by HALO Trust in 2019, 50 did not contain anti-personnel mines (2 SHAs classified as A1, 40 as A2 minefields, and 8 as A4). According to HALO, the A1 and A4 minefields were released through area reduction, whereas A2 minefields were primarily planned for anti-vehicle mine clearance using large-loop detectors (LLDs).¹⁴⁴

MAG cleared nearly 1.42km² of mined area in 2019, during which it destroyed a total of 1,877 anti-personnel mines, 1 anti-vehicle mine; and 116 items of UXO, excluding EOD callouts.¹⁴⁵ MAG's clearance output increased in 2019, compared to the previous year, due to scaling up of operational capacity in mid-2018 of manual teams and the addition of an MDD team and one additional mechanical operations unit in mid 2019.¹⁴⁶

APOPO's clearance and technical survey output, in partnership with CMAC, increased in 2019, compared to the previous year. While APOPO aims to conduct technical survey whenever appropriate, many of the mined areas it worked on in 2019 contained scattered mines making technical survey challenging. All of the 24 mined areas cleared by APOPO in 2019, in partnership with CMAC, contained anti-personnel mines.¹⁴⁷ In 2020, APOPO, in partnership with CMAC, commenced another technical survey/clearance project with mine detection rats and technical survey dogs.¹⁴⁸

In 2019, UNDP's CfR project released 9.67km² of mined land, during which 1,341 anti-personnel mines, 10 anti-vehicle mines, and 1,368 items of ERW were destroyed.¹⁴⁹

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the second extension, of 5 years and 11 months, granted by States Parties in 2019), Cambodia is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025.

While Cambodia committed to clearing all anti-personnel mine contamination by the end of 2025 in its latest extension request, this is an extremely ambitious target, which relies on Cambodia bringing on board an additional 2,000 deminers. As at February 2020, no additional RCA capacity had been deployed and based on existing capacity and funding, the CMAA expected it will take 11 years to complete clearance.¹⁵⁰

Cambodia planned to steadily increase annual land release (i.e. survey and clearance) output from 84km² in 2019 (which it did not achieve) to 110km² from 2020 to 2021, when 500 priority villages will be declared mine free, to 146.5km² from 2022 to 2025. Between the Third Review Conference in 2014 and the Fourth Review Conference in 2019, Cambodia released an average of 84km² per year, so the land release targets it has set itself require additional funding and capacity as well as exceptional performance. In 2019, Cambodia released a total of nearly 55.5km² through survey and clearance, which is well short of the nearly 84.3km² is forecasted for the year in its 2019 extension request.¹⁵¹

Cambodia has stated it will require an average of US\$62 million for sector management and clearance of mines, CMR, and other ERW.¹⁵² From 2010 to 2018, Cambodia was averaging \$42.5 million in funding from the government and donor community, which would mean a 45% annual increase in funding.¹⁵³ While Cambodia expects to increase funding from domestic and private sources in the coming years there will still be a funding shortfall without increased donor support. In addition to the increased funding Cambodia has also calculated that it will need an extra 2,000 deminers to complete anti-personnel mine clearance by 2025. It is proposed that these deminers will come from the RCA, but will require international assistance in order to train and equip them.¹⁵⁴

Clearance output in 2019, was significantly lower than the previous year. Although not entirely clear, multiple factors are thought to account for the decrease in clearance, including: tasking of a larger proportion of difficult-to-access mined areas with more challenging terrain, compared to previous years; clearance of more mixed contamination; and decreased funding to some operators.¹⁵⁵

Significant amounts of previously unrecorded contamination are still being added to the database, hampering efficient land release. It is vital that the CMAA has effective QM processes in place to ensure that only new mined areas with evidence of contamination are entered into IMSMA and that where there is no evidence of contamination, SHAs are cancelled.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Goal seven of Cambodia's National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 is to establish a sustainable national capacity to address residual threats after 2025. Reference to the issue is also included in the foreword signed by the Cambodian Prime Minister and noted throughout the document. Objectives include reviewing by 2020 the legal, institutional and operational framework, strategy, and capacity needed to address the residual threats.¹⁶⁴

In Phase I (2018–22) of the national strategy Cambodia planned to “develop a comprehensive residual threats strategy; establish a residual threat legal and institutional framework; and establish residual threats regulatory and operational frameworks including coordination, planning and prioritization, and sustained information management system”. In Phase II (2023–25), Cambodia plans to “develop residual threat capacity in preparation to transition from the traditional mine action program; determine resource mobilisation schemes to support the development of residual threat capacity and its future activities; and to conduct post-programme evaluation of achievements and outcomes after the conclusion of the strategy in 2025 to evaluate performance, lessons learned, recommendations for efficiencies and improvements in any remaining mine action”.¹⁶⁵

The CMAA have stated that it is likely that the RCA will be tasked with addressing explosive threats after 2025.¹⁶⁶

In 2018, the GICHD presented a case study on the Management of Residual ERW in Cambodia, and hosted a Long Term Risk Management workshop and an exchange visit between the CMAA and the national mine action centre in Sri Lanka.¹⁶⁷

Table 8: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	20.94
2018	41.00
2017	27.68
2016	25.33
2015	46.47
Total	161.42

The high-density K5 minefield lies along the Cambodian-Thai border, including in areas where the border is not demarcated and where access is limited. In order to make progress towards its 2025 clearance deadline, Cambodia must ensure that it can release all contaminated land along its border with Thailand, which will require cross-border cooperation.¹⁵⁶ Improved relations between Thailand and Cambodia have opened the way for increased border cooperation. The Cambodia-Thailand General Border Committee, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence from both countries, has agreed that CMAC and the Thailand Mine Action Centre (TMAC) can cooperate to conduct demining along the Thai-Cambodian border.¹⁵⁷ In September 2018, CMAC and TMAC met and agreed to find a task for a pilot border project: a small area that could be cleared within a month as a symbolic demonstration of two sides working together. In September 2019, CMAC and TMAC agreed the respective mined areas on a demarcated section of the Thai-Cambodia border, distanced not too far apart.¹⁵⁸ The selected area on the Cambodian side is Kilobuan village, Poipet District, Banteay Meanchey province. The selected pilot project area on the Thai side is in Sano-noi village, Aranyaprathet District, Sa Kaeo province.¹⁵⁹

TMAC and CMAC signed the agreement for the pilot site survey on 2 March 2020,¹⁶⁰ after which operations were expected to start shortly thereafter and were expected to take no more than 50 days to complete.¹⁶¹ As at June 2020, around 10 CMAC clearance tasks were ongoing along the border; having started in April 2020, clearance was expected to be completed in July.¹⁶² Cambodia has said it will provide updates on clearance along border areas at forthcoming meetings of States Parties.¹⁶³

- 1 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Point 4.
- 2 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Point 4.
- 3 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Annex 1.
- 4 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 5.
- 5 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Point 4; and emails from Rebecca Letven, Country Director, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 6 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Point 4.
- 7 Interview with Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA, Geneva, 11 February 2020.
- 8 Statement by the Chair of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on the Analysis of the Request for extension submitted by Cambodia, Oslo, 26 November 2019.
- 9 Interviews in Phnom Penh with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 24 April 2018; and Greg Crowther, MAG, and Matthew Hovell, HALO Trust, 26 April 2018; Su Yeon Yang, Conflict Prevention Officer, and Tong Try, National Mine Action Advisor, UNDP, 23 April 2019; and Heng Rattana, Director General, CMAC, 25 April 2019.
- 10 CMAA, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 8.
- 11 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 21.
- 12 APMBC Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Point 4. Remaining contamination data as at end of 2019 reported by the CMAA to Mine Action Review totalled nearly 768.31km² of anti-personnel mined area across 8,720 hazardous areas and nearly 33.32km² of anti-vehicle mined area across 613 hazardous areas. Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 13 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 14 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 15 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 16 Email from Lasha Lomidze, Country Director, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 17 Email from Zlatko Vezilic, Programme Manager, NPA, 5 May 2020.
- 18 Email from Michael Heiman, Program Manager, APOPO, 4 May 2020.
- 19 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 20 CMAA, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 1; and The HALO Trust, "Where we work: Cambodia", accessed 10 July 2019, at: bit.ly/31j3TKs.
- 21 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 21.
- 22 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4.
- 23 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form 4.
- 24 Interview with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, Phnom Penh, 24 April 2019.
- 25 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 2.
- 26 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 27 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4. HALO reported identifying almost 1.8km² of additional AP mine contaminated area in 2019. Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020. MAG identified and added two additional SHAs in 2019, totalling 162,155m². Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020. Additional contamination data in 2019 reported by the CMAA to Mine Action Review totalled nearly 11.55km² of previously unknown anti-personnel mined area across 179 hazardous areas (including 131 SHAs totalling nearly 9.59km² recorded by CMAC; 46 SHAs totalling nearly 1.80km² recorded by HALO Trust; and 2 SHAs totalling more than 0.16km² recorded by MAG. Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 28 CMAA, "Legal framework and mandate", at: bit.ly/2W7r3dJ.
- 29 Interviews with Su Yeon Yang, and Tong Try, UNDP, 23 April 2019; and Rebecca Letven, MAG, Phnom Penh, 25 April 2019.
- 30 CMAC, "20 Years' Achievement in Mine Action 1998-2018 and Path Ahead", 2018.
- 31 Interview with Heng Rattana, CMAC, Phnom Penh, 25 April 2019.
- 32 GICHD, "Landmines and Land Rights in Cambodia", December 2010, pp. 9 and 13.
- 33 Email from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020.
- 34 CMAA, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 24; and email from Tong Try, UNDP, 18 June 2019.
- 35 Emails from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020; Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020; and Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020.
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- 37 Email from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020.
- 38 Emails from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 4 April 2019; Rebecca Letven, MAG, 9 May and 28 June 2019; and Damian O'Brien, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 39 Email from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 4 April 2019.
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- 42 Email from GICHD, 1 July 2020.
- 43 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 12.
- 44 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 45 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 6.
- 46 Emails from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019; Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020; and Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 47 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019; and Statement of Cambodia on Second Extension Request, APMBC Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 48 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 49 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019.
- 50 CMAA, Three-Year Implementation Plan 2018–2020, Phnom Penh, undated but 2018, p. 14.
- 51 DFID Capacity Development Report, Activity Detail Extract, 18 September 2018.
- 52 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
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- 61 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
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- 63 Ibid.
- 64 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, Annex 18.
- 65 Emails from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020; and GICHD, 1 July 2020.
- 66 Email from GICHD, 1 July 2020.
- 67 CMAA, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 22.
- 68 Email from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020.
- 69 Ibid.; and email from Michael Heiman, APOPO, 4 May 2020.
- 70 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 71 CMAA, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, pp. 14–15.
- 72 Emails from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020; and Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 73 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 74 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 75 Email from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020.
- 76 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 9 May 2019; and interview with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, Phnom Penh, 24 April 2019.
- 77 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 78 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019.
- 79 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 80 Three-Year Implementation Plan 2018–20, p. 3.
- 81 Statement of Cambodia on Second Extension Request, APMBC Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 82 CMAC, Integrated Work Plan 2019, p. 24.
- 83 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.
- 84 Ibid., p. 5.
- 85 Ibid., p. 8; and interviews with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, Phnom Penh, 24 April 2018 and Geneva, 11 February 2020.
- 86 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7; Statement of Cambodia on Second Extension Request, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; and interview with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, Geneva, 11 February 2020.
- 87 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 31; and 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 3.
- 88 CMAA, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, pp. 14–15.
- 89 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9; and interview with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, Geneva, 11 February 2020.

- 90 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 30–31; and email from Damian O'Brien, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 91 Interview with Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 3 May 2019.
- 92 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 9 September 2019.
- 93 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 4.
- 94 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 95 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 96 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 97 Ibid.
- 98 Email from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020.
- 99 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019; and Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 4 April 2019.
- 100 Emails from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020; and Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 101 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 102 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 1; and email from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020.
- 103 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 1.
- 104 Emails from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 4 April 2019 and Rebecca Letven, MAG, 9 May 2019.
- 105 Emails from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 9 May 2019; and Damian O'Brien, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 106 Email from GICHD, 1 July 2020.
- 107 UNDP, "Clearing for Results Phase III Annual Report", 2018.
- 108 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 109 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019; and 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 2.
- 110 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 2.
- 111 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 112 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 43.
- 113 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p.48.
- 114 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 115 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 116 Email from Prum Suonpraseth, CMAC, 21 June 2019.
- 117 Emails from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 28 June 2019 and 29 June 2020.
- 118 Email from Michael Heiman, APOPO, 4 May 2020.
- 119 Email from Zlatko Vezilic, NPA, 5 May 2020.
- 120 Email from Tong Try, UNDP, 19 June 2020.
- 121 Email from Tong Try, UNDP, 19 June and 21 July 2020.
- 122 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.
- 123 Ibid., p. 41.
- 124 Interview with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, Geneva, 11 February 2020.
- 125 "India Provides \$1.5 million to Support Cambodia's Demining Program", Cambodianess, 10 August 2020.
- 126 Email from CMAA, 2 May 2017.
- 127 Interview with Edwin Faigmane, UNDP, Phnom Penh, 24 April 2018.
- 128 Email from Tong Try, UNDP, 19 June 2020.
- 129 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, Annex 18; emails from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020; Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020; and Michael Heiman, APOPO, 4 May 2020.
- 130 APMBC Article 7 Report submitted in 2020 (covering 2019), Point 4.
- 131 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019.
- 132 Ibid.
- 133 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4.
- 134 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 135 APMBC Article 7 Report submitted in 2020 (covering 2019), Point 4. HALO Trust reported that it cancelled over 22.8km² of mined area. Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020. MAG reported that it cancelled over 4.58km² through non-technical survey in 2019. Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020. The amount of mined area cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019 reported by the CMAA to Mine Action Review totalled over 27.55km² (nearly 0.70km² cancelled by CMAC; nearly 22.74km² by HALO; and nearly 4.12km² by MAG. Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 136 APMBC Article 7 Report submitted in 2020 (covering 2019), Point 4. HALO Trust reported that it reduced 342,153m² in 2019, as part of its clearance process. Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020. MAG reported that it reduced over 2,151,349m² through technical survey in 2019. Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020. In partnership with CMAC, APOPO reported that it reduced 1,047,100m² in 2019 in three provinces. Email from Michael Heiman, APOPO, 4 May 2020. The amount of mined area reduced through technical survey in 2019 reported by the CMAA to Mine Action Review totalled over 7.80km² (nearly 5.86km² reduced by CMAC; more than 0.44km² by HALO; and more than 1.50km² by MAG. Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 137 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Point 4.
- 138 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019.
- 139 APMBC Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Point 4. The amount of mined area released through clearance in 2019 reported by the CMAA to Mine Action Review totalled over 28.26km² (more than 15.43km² cleared by CMAC; more than 0.45km² by CSHS; nearly 8.52km² by HALO Trust; nearly 1.38km² by MAG; and more than 2.48km² by NPMEC. Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020. According to data provided to Mine Action Review by the CMAA a total of 4,361 anti-personnel mines (1,394 by CMAC; 178 by CSHD; 1,075 by HALO Trust; 13 by NPMEC; and 1,701 by MAG), 102 anti-vehicle mines (27 by CMAC; 0 by CSHD; 56 by HALO Trust; 3 by NPMEC; and 16 by MAG), and 4,599 item of UXO were destroyed in 2019. HALO Trust reported that it cleared nearly 5.63km² in 2019, during which it destroyed a total of 3,562 anti-personnel mines, 177 anti-vehicle mines; and 292 items of UXO. Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020. MAG reported that it cleared nearly 1.42km² in 2019, during which it destroyed a total of 1,877 AP mines, 1 AV mine, and 116 other UXO. Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020. As part of its partnership with CMAC, APOPO reported that it cleared nearly 1.29km² in 2019, during which it destroyed a total of 331 AP mines, 1 AV mine, and 324 other UXO. Email from Michael Heiman, APOPO, 4 May 2020. UNDP reported that the CfR project released 9.67km² of mined land, during which 1,341 anti-personnel mines, 10 anti-vehicle mines, and 1,368 items of ERW were destroyed. Email from Tong Try, UNDP, 19 June 2020.
- 140 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020. HALO Trust itself reported destroying 1,169 anti-personnel mines during EOD callouts in 2019 (email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020) and MAG reported destroying 1,124 (email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020).
- 141 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 142 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 11 September 2019.
- 143 Email from Lasha Lomidze, HALO Trust, 15 May 2020.
- 144 Ibid.
- 145 Email from Rebecca Letven, MAG, 7 April 2020.
- 146 Ibid.
- 147 Emails from Michael Heiman, APOPO, 4 May and 23 June 2020.
- 148 Ibid.
- 149 Email from Tong Try, UNDP, 19 June 2020.
- 150 Interview with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, Geneva, 11 February 2020.
- 151 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.
- 152 Ibid., p. 55.
- 153 Ibid., p. 34.
- 154 Interview with Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, Phnom Penh, 24 April 2019.
- 155 Email from Eva Veble, on behalf of Samritha Sron, NPA, 9 September 2020.
- 156 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 38.
- 157 Emails from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019; and Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 158 'CMAC, Thais join forces to clear mines at border provinces', The Phnom Penh Post, 24 September 2019, at: bit.ly/3ejuyrW.
- 159 Email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, on 27 February 2020.
- 160 Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), "A record of discussions signed between CMAC and TMAC", 3 March 2020, available at: bit.ly/34yiUEW.
- 161 Email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, on 27 February 2020.
- 162 Email from Prum Sophakmonkol, CMAA, 1 July 2020.
- 163 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.
- 164 CMAA, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 14.
- 165 Ibid., p. 16.
- 166 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, undated but August 2019, p. 5.
- 167 Email from Rob White, Advisor, Strategic Management & Residual Contamination, GICHD, 3 July 2019.

CAMEROON



CLEARING THE MINES 2020

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2013
NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE NEEDED

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

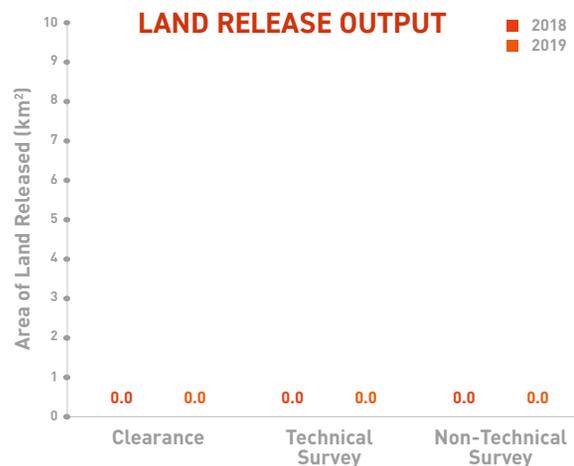
LOW, EXTENT UNKNOWN

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

UNKNOWN



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan Commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Mines of an improvised nature continued to claim casualties in 2019, particularly in Cameroon's northern districts along the border with Nigeria amid escalating military activity by Boko Haram but also in other regions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Cameroon should respect its obligations to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).
- Cameroon should inform States Parties to the APMBC of the discovery of any anti-personnel mine contamination, including mines of an improvised nature. It should report on the location of all suspected or confirmed mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and on the status of programmes for their destruction in its Article 7 transparency report.
- Cameroon should request a new APMBC Article 5 deadline.
- As soon as security conditions permit, non-technical survey should start in the Extrême-Nord (Far North) region, which is reportedly the region most affected by conflict.
- Cameroon should try to mobilise and facilitate assistance and expertise from humanitarian demining organisations for survey and clearance.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or national mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Army Engineer Corps

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Cameroon faces a continuing threat from mines of an improvised nature and other explosive devices, mainly as a result of escalating Boko Haram insurgency spilling over from Nigeria into the Lake Chad region. The extent of contamination, which seemingly includes both anti-vehicle and anti-personnel mines, is unknown.

The threat appears to be concentrated in Cameroon's Far North region between Nigeria and Chad where its armed forces continue to conduct counterinsurgency operations as part of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). The government has also accused Anglophone separatists of responsibility for a mine incident that killed four police in the south-west in 2019.¹

One member of Cameroon's elite Rapid Intervention Battalion was killed and eleven others injured in February 2019 when their truck detonated a mine of an improvised nature in the vicinity of Kerawa on the border with Nigeria. The troops were returning from an operation in which soldiers reportedly destroyed four workshops which were producing improvised mines and found to hold hundreds of containers of explosives, batteries, and detonators. Two other detonations in the area in October 2018 involving mines or improvised devices reportedly caused the deaths of three soldiers and injured six others. Seven soldiers were killed in two separate incidents in the same area in April 2019.² Media also reported that two Cameroonian soldiers were killed after their truck drove over a mine near the town of Eyumedjock in an area of the South West region near the border with Nigeria where English-speaking separatists are active.³

A senior army officer commented in 2017 that some roads in areas bordering Nigeria were "riddled with mines."⁴ A Cameroonian analyst commented that insurgents were using "homemade mines" with increasing frequency on roads as well as in houses and vehicles.⁵ The effect has been to reduce access for humanitarian organisations working in the area. International Organization for Migration (IOM) personnel who visited the Far North region in September 2018 were denied permission to visit a number of towns in Mayo-Tsanaga,⁶ a department bordering Nigeria, because of the presence of mines and reports of kidnappings.⁷

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Cameroon does not have a functioning mine action programme. Mine clearance and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) are the responsibility of the Cameroon Military Engineer Corps.

Cameroon informed the United Nations in 2019 that casualties from mines and improvised devices had increased 43% compared to the previous year, which required a change of approach by the government. It appealed for international assistance but provided no information about any action it had taken or was planning to address the issue.⁸

Over the past four years, the Army has received military training in demining and counter-IED [improvised explosive device] measures, mainly from the France and the United States.⁹ Cameroon received demining/EOD equipment from the United States and Russia in 2015, with armoured mine-detection vehicles being provided by the US Army Africa Command.¹⁰ The US also donated significant quantities of demining equipment, including metal detectors, to Cameroon in 2017.¹¹ US Army Africa and the French Army's French Elements in Gabon (EFG) provided further demining and EOD training up to Level 4 EOD in March–April 2018.¹²

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Cameroon did not report results of any clearance and EOD conducted by its Army engineers in 2019 or 2018.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR CAMEROON: 1 MARCH 2003



ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2013

NEW ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE REQUEST REQUIRED
LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): LOW

Cameroon is a State Party to the APMBC. Its Article 5 deadline to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control expired on 1 March 2013.

Cameroon has not submitted an Article 7 report since August 2009 when it reported there were no areas of mine contamination under its jurisdiction or control. In view of the casualties reported by Cameroon from mines and/or victim-activated mines of an improvised nature, Cameroon needs to revise its position.

Under the APMBC's agreed framework, Cameroon should immediately inform all States Parties of any newly discovered anti-personnel mines since the expiry of its Article 5 deadline (in 2013) and ensure their destruction as soon as possible. It should also submit a request for a new Article 5 deadline, which should be as short as possible and not more than ten years. Cameroon must continue to fulfil its reporting obligations under the convention, including on the location of any suspected or confirmed mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and on the status of programmes for the destruction of all anti-personnel mines within them.

-
- 1 "Cameroon: l'explosion d'une mine tue 4 policiers dans le Sud-ouest", Journal du Cameroun, 17 June 2019, at: bit.ly/2YnZwte.
 - 2 "Boko Haram landmines inflict heavy toll on Cameroon", Latin American Herald Tribune, 30 May 2019, at: bit.ly/2XUT4ef; "Cameroon: Boko Haram mine kills four soldiers in Far North region", Journal du Cameroun, 13 April 2019, at: bit.ly/2Z50o3u.
 - 3 "Mine blast kills two Cameroon soldiers", News24, 21 April 2018, at: bit.ly/2JRyDoR.
 - 4 P. Kum, "Landmine explosion kills two Cameroon soldiers", Anadolu Agency, 28 September 2017, at: bit.ly/2LxKjQ0.
 - 5 "Boko Haram landmines inflict heavy toll on Cameroon", Latin American Herald Tribune, 30 May 2019.
 - 6 The towns were Talla-Katchi, Assighassia, Zéméné, and Cherif Moussari.
 - 7 IOM, "Cameroon, Far North Region, Displacement Report, Round 15, 3-15 September 2018", Report, p. 8.
 - 8 Cameroon statement to the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 23 October 2019.
 - 9 "Military Cooperation: mine clearing training (Sept. 19-30th 2016)", French embassy in Yaoundé webpage at: bit.ly/2Z3ShnY; M. E. Kindzeka, "Cameroon Vigilantes Hunt for Boko Haram Landmines", Voice of America News, 4 March 2016, at: bit.ly/2XZGxGM.
 - 10 M. E. Kindzeka, "Land Mines Hamper Cameroon, Chad in Fight Against Boko Haram", Voice of America News, 3 March 2015, at: bit.ly/2XX0fkD; and "US Helps Cameroon in Fight Against Boko Haram", Voice of America News, 17 October 2015, at: bit.ly/2y1GeeR.
 - 11 "US donates mine-clearing devices to Cameroon", Journal du Cameroun, 24 April 2017; at: bit.ly/2Z3Hryl.
 - 12 "Génie Militaire - Des démineurs formés", Cameroon Tribune (Yaoundé), 23 April 2018, at: bit.ly/2M2uoJO.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JANUARY 2025
 NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
 MINE CONTAMINATION:

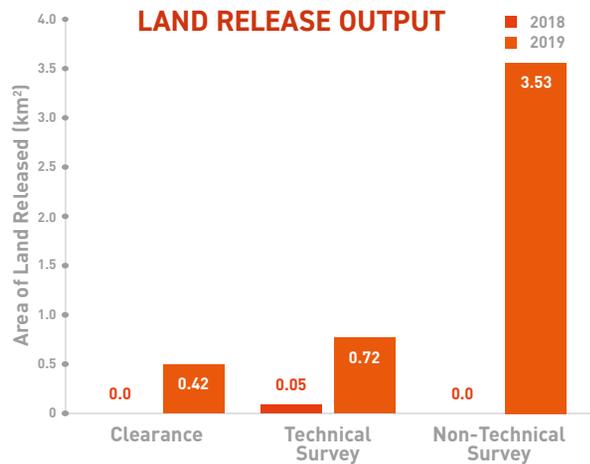
MEDIUM, 10 KM²
 (MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
 CLEARANCE IN 2019

0.42 KM²

AP MINES
 DESTROYED IN 2019

0



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Chad reported a sharp increase in land release in 2019, including mine clearance for the first time in three years, although operations did not result in destruction of any anti-personnel mines. Mines Advisory Group (MAG), after delays caused by insecurity, began operating in Borkou province. Chad also secured a five-year extension of its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline for completing clearance to the beginning of 2025. Chad made progress in consolidating data to improve its understanding of mine contamination, sharply reducing the estimate of its remaining challenge in the process.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The National High Commission for Demining (HCND) should ensure operators focus clearance assets on areas with known mine contamination.
- Chad needs to develop a resource mobilisation strategy to secure and diversify funding and attract international technical and operational support.
- Chad should streamline bureaucratic procedures that currently delay operators seeking to conduct survey and clearance.
- Chad should consider establishing an in-country platform bringing together the authorities, donors, and key stakeholders to help strengthen national coordination.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	4	Contamination estimates are based on outdated and incomplete data, underscoring the need for re-survey. Progress in cleaning up the national mine action database has provided greater clarity on contamination and areas where re-survey is required.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	4	Chad's national mine action authority coordinates the sector and carried out further restructuring in 2019 to increase efficiency. Government pays salaries of national staff in the mine action sector but operations remain dependent on international funding.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	3	Gender has not been a priority in a programme that has undergone significant downsizing and struggled to mobilise resources to implement survey or clearance. Women find employment, including in managerial- and supervisory-level positions, mainly in administrative roles, risk education, or victim assistance. Women are consulted during survey and community liaison activities.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	4	Upgrading of the HCND database by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) has significantly improved understanding of contamination and data quality. The HCND has started to report disaggregated data on land release but sustained training and capacity building will be essential to preserve the gains.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	4	4	Chad provides annual Article 7 reports and submitted a revised Article 5 extension request in August 2019, which was granted at the Fourth Review Conference in November 2019, but its contamination data was rendered obsolete by improvements in the database. It set only general goals for survey and clearance that need to be enhanced by detailed annual work plans.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	Chad has national standards in place, which were updated by Humanity and Inclusion (HI) in 2017. These are said to comply with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). HCND planned further updates and amendments in 2020.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	3	2	Chad released more land through survey and clearance in 2019 than in the previous five years combined but in the process it did not report clearing a single anti-personnel mine.
Average Score	4.5	3.9	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National High Commission for Demining (HCND)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Armed Forces Combat Engineering Battalion
- HCND

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Humanity and Inclusion (HI)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)
- Secours Catholique et Développement (SECADEV) (Victim Assistance)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Chad estimated that its anti-personnel mine contamination covered some 42km² at the end of 2019 (see Table 1),¹ barely one-third of the nearly 118km² reported a year earlier or even the 137 mined areas covering 111km² identified in Chad's revised Article 5 extension request from August 2019.² Clean-up of the database eliminating duplicate entries accounted for close to 90% of the reduction in the estimated area and cut the number of provinces thought to be mine affected from nine in 2019 to three in 2020. The HCND, however, has also acknowledged that the data is incomplete and it is unable to provide a precise estimate of total mine contamination.³

One region, Tibesti, alone accounted for 95% of the estimated remaining mined area.⁴ On the border between the Borkou region and Libya, Chad has reported the presence of anti-vehicle mines protected by lines of anti-personnel mines. Access for survey and clearance has been blocked by scattered "nuisance" minefields. The HCND says further survey is also required in southern provinces bordering the Central African Republic to confirm that mined areas have been eliminated.⁵

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area (at end 2019)⁶

Province	Confirmed mined areas	Area affected (m ²)
Borkou	1	4,033
Ennedi	8	2,260,414
Tibesti	57	40,080,407
Totals	66	42,344,854

NEW CONTAMINATION

MAG reported identifying five new suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) in 2019 totalling 3,341,600m² in Borkou region, including one SHA which amounted to 3,400,000m² and four SHAs recorded at 400m² each.⁷ HI said non-technical survey in 2019 identified one hazardous area in Borkou covering 35,379m² and another in Ennedi West of 139,426m² but recorded them as battle areas.⁸

In 2018, Chad cited insecurity in Tibesti and the probability that mines had been newly laid there as among the reasons for its failure to meet its extended third Article 5 deadline.⁹ It also contends with rising insurgency from Boko Haram and other armed groups in western areas around Lake Chad, which harvest explosives from explosive remnants of war (ERW) for improvised explosive devices. The HCND has not quantified the level of use or the extent to which the devices found qualify as anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.¹⁰

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Chad's mine action programme is coordinated by the National High Commission for Demining (Haut Commissariat National de Déminage, HCND) which comes under the Ministry of Economy and Development Planning.¹¹ The National Demining Centre (Centre National de Déminage, CND), which earlier conducted clearance operations, appears to have been dissolved. The headquarters is supported by four regional centres and two sub-centres.¹²

The HCND is responsible for preparing a national demining strategy and annual work plans and proposing a budget to support their implementation.¹³ Chad's latest Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in April 2019 and revised in August 2019, which was granted at the Fourth APMB Review Conference in November, observed that its mine action programme had lacked a strategic vision, operational planning and effective coordination, weakening its credibility nationally and internationally.¹⁴

The HCND embarked on a process of restructuring three years ago involving a major reduction in staff. In July 2017, nine years after the government first ordered the HCND to restructure, a government decree reduced the number of personnel by more than half from 744 to 329. At the time Chad submitted its revised Article 5 extension request in August 2019, the HCND reported having 320 staff, a number unchanged at the end of the year.¹⁵ A June 2019 decree provided for re-organisation, resulting in four main divisions covering: Operations and Logistics, Planning, Administrative and Financial Affairs and Human Resources.¹⁶ Operators say constant changes in coordination staff have hampered efficiency.¹⁷

Government funding for mine action is limited to payment of salaries for national staff. The HCND reported payment of up to approximately US\$1.5 million in 2019.¹⁸ However, the government's persistent non-payment of salaries has badly affected sector performance. A long-running strike by deminers that started in 2017 gave rise to threats by former deminers that have prevented operations in areas of Tibesti earmarked for survey and clearance.¹⁹ Operators also report lengthy delays obtaining the permits required to import equipment as well as in other bureaucratic procedures.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Gender is not discussed in Chad's latest Article 5 deadline extension request and recruitment of female staff is not a priority for the HCND, which has undergone drastic downsizing in the past two years and still faces demands for back pay from staff.

There were nine women among the 207 personnel working for the HCND in 2019; they were employed in a range of management, administrative and field roles. They included the HCND's assistant director, the administration and finance assistant director, the head of risk education, a personnel officer, and two secretaries.²⁰

The lack of women in HCND's operational staff limited options for international operators whose deminers are seconded from HCND. As a result, HI employed women in administrative roles including its country director, a human resources coordinator and assistant finance director.²¹ The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) is advising HI's programme in Chad on the mainstreaming of gender and diversity in their activities.²²

In 2019, MAG employed Chad's first female deminer as a team leader overseeing survey and clearance tasks, conducting on-site quality control and reporting data. She had been trained in Benin to EOD [Explosive Ordnance Disposal] Level 3. MAG also employed women in community liaison and administrative functions.²³

Operators reported that risk education targeted all members of the community and that the resulting data was disaggregated by gender.²⁴ MAG community liaison teams conduct focus group discussions with women, since they are better placed to provide information on contamination in some areas such as wadis where they collect water and firewood. Discussions led by a female community liaison officer identify women's priorities for mine action interventions.²⁵

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The HCND uses an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database but poor maintenance meant data available from it was unreliable because of lost reports and duplication. A clean-up of the database undertaken by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) under the European Union (EU)-funded PRODECO project that started in 2017 has now resulted in cancellation of large numbers of duplicate entries and a sharply reduced estimate of contamination. To support the clean-up, the HCND conducted two field operations in 2019 and one in the first three months of 2020 in order to verify survey results.²⁶

FSD also supported data entry and correction and the production of maps of SHAs, and helped to compile tables for Chad's Article 5 deadline extension request. IMSMA forms were reviewed, updated, and approved at a workshop in 2019. With FSD support, the HCND also introduced standardised forms to be used by operators for weekly and monthly reporting.²⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

Since September 2017, Chad's mine action programme has focused mainly on implementing the four-year (2017–21) EU-funded mine action project (PRODECO), which is being implemented by a consortium of three international operators and one national operator.²⁸ HI was due to focus on survey and clearance in the Borkou and Ennedi regions; MAG was to work in the Tibesti and Lake Chad regions; and FSD would provide training and support for information management, while Secours Catholique et Développement (SECADEV) would address victim assistance.²⁹ Those objectives subsequently changed due to insecurity in Tibesti that prevented MAG from gaining access and forcing it to redirect its demining teams to the Lake Chad area in the west of the country. The HCND acknowledged in its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request that mine action in Chad had lacked a strategic vision, operational planning, and effective coordination, resulting in a loss of confidence locally and internationally.³⁰

Chad's extension request presents a "detailed" programme with targets for non-technical survey, technical survey, and clearance that avoid specifics for any category of activity.³¹

The HCND prioritises tasks according to requests from local authorities. It issues task orders to operators usually after receiving their input on technical and resource requirements of the task. Operators are also usually able to recce tasks with the HCND and local authorities prior to deploying staff.³² HI said it prioritised tasks according to local community development priorities.³³

Table 2: Planning for the Article 5 deadline extension period

Region	Activities	Areas to be addressed	Timeline
Borkou	NTS, TS, clearance	39	January 2020 – September 2021
Chagri	NTS, TS, clearance	1	January 2020 – September 2021
Ennedi	NTS, TS, clearance	7	July 2020 – December 2024
Moyen-Chari	NTS, TS, clearance	1	January 2020 – September 2021
Tibesti	NTS, TS, clearance	89	January 2020 – December 2024

NTS = non-technical survey TS = technical survey

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Chad's national mine action standards are believed to be consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). HI started a review of Chad's standards in 2016 and reported in September 2017 that 11 national mine action standards had been updated and issued, following HCND approval.³⁴ HCND said it planned to update national standards for land release, supervision of organisations, and quality assurance, but gave no details.³⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The HCND is Chad's biggest operator employing a total staff of 320 people in 2019, of whom 113 were seconded to HI and MAG.³⁶ The HCND informed Mine Action Review that operational capacity at the end of 2019 amounted to four manual demining teams with 72 personnel, two non-technical survey teams with six personnel, and two teams operating two mechanical assets with a total of seven personnel. Other capacity included two EOD teams with 16 technicians.³⁷ Additional national EOD capacity is available from the Chad armed forces' combat engineering battalion, which received training on demining and IED clearance in May 2019 from two French army engineers.³⁸

The mine action component of the PRODECO programme funded by the EU and implemented by a consortium of three international demining organisations was the only operation active in Chad in 2019. HI, the PRODECO consortium lead agency, operated with a total staff of 76 people. These included 35 deminers in three multi-task teams and a survey team of five people who conducted survey and clearance of mined areas in the Kirdimi and Faya districts of Borkou province.³⁹ The HCND said it would remain in the province in the first half of 2020 and work in Ennedi throughout the year.⁴⁰ HI is understood to have used drones fitted with infrared cameras to conduct survey⁴¹ but provided no details.

MAG worked with three 12-strong teams of manual deminers, four community liaison staff, and 24 support staff focused on clearance and risk education in northern Chad's Borkou region, including road clearance to enable communications between towns in the north. MAG was supposed to have operated in Tibesti but was prevented from doing so by local conflicts. In consultation with the HCND and HI, it identified alternative areas and carried out an exploratory mission to Borkou in March 2019 before starting operations in June. In 2020, MAG expected to shift operations to Ennedi region.⁴²

As part of the PRODECO programme, 10 HCND deminers were sent to the Centre de Formation au Déminage Humanitaire (CPADD) in Benin for training. Of those, nine qualified for EOD Level 3, the first time Chadian deminers have qualified at this level. Two other HCND staff qualified as quality assurance officers.⁴³

FSD, working with four international and five national staff in 2019, focused on building capacity in the national authority with particular attention to information management, operations management, quality assurance, logistics, and administration. In 2019, FSD also supported production of maps, tables, and analysis for Chad's Article 5 deadline extension request.⁴⁴ The HCND's work plan for 2020 also called for FSD support for non-technical survey and technical survey in Salamat, Sila, and Wadi Fira.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

The HCND reported release of a total of 4.7km² in 2019, mostly through non-technical survey. The results marked a significant acceleration after two years in which Chad did not release any mined land but the operations in 2019 did not result in destruction of any anti-personnel mines.⁴⁵

SURVEY IN 2019

The HCND reported that HI and MAG together cancelled a total of 3.5km² through non-technical survey in 2019 (see Table 3)⁴⁶ although there discrepancies in reported results.⁴⁷ Around 80% of the released area was accounted for by non-technical survey conducted by MAG along a 167km road between Chicha and Kouba Olanga in the Borkou region. Interviews with local inhabitants along the road, together with reviewing old reports and the IMSMA database over a period of approximately three months, enabled MAG to conclude that rumours of mine contamination were groundless. MAG conducted technical survey on one specific area (see Table 4) that a former rebel commander had reported as mined but no mines were found, only 16 items of small arms ammunition.⁴⁸

Table 3: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁵⁰

Province	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Borkou	MAG	3,340,000
	HI	133,471
Wadi Fira	HCND	504
Moyen Chari	HCND	49,239
Salamat	HCND	350
Chari Barguimi	HCND	4,591
Total		3,528,155

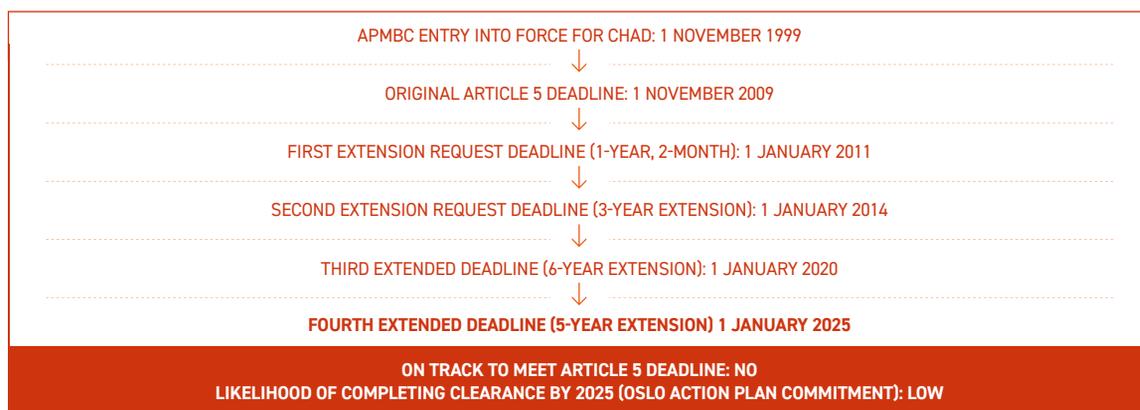
CLEARANCE IN 2019

The HCND reported that HI cleared 423,934m² of mined area in Borkou region in 2019, the first land release through clearance in three years. The HCND said 87 anti-vehicle mines and 1,559 items of ERW were destroyed, but no anti-personnel mines.⁴⁹

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁵¹

Province	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Borkou	HI	140,579
Borkou	MAG	580,801
Total		721,380

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC and in line with the fourth extension (for five years) of its clearance deadline, Chad is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 January 2025.

Chad's deadline extension request provided welcome evidence of continued engagement with the APMBC machinery but not clarity about prospects for achieving completion within the five years requested. In their decision on the application, States Parties described the request as "ambitious" but called for regular updates on progress, communicated in language consistent with IMAS, and noted that the request lacked a detailed annual work plan for survey and clean-up of the database.⁵²

Within months of submitting the request in August 2019, Chad's national authority had lowered its estimate of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination by almost two-thirds, the most significant step towards completion in years, but it resulted largely from database clean-up. The outlook for survey and clearance needed to fulfil Chad's obligations is less clear.

The land release reported in 2019 also represented a significant step forward but at the end of 2019, more than two years after the launch of the PRODECO programme, operators had yet to clear a single anti-personnel mine. Operations remain constrained by insecurity, which has blocked access to the Tibesti region, which accounts for close to 95% of known contamination and by lack of funding. Operations came to a halt in 2020 as a result of measures taken to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, presenting an additional financial challenge for operators needing to extend existing funding agreements or attract new sources of funds.⁵³

Under the plan set out in its extension request, the HCND has estimated the cost of completion at US\$34 million. Chad would provide a little over half a million dollars of this to pay salaries while the remainder is dependent on international donors.⁵⁴ The only international funding available to Chad at present is the €23 million provided by the EU for the PRODECO project, which expires in 2021. Sustained progress will depend on new commitments of international donor funding.

Table 5: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	*0
2018	0
2017	0
2016	**0.58
2015	0.26
Total	0.84

* A total of 423,934m² of anti-vehicle mined area was cleared in 2019.

** Combined clearance and technical survey.

- 1 Email from Souttani Moussa, Manager/Administrator, HCND, 28 April 2020.
- 2 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2019, p. 9.
- 3 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, April 2019, p. 22.
- 4 Email from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 27 April 2020.
- 5 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, April 2019, p. 31.
- 6 Email from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 27 April 2020.
- 7 Email from Daniel Davies, Programme Support Coordinator, MAG, 27 April 2020.
- 8 Email from Seydou Gaye, Armed Violence Reduction Specialist, HI, 3 June 2020.
- 9 Statement of Chad, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 27 November 2018.
- 10 "Impact de la menace terroriste (Etat Islamique en Afrique de l'Ouest ex Boko Haram) au Tchad", PowerPoint presentation by Gen. Mahamat Hisseini Salkato, Deputy Coordinator, HCND, undated but accessed on 3 June 2020 at: bit.ly/3cyoKc7.
- 11 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, April 2019, p. 9.
- 12 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, April 2019, p. 12. The four centres are Abeche (Ouadda), Bardai (Tibesti), Fada (West Ennedi), and Faya-Largeau (Borkou region); the two sub-centres are at Am-timan (Salamat) and Zouar (Tibesti).
- 13 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, April 2019, p. 10.
- 14 Ibid., p. 26.
- 15 Ibid., p. 11; and emails from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 14 May 2019 and 27 April 2020.
- 16 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, April 2019, p. 10.
- 17 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
- 18 Emails from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 14 May 2019 and 27 April 2020.
- 19 Email from Romain Coupeuz, MAG, 4 March 2019. "Tchad: grève des démineurs restés 10 mois sans salaire", ("Chad: deminers strike after 10 months without pay"), Agence de Presse Africaine, 10 May 2017, at: bit.ly/30Cz25g; and email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 26 September 2017.
- 20 Emails from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 14 May 2019 and 29 May 2020.
- 21 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
- 22 Email from Arianna Calza Bini, Head of GMAP division, GICHD, 7 September 2020.
- 23 Email from Daniel Davies, MAG, 21 May 2020.
- 24 Email from Romain Coupeuz, Country Director, MAG, 4 March 2019.
- 25 Email from Daniel Davies, MAG, 21 May 2020.
- 26 Email from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 27 April 2020.
- 27 Email from Olivier Shu, Senior Technical Adviser, FSD, 27 March 2020.
- 28 HI "Country Profile Chad", September 2017, at: bit.ly/2Sri4nx.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, April 2019, p. 30.
- 31 Ibid., p. 35.
- 32 Email from Daniel Davies, MAG, 27 April 2020.
- 33 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
- 34 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 5 September 2017.
- 35 Email from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 27 April 2020.
- 36 Email from HCND, 29 May 2020.
- 37 Email from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 27 April 2020.
- 38 Embassy of France, "Former au déminage et à la lutte contre les engins explosifs improvisés" ("Training in demining and in tackling improvised explosive devices"), Ndjamena, at: bit.ly/2Xwl70p.
- 39 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 "Les drones peuvent désormais repérer les mines, annonce Handicap International", Pixabay, 8 November 2019.
- 42 Email from Daniel Davies, MAG, 27 April 2020.
- 43 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
- 44 Email from Olivier Shu, FSD, 27 March 2020.
- 45 Emails from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 27 April and 29 May 2020.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 HI reported it cancelled 110,844m² through non-technical survey and reduced 169,515m² through technical survey in 2019. Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
- 48 Emails from Daniel Davies, MAG, 27 April and 21 May 2020; and Llewellyn Jones, Director of Programmes, MAG, 7 September 2020.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Email from Souttani Moussa, HCND, 27 April 2020.
- 51 Email from HCND, 29 May 2020.
- 52 Decision on Chad's Extension Request, Fourth APMB Review Conference, 29 November 2019.
- 53 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
- 54 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, April 2019, p. 36.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2020
CLEARANCE REPORTED COMPLETED

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

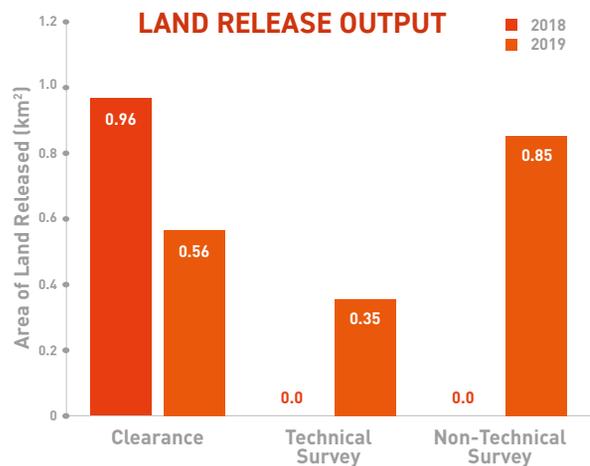
0 KM²

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0.56 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

4,093



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **Clearance completed in 2020**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Chile ended its formal mine clearance operations on 27 February 2020 and declared that it has addressed all known minefields within its territory, meeting its 1 March 2020 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Chile should ensure that sufficient capacity is maintained to address any residual contamination that may be discovered in the future.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	9	7	It is understood that Chile has no known anti-personnel mine contamination remaining in the country since the end of February 2020.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	8	There is strong national ownership in Chile with effective leadership of the programme from the National Demining Commission (Comisión Nacional de Desminado, CNAD) and demining operations were fully funded by the Chilean government.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	In previous years Chile has taken steps to mainstream gender across the armed forces with women working at all levels of the mine action programme. However, in 2019 only 4% of staff employed by the demining units were female.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	8	6	Chile uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. Chile submits timely Article 7 transparency reports and provides regular updates on progress in Article 5 implementation at the annual meetings of States Parties.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	6	Chile has had a National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2016–2020; it submitted updated clearance plans in 2019. Chile did not meet its land release target for 2019 but then far exceeded its target for 2020. As at May 2020, Chile had not provided information on its plan for residual risk post-completion.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	7	Chile is guided by the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and the Humanitarian Demining Manual of the Chilean Army. All survey and clearance are undertaken by the military with both machines and dogs used during operations.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	10	5	Chile released almost 1.8km ² in 2019 and 2.8km ² in 2020, totalling a highly impressive 4.6km ² over just 14 months in order to meet its Article 5 deadline. Chile's survey output increased in 2019. Its clearance output fell in 2019 (0.56km ²) compared to the previous year but then rose rapidly in 2020 when Chile reportedly cleared 0.7km ² in just two months.
Average Score	8.1	6.4	Overall Programme Performance: VERY GOOD

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Demining Commission (Comisión Nacional de Desminado, CNAD)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Army Corps of Engineers (Arica, Calama, Punta Arenas), Navy Landmine Operations Squad (POMTA), Air Force (CEDDEX)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at 27 February 2020, Chile declared that it had addressed all known minefields and was now free of known anti-personnel mine contamination.¹ At the end of 2018, Chile had 4.45km² of anti-personnel mined area in five regions across 18 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) covering a total of 1.16km² and 4 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) with a total size of 3.29km².² At the end of 2019, Chile reported seven hazardous areas totalling 2.70km² remaining across three regions (see Table 1), which it went on to fully release in January and February 2020. In addition, Chile added 4,430m² of previously unrecorded mine contamination in the regions of Valparaíso and Magallanes y Antártica Chilena to the database in 2019. In 2020, Chile added 102,902m² of previously unrecorded mine contamination in the regions of Arica y Parinacota, and Tarapacá to the database.³

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end 2019)⁴

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHA/CHA	Total area (m ²)
Arica y Parinacota	2	179,981	1	145,297	3	325,278
Tarapacá	2	30,383	0	0	2	30,383
Antofagasta	1	62,591	1	2,279,112	2	2,341,703
Totals	5	272,955	2	2,424,409	7	2,697,364

The mines were all laid during the Pinochet regime in the 1970s on Chile's borders with Argentina in the south, and with Bolivia and Peru in the north. The mined areas, which typically contained both anti-vehicle and anti-personnel mines, were generally difficult to access and mostly in unpopulated regions. The regions of both Antofagasta and Arica y Parinacota were contaminated with anti-vehicle as well as anti-personnel mines while the region of Tarapacá was contaminated only with anti-personnel mines.⁵ The vast majority of the mines were laid in the northern region, with some minefields located as high as 5,000m above sea level.⁶ Of the seven mined areas identified in Table 1 two contained only anti-personnel mines.⁷

Chile is also contaminated with cluster munition remnants (currently estimated to cover 65km², although actual contamination is likely to be considerably lower) and to a limited extent other unexploded ordnance (UXO) (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Chile for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The national mine action programme is managed by the National Demining Commission (CNAD), which is chaired by the Minister of Defence. In 2002, Supreme Decree No. 79 created CNAD as an advisory body to the President of the Republic and interministerial coordinating body to support the fulfilment of Chile's obligations under the APMBBC.⁸ Its main functions are to advise the President, mobilise resources, coordinate demining with state agencies, and develop plans for implementing the APMBBC. Demining operations are all funded by the Government of Chile.

Mine clearance operations were fully funded by the Chilean government.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

While there is no specific gender policy within CNAD, Chile's policy of integrating women into the armed forces has been in place since 2000. As at May 2019, 14.4% of total armed forces personnel were female. In 2016, restrictions on the type of military positions a woman could hold were lifted and legislation was adopted to modify the military grading system, allowing women to be promoted in the same way as men. Women have been working in demining in Chile since 2004 across all types of roles, including as deminers and in managerial/supervisory roles.

In 2007, the first woman was appointed as Manual Demining Section Commander in Arica. In May 2018, a woman was appointed as Demining Company Commander in Arica. Chile has made it easier for women to work in the sector by, for example, adapting demining equipment to better suit female specifications, providing childcare, and eliminating the gender wage gap.⁹ Chile reported that in 2019, of the 246 personnel carrying out roles within the demining units, only 10 (4%) were women. They included two demining section commanders and four women in support roles (one medic, two nurses, and one paramedic).¹⁰

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Since 2003, Chile has been using the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). During 2017, Chile upgraded to Version 6 of IMSMA after starting the MARS (Mine Action Reporting System) application that replaced IMSMA Mobile. This application has equipped Chile with high-quality geographic information to support decision-making around clearance.¹¹

Chile has submitted its Article 7 reports almost every year since its accession to the convention in 2002 and makes regular Article 5 statements at meetings of States Parties, although there have been some problems with the accuracy of the information presented. In previous years, Chile submitted clearance plans that contained estimates that were more than the amount of area that had been indicated as remaining.¹²

PLANNING AND TASKING

The National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2016–2020 was formulated in accordance with the request of the Eleventh Meeting of the States Parties (11MSP) that Chile provide updates relative to the timelines presented in its 2011 extension request.¹³ The main objective of the plan was to eliminate all existing anti-personnel mines on national territory by the March 2020 clearance deadline.¹⁴

As at April 2019, Chile had cleared three mined areas totalling 26,603m² since January and planned to clear an additional 18 mined areas by the end of the year, leaving one mined area to clear in 2020 (see Table 2).¹⁵ In fact, Chile released 15 mined areas in 2019 totalling 1.76km², of which 0.56km² was cleared, 0.35km² was reduced through technical survey, and 0.85km² was cancelled through non-technical survey. Then in January and February 2020, Chile released a further 2.8km² of mined area, of which 2.09km² was reduced through technical survey and 0.71km² was cleared.¹⁶

Table 2: Updated demining plan (2019–20)¹⁷

Year	Mined areas	Planned release (m ²)
2019	18	4,374,448
2020	1	50,600
Totals	19	4,425,048

Annually, CNAD issues a National Directive on the Execution of Demining Activities from the Government of Chile, which contains a set of provisions and tasks to support the planning of demining activities.¹⁸ Clearance was prioritised according to proximity to populated areas, impact on land that has been designated a national park or is a historical site of touristic interest, and impact on land that obstructs development.¹⁹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Chile is guided by the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).²⁰ In addition to the IMAS Chile also follows the provisions and regulations as set out in the "Humanitarian Demining Manual of the Chilean Army".²¹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Mine clearance in Chile is conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers, the Navy Landmine Operations Squad, and the Air Force.²²

In 2019, there were four non-technical survey teams deployed totalling 11 personnel. In addition, there were 14 technical survey teams totalling 121 personnel. In 2020, there were two non-technical survey teams deployed totalling six personnel and eight technical survey teams totalling fifty-five personnel.²³

Table 3: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019²⁴

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**
Arica	6	69	2	3
Calama	2	45	0	3
Punta Arenas	2	26	0	0
POMTA	2	28	0	0
CEDDEX	2	12	0	0
Totals	14	180	2	6

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2020²⁵

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**
Arica	6	69	0	3
Calama	2	45	0	3
Totals	8	114	0	6

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

Since 2008, mechanical assets have been used to support manual demining in Chile. During 2019, machines were deployed to conduct clearance in the regions of Arica y Parinacota and Antofagasta.²⁶ Chile also used explosive detection dogs for the first time in 2018 to carry out quality control of an area that had been cleared using machines.²⁷

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019 AND 2020

Chile released a total of 4.56km² from 1 January 2019 to 27 February 2020, of which 1.27km² was cleared, 2.44km² was reduced through technical survey, and 0.85km² was cancelled through non-technical survey. A total of 16,619 anti-personnel mines and 11,357 anti-vehicle mines were found and destroyed. The clearance figures include 107,332m² of previously unrecorded mine contamination in the regions of Arica y Parinacota, Magallanes y Antártica Chilena, Tarapacá, and Valparaíso which was added to the database in 2019 and 2020 and cleared during that period.

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, Chile released a total of 1.20km² through survey across four regions, of which almost 0.85km² was cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 5) and 0.35km² was reduced through technical survey (see Table 6).²⁸ This is a huge increase from 2018 when no mined area was cancelled or reduced through survey.²⁹

Table 5: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019³⁰

Region	Area cancelled (m ²)
Arica y Parinacota	121,104
Tarapacá	4,216
Antofagasta	613,615
Magallanes y Antártica Chilena	108,930
Total	847,865

Table 6: Reduction through technical survey in 2019³¹

Province	Area reduced (m ²)
Arica y Parinacota	312,873
Tarapacá	1,272
Antofagasta	11,306
Magallanes y Antártica Chilena	26,039
Total	351,490

SURVEY IN 2020

In 2020, Chile reduced a massive 2.09km² through technical survey in just two months (see Table 7), almost six times the amount reduced through technical survey throughout the whole of 2019. The contaminated area of Seilao in Antofagasta province was estimated to cover 2.28km² when technical survey was carried out in 2017 based on the information from manual and mechanical demining conducted in the area since 2010.³² This area was then partially reduced by survey in 2019. No mined area was cancelled through non-technical survey in 2020.³³

Table 7: Reduction through technical survey in 2020³⁴

Province	Area reduced (m ²)
Arica y Parinacota	160,899
Tarapacá	24,278
Antofagasta	1,905,685
Total	2,090,862

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 0.56km² was released through clearance in five regions with 4,093 anti-personnel mines and 1,187 anti-vehicle mines found and destroyed (see Table 8).³⁵ This is a 42% decrease from the 0.96km² cleared in 2018, although an increase from the 3,908 anti-personnel mines and 1,117 anti-vehicle mines that were found and destroyed.³⁶

Table 8: Mine clearance in 2019³⁷

Region	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Arica y Parinacota	183,399	886	663
Tarapacá	13,328	167	0
Antofagasta	321,542	1,553	524
Valparaíso	15,787	0	0
Magallanes y Antártica Chilena	25,306	1,487	0
Totals	559,362	4,093	1,187

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

CLEARANCE IN 2020

In 2020, over two months, Chile cleared 0.71km² across three regions, finding and destroying 12,526 anti-personnel mines and 10,170 anti-vehicle mines (see Table 9).³⁸ This is a 27% increase in the amount cleared over the whole of 2019 and a threefold increase in the number of anti-personnel mines found and destroyed. According to Chile, it managed to achieve this amount of clearance as the climatic conditions were optimal. In addition, the mechanical demining units were reorganised allowing them to work up to three shifts per day, thereby significantly increasing clearance output.³⁹

Table 9: Mine clearance in 2020⁴⁰

Region	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Arica y Parinacota	265,786	11,176	9,934
Tarapacá	7,600	212	0
Antofagasta	436,018	1,138	236
Totals	709,404	12,526	10,170

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the eight-year extension request granted by States Parties in 2012), Chile was required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2020. Chile reported in its Article 7 report covering 2019 that it had completed clearance on 27 February 2020. As at 29 February 2020, Chile had destroyed a total of 177,725 emplaced landmines since it became a State Party to the APMBC.⁴¹ Chile fulfilled its obligations by releasing an impressive 4.56km² in just 14 months while facing considerable challenges to implementation from the climate and topology.

Table 10: Six-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2020*	0.71
2019	0.56
2018	0.96
2017	0.86
2016	3.52
2015	1.89
Total	8.50

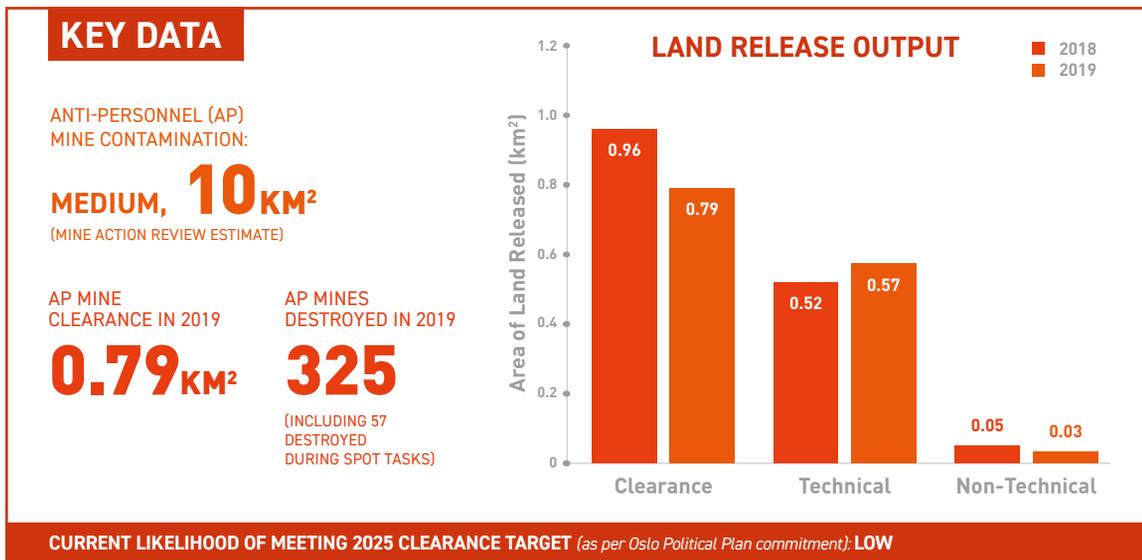
* January and February 2020

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

As at May 2020, Chile had not provided information on whether it had a plan in place for dealing with residual risk since completion. It is expected that this capacity will come from the Chilean military, which it plans to redeploy to conduct survey and clearance of the remaining cluster munition remnant contamination.

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| <p>1 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form G.</p> <p>2 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.</p> <p>3 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>4 Ibid., Form C.</p> <p>5 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.</p> <p>6 Article 7 Report (covering 2009), Form I.</p> <p>7 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.</p> <p>8 Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form A3.</p> <p>9 Statement from Chile during the Thematic Discussion on Integrating Gender into Mine Action, Intersessional Meetings, 23 May 2019; and emails from Col. Juan José López Demuth, Executive Secretary, CNAD, 22 and 27 June 2019.</p> <p>10 Email from Carlos Rivera Bugueño, Senior Sub-Officer, CNAD, 6 August 2020.</p> <p>11 Email from Col. Andres Caceres Cuadra, CNAD, 12 July 2018.</p> <p>12 Conclusions on the implementation of Article 5, 16th Meeting of States Parties, 18–21 December 2017.</p> <p>13 Decisions on the request submitted by Chile for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, 11MSP, 2 December 2011.</p> <p>14 Email from Col. Andres Caceres Cuadra, CNAD, 12 July 2018.</p> <p>15 Statement of Chile, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.</p> <p>16 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>17 Statement of Chile, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.</p> <p>18 Email from Col. Andres Caceres Cuadra, CNAD, 12 July 2018; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.</p> | <p>19 Email from Col. Andres Caceres Cuadra, CNAD, 12 July 2018.</p> <p>20 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F.</p> <p>21 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>22 Email from Carlos Rivera Bugueño, CNAD, 6 August 2020.</p> <p>23 Ibid.</p> <p>24 Ibid.</p> <p>25 Ibid.</p> <p>26 Ibid.</p> <p>27 CNAD, "Desminado Canino", 27 December 2018, at: bit.ly/2VCpHwb.</p> <p>28 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>29 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F.</p> <p>30 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>31 Ibid.</p> <p>32 Email from Carlos Rivera Bugueño, CNAD, 6 August 2020.</p> <p>33 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>34 Ibid.</p> <p>35 Ibid.</p> <p>36 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F.</p> <p>37 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>38 Ibid.</p> <p>39 Email from Carlos Rivera Bugueño, CNAD, 6 August 2020.</p> <p>40 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>41 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form G.</p> |
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ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2021
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 31 DECEMBER 2025



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Colombia is not on track to meet its current Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline of March 2021 and has requested a second extension to 2025. In response to comments by the Article 5 Committee, Colombia submitted additional information on its extension request in August 2020, but this added little new detail to what was already known. While some improvements have been made to the mine action programme, such as the shift towards a more evidence-based estimate of contamination, numerous challenges impede the effectiveness and efficiency of land release. Continued insecurity affects access to contaminated areas but the approach to land release is neither cost effective nor efficient.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Colombia should further endeavour to conduct a baseline survey to elaborate a more meaningful and evidence-based understanding of contamination.
- Colombia should prioritise non-technical survey with integrated explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) capacity in accessible areas and continue to review and clean the data on “events” in the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.
- Colombia should complete the review of national mine action standard (NMAS), finalise and apply its land release NMAS, and correctly implement its technical survey standards. Operators should be supported to use the full toolbox of land release methodologies.
- Colombia should engage more positively and collaboratively with civilian operators and task them in a manner that ensures the best use of resources and prioritises the highest impact areas in response to humanitarian, community, and development needs.
- Quality management of operations should be streamlined and applied equally to all operators, including the military.
- Colombia should provide an updated work plan through to 2025, taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and including realistic targets for land release.
- Colombia should provide more detailed information on how it will mainstream gender and diversity considerations in its mine action programme, including with targets and timeframes.

- Colombia should establish a National Mine Action Platform (NMAP) for regular dialogue among all stakeholders, as recommended by the APMBC's Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, develop resource mobilisation plans, and use all mechanisms within the Convention to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	3	The precise extent of anti-personnel mine contamination remains unknown. While a nationwide baseline survey has yet to be conducted, non-technical survey is taking place in accessible areas. Colombia is now presenting a more evidence-based estimate of remaining contamination that is at least partially based on survey. Insecurity remains an obstacle to access of suspected mined areas and new mines are being emplaced in some areas.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	6	In early 2019, Descontamina Colombia was reallocated to the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace and a new leadership installed. However, there have been no regulatory changes in the management structure and most decisions related to mine clearance remain with the <i>Instancia de Desminado</i> , led by the Ministry of Defence. Roles and responsibilities at national level are generally clear but operators reported significant delays to approval and decision-making and said consultation with stakeholders is tokenistic. Colombia is projected to fund 30% of mine action costs to 2025.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	In 2019, Colombia developed the Gender Guidelines for Mine Action and gender is included within the framework of the new Strategic Plan for 2020–25. The needs of different groups must be taken into account during community liaison with gender-balanced teams but this is not required by the non-technical survey national mine action standard (NMAS). A woman heads the national authority and women make up 63% of the staff dedicated to mine action. However, among deminers this figure drops to 4%.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	4	Improvements have been made to information management in Colombia following a review of the IMSMA database. However, Colombia continues to rely on "events" where more recent survey data is unavailable as the main indicator of contamination even though these are beset with errors and are often cancelled or discarded once investigated. Discrepancies between operator data and figures from the national authority are also frequent due to delays in information processing and quality control. Colombia submitted its 2020 Article 5 extension request, which fails to address longstanding issues around land release, task prioritisation and quality management and lacks clear and achievable goals for land release of all contaminated areas.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	4	4	In 2019, Colombia developed a new five-year strategic plan and an operational plan for demining which includes land release targets although it is unclear how much will be released by survey and how much by clearance. A continuing issue within the mine action programme is prioritisation and task allocation, which has led to operators being locked into inaccessible tasks or which do not allow for an efficient deployment of resources. The Armed Forces, as the largest operator, has been tasked with more than it can manage while civil society operators stand idle due to a lack of feasible tasks. A new prioritisation model has been developed but it is as yet unclear whether this has improved task allocation. This continuing issue can be attributed to operators' priorities not being meaningfully considered and included in either the plan or the model.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	5	Colombia has 15 NMAS in place, but no defined land release concept. In 2019, a participatory review was conducted of all the NMAS. The land release NMAS has been in development for over five years and, as at May 2020, had still to be finalised. Despite contamination being characterised as low density, the approach to land release is very risk averse, which results in over-clearance of areas (meaning clearance of considerable area without contamination being found). The national authority reported that no contamination was found in 58% of tasks cleared.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	4	4	Colombia's land release output fell in 2019 and again there are discrepancies between the figures from operators and those provided by the national authority. Colombia has submitted a request to extend its Article 5 deadline to 31 December 2025. Significant challenges exist to meeting this second extended deadline, particularly as a result of the security situation and ongoing problems with effective and efficient land release.
Average Score	4.6	4.4	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP)
– Descontamina Colombia

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Humanitarian Demining Brigade (Brigada de Desminado Humanitario (BRDEH))
- Marine Corps Explosives and Demining Association (Agrupación de Explosivos y Desminado de Infantería de Marina (AEDIM))
- Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas (CCCM)
- Asociación Colombiana de Técnicos y Expertos en Explosivos e Investigadores de Incendios y NBQR (ATEXX) (not operational in 2019 and closing its programme in 2020)
- Humanicemos DH (not operational in 2019)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Demining Group (DDG)
- The HALO Trust
- Humanity and Inclusion (HI)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
(closing its programme in 2020)
- Perigeo (closing its programme in 2020)
- Polus Colombia (not operational in 2019)

OTHER ACTORS

- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Organization of American States (OAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The precise extent of anti-personnel mine contamination in Colombia remains unknown. As at December 2019, it was reported that 322¹ municipalities have both suspected and confirmed mine contamination. Of this total, 156 municipalities have been assigned to clearance operators and 166 municipalities have “known unknowns” and are awaiting intervention.² In figures reported by the national authority between 2016 and 2019, 212 municipalities have been released through clearance and 179 have been released through the qualification of information bringing the total to 713.³

This is an increase from the 673 municipalities that were estimated to have anti-personnel mine contamination in Colombia's strategic plan for 2016–21. This estimate was based on a calculation that takes 15% of the number of IMSMA “events” from 1990 to 2009 and adds them to 24% of the number IMSMA events from 2010 to 2015, with a further 20% added for both periods. These percentages were calculated based on information from historic humanitarian demining operations. The figure it generates is then multiplied by an estimated average confirmed hazardous area (CHA) of 5,000m², which generated the “baseline” contamination figure for the country.⁴

While a nationwide baseline survey has yet to be conducted in Colombia, operators are conducting non-technical surveys to investigate IMSMA reports and collect additional information from affected communities. This has provided an initial mapping of contamination in the municipalities that have been assigned for demining.⁵ IMSMA events are notoriously unreliable and are frequently not directly related to a hazardous area.⁶ At least Colombia is now presenting a more evidence-based estimate of remaining contamination in its official reporting – one that is partially based on non-technical survey.

In the 156 municipalities assigned to operators as at December 2019, 2,202 areas have had survey or clearance.⁷ A total of 2,723 non-technical surveys have been carried out in the 156 municipalities, which has provided information on 1,344 suspected and confirmed hazardous areas (SHAs and CHAs) covering an estimated total size of 7.49km². Of this, 877 SHAs and CHAs covering 4.16km² have been released, leaving 467 mined areas totalling 3.33km².⁸

Colombia has projected a further 4.95km² of contaminated area exists across 2,843 areas within the 156 affected municipalities that have not yet been surveyed. This projection was calculated using an average contaminated area of 4,700m² per area plus a 5% margin. An additional 166 municipalities where neither survey nor clearance has been conducted have reported “events” related to anti-personnel mines, but have not yet been assigned to demining operators.⁹ As at July 2020, access to 147 of these municipalities was restricted due to lack of security, with no plan on promoting and thus potentially opening humanitarian spaces in these areas.¹⁰

During 2019, 133 SHAs with a size of 624,843m² and 137 CHAs with a size of 698,058m² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination in 13 departments were identified and added to the database.¹¹ Of this, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) reported adding 103,178m²; The HALO Trust 109,185m²; Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas (CCCM) 125,006m²; Danish Demining Group (DDG) 50,712m²; and Humanity and Inclusion (HI) 60,788m².¹² None of this newly recorded contamination corresponds to new or recent use of anti-personnel mines; security still restricts access to areas where new mines are being laid.¹³

All the landmines remaining in Colombia are said to have been laid by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) and all are of an improvised nature. According to The HALO Trust, mined areas in Colombia are low-density, nuisance minefields with the average size of minefields identified by the organisation in 2019 as approximately 2,200m² in size.¹⁴ The average size of minefields in 2019, according to figures reported by the national authority, was 4,574m².¹⁵ Mines were planted in isolated rural areas to protect strategic positions; often coca cultivations whose crops were used by NSAGs to fund operations. When the groups moved on, the mines were left behind, blocking access to roads, paths, schools, and other civilian infrastructure, preventing productive use of land.¹⁶ As there was little, if any, mapping of mined areas by NSAGs and the intended victims were the military or paramilitaries, local communities were often informed that certain areas were mined, though no specifics were typically given. This has led to a widespread belief that mines are everywhere and local people are afraid to use vast areas of land for fear of mines, despite scant firm evidence of their presence.¹⁷

In many areas where the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia–People's Army) demobilised, the government has yet to arrive in force, with other NSAGs now struggling for power.¹⁸ This includes FARC-EP dissidents,¹⁹ the National Liberation Army (ELN), and drug-trafficking groups, especially the largest among them, the Gaitán Self-Defence Forces. Most of the fight for control is concentrated in about one-quarter of the country's municipalities. Mine action operations will only be undertaken with the local community's agreement, often in areas where mistrust of the state is high and community members are sceptical of the operator's intentions due to the perception that operators are linked to the military, which is often exacerbated by the proximity of the demining brigade's operations to civilian operators' areas of intervention. This negatively affects the ability of humanitarian demining organisations to conduct survey and clearance and to determine an accurate estimate of contamination in these areas.²⁰

NEW CONTAMINATION

In 2019, there were 111 civilian and military casualties from anti-personnel mines in Colombia, a 38% decrease from the 178 victims recorded in 2018.²¹ Over half of the victims come from three departments: Antioquia, Arauca, and Norte de Santander; areas traditionally the most affected by armed groups.²² Other departments with high numbers of victims include Bolívar, Cauca, Chocó, Meta, and Nariño.²³ All these territories coincide with drug production and trafficking routes, both for cocaine and marijuana.²⁴ Despite President Duque's governments aggressive approach to coca plant eradication, with 100,000 hectares destroyed in 2019, the amount of land used for coca leaf production rose by 2% over 2018.²⁵ New mines are said to be emplaced to protect these plantations. According to Miguel Ceballos, the High Commissioner for Peace, the government is particularly concerned about the resurgence of this practice in the northern Chocó region, an ELN stronghold.²⁶

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In April 2017, following the adoption of a Presidential Decree, the Directorate for Comprehensive Mine Action (Dirección para la Acción Integral contra minas Antipersonal, DAICMA) became Dirección para la Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal – Descontamina Colombia. Descontamina Colombia was ostensibly made Colombia's national mine action authority, with responsibility for formulating the strategic direction of mine action, coordinating and monitoring mine action at national and local level, applying technical guidance and regulating state and non-state operators, and elaborating and implementing national standards. In practice, it also serves as the national mine action centre.²⁷ In February 2019, responsibility for Descontamina Colombia was reallocated to the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace along with the appointment of a new Director, the Commissioner for Peace.²⁸ In turn, coordination of the sector has been delegated to the Deputy Commissioner.²⁹ Decrees 179 and 1784, both ratified in 2019, elevated decision-making on AICMA to the presidential level and established its functions at national and local level.³⁰ However, in this process AICMA has been disconnected from the Office of the Presidential Counsellor for Stabilization, limiting access for the sector to stabilisation and development funds.³¹

In 2011, Decree 3750 created the Instancia Interinstitucional de Desminado Humanitario (IIDH – Interinstitutional Tribunal for Humanitarian Demining) which is composed of a representative from the Ministry of National Defence, the General Inspectorate of the Military Forces, and Descontamina Colombia. It is responsible for recommending or suspending the certification of humanitarian demining organisations to the Ministry of National Defence and, determining and assigning demining tasks.³² In addition, Decree 3750 called for the elaboration of National Standards for Humanitarian Demining and regulates the quality management of demining operations.³³ Promulgated in July 2017, Decree 1195 outlines mitigation and correction measures that must be applied by operators when demining in National Parks and other areas of ecological value.³⁴ Operators are currently expected to reforest in protected areas after clearance to mitigate environmental impact.³⁵ However, the extent of reforestation often exceeds any estimated impact from manual clearance.³⁶

While roles and responsibilities at a national level are generally clear, operators often experience costly delays due to slow approval and lengthy decision-making processes.³⁷ HI and DDG both reported difficulties obtaining accreditation for international staff with an EOD 2 qualification or above.³⁸ Operators also reported delays in tax exemptions being granted for new contracts. In 2019, operators had to wait for several months as the national authority was involved in a judicial inquiry within the Colombian administration to clarify this process.³⁹

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has been supporting Colombia in a number of key areas for several years, including support for information management, gender and diversity, non-technical survey training for trainers, operational analysis, and through a study on the effect of ageing on improvised anti-personnel mines.⁴⁰ This study is particularly pertinent to the Colombian context due to the large proportion of non-functional mines found. As of writing, however, it appeared that the process had stalled and, as at August 2020, no results have been published.⁴¹ The Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) has been helping Descontamina Colombia to develop, review, and implement national standards and to improve their information management capacities, albeit with mixed success. In July 2019, following the start of FSD's new contract, an additional information management advisor was hired to support Descontamina Colombia with data analysis and evidence-based decision making.⁴² The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) provides technical assistance to the national authority as well as training and capacity building with a focus on national operators. In 2019, UNMAS worked closely with Humanicemos DH to support capacity development with the ultimate aim of it becoming a fully self-sufficient operator and, in March 2020, UNMAS was designated as responsible for the quality management of Humanicemos DH.⁴³

Colombia has estimated the total cost of the mine action programme in 2020–25 will be almost US\$250 million, of which the government will fund 30%. Colombia plans to seek funding from the international community to cover the remaining 70%.⁴⁴ Of this, the projected cost of

demining activities is estimated at \$183 million of which the government will fund \$55 million.⁴⁵ For demining, Colombia is seeking almost \$128 million from the international community to build the quality management capacity within the national authority, in funding for civilian operators, and equipment servicing and replacement for the national military.⁴⁶ In 2019, Colombia received \$37.62 million in international funding for mine action an increase from the \$35.84 million received in 2018.⁴⁷ For 2019–21, the OACP's new investment project has increased national allocation of resources to mine action by 134% from approximately US\$500,000 in 2018 to approximately US\$1.4 million in 2019, with a further expected 37% increase in 2020.⁴⁸ However, this funding is only being allocated to the OACP and there is still a funding shortfall within the mine action sector.

There is no established coordination mechanism to convene stakeholders on a regular basis to discuss and address issues with Article 5 implementation.⁴⁹ A number of workshops were held in 2019 on the new National Strategy for Mine Action 2020–25 and the accompanying Operational Plan, and on Colombia's 2020 extension request. Operators were invited and then asked to provide comment, though it was widely felt that this was not a meaningful consultation with very short timeframes provided for comment, no feedback given by the national authority, and no revisions made, based on the comments given.⁵⁰

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In 2019, Colombia, with the support of the GICHD, developed Gender Guidelines for Mine Action and reports that gender is mainstreamed within the framework of the new Strategic Plan 2020–25 and in its national standards, although the gender and diversity provisions in IMAS are not reflected throughout all the relevant national standards.⁵¹ Data are disaggregated by gender, age, and ethnicity. According to the mine risk education NMAS it is stipulated that the approach must take into account the needs capacities and strengths of men, women, youth, boys and girls of all ethnic groups, and that teams must be gender balanced.⁵² Operators often conduct non-technical survey in communities that were previously inaccessible due to lack of security. All the operators stressed the importance of community liaison and of working with local people, including by employing "local guides", as a way of both building relationships with the community and as a source of accurate information about the existence of contamination.⁵³ The CCCM, DDG, The HALO Trust, HI, and NPA, all reported consulting women and children as well as men during non-technical survey and community liaison and employing women in their non-technical survey teams, but this is not done systematically nor is it required by the non-technical survey NMAS although FSD report that it will be in the updated version and it is a requirement of the risk education NMAS.⁵⁴

Colombia has a significant indigenous and ethnic minority group population at 13.7%, which are afforded their own constitutional protections and therefore require a specific approach during demining tasks. Indigenous communities are said to have been disproportionately affected by anti-personnel mine contamination.⁵⁵ In the Implementation Framework Plan 2017–2032 and the National Development Plan there are commitments to clear anti-personnel mines from ethnic minority communities.⁵⁶ However, there is no information or associated actions on how the needs of ethnic and minority groups are being taken into account during community liaison, survey, and clearance activities in the extension request, despite the commitments made in the 2017 Peace Deal and the Implementation Framework Plan. In order to gain access to indigenous reserves, special permission must be granted and operators work closely with communities to build trust by employing community liaison officers, deminers and non-technical survey personnel directly from those communities. Operators involve local ethnic minority communities in the liaison process ahead of any field operations, working with them to map contamination

and prioritise tasks.⁵⁷ The involvement of local indigenous communities during the community liaison process also gives operators an understanding of the necessary preparations that must take place before survey or clearance can be conducted on sacred land.⁵⁸

Colombia has a female head of its national mine action authority, one of the few women who hold this position in the world. In the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, of the 30 officials dedicated to mine action 19 (63%) are women. However, from the 4,566 accredited deminers in Colombia, only 194 (4.2%) are female deminers.⁵⁹ As reported in the 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request, BRDEH, the largest operator in Colombia, had no female deminers operational in 2019 and nor did AEDIM, the smaller military operator.⁶⁰ As at August 2020, no information had been provided by the BRDEH or AEDIM to Mine Action Review on whether there is equal access to employment within these organisations for qualified women and men or whether any measures have been put in place to achieve this.

The HALO Trust has an organisational gender and diversity policy. Open recruitment for jobs such as deminers specifically encourages women to apply because manual labour is often seen as not appropriate for women in some rural regions of Colombia.⁶¹ In 2019, an average of 480 staff were employed across the programme each month, of whom 33% were women. Operations staff consisted of an average of 310 staff per month, of whom 22% were women. In 2019, 23% of all managerial and senior positions were held by women, including survey and demining supervisors, location managers and the deputy programme manager.⁶²

NPA set gender and diversity as an internal Key Performance Indicator for 2019. During the year, NPA established the country's first all-female clearance team. NPA also recruited indigenous and staff with disabilities during a recruitment drive when the programme opened in Caquetá department in April 2019. NPA set a target of 50% for new female recruitment which it was not able to meet due to the proportionately lower number of applications from women, though it did reach 35%. Of the 87 operational staff employed by NPA in 2019, 19 were women (22%). NPA in Colombia in 2019 had four women in its nine-strong Country Management Team, amounting to 44% of the total.⁶³

HI has an organisational disability, gender, and age policy which specifies that HI Colombia will need to elaborate an implementation plan. HI actively recruits women and offers gender-appropriate working conditions, such as separate living quarters in the field. In 2019, within operational and supervisory positions there were 35% women on average. At managerial level this rose to 60%.⁶⁴ Ethnic minority groups made up 11% of staff employed in operational roles in HI anti-personnel mine survey and clearance teams and 2% of them were employed in managerial level/supervisory positions. In addition, 88 people from local communities were employed by HI on anti-personnel mine survey and clearance teams, and 10 of them were from ethnic minority groups.⁶⁵

CCCM has a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan. In 2019, CCCM conducted gender equality training to equip teams with an understanding of gender inequalities to better mainstream gender in their operational work. It sought to raise awareness of discrimination and violence against women and create reporting channels within the organisation; to ensure women were promoted to leadership positions; that all of the organisations policies have been reviewed and updated; and that workshops have been conducted with local communities on violence against women and the recognition of rights. A pilot project was also initiated on the inclusion of LGBTQ+ communities and the creation of safe spaces.

In 2019, the CCCM Gender Advisor enrolled in the GICHD Gender Focal Point Capacity Development programme, an 18-month programme comprising of an introduction to gender and diversity in mine action e-Learning; 10-day face-to-face training; assignments to put knowledge and skills acquired into practice; participation in an online community of practice. This further strengthened CCCCM's capacity on gender and diversity.⁶⁶ Gender focal points were also appointed within community liaison, survey and clearance teams to ensure that gender is being mainstreamed throughout the organisation. CCCM has reviewed its hiring processes to make roles more accessible to women both at the operational and managerial level, but despite these efforts the inclusion of women remains a challenge. In 2019, 29% of clearance teams and 31% of non-technical survey teams were women and 50% of the national management team and 31% of the operational management team are female.⁶⁷

In 2019, DDG reported that its staff team was gender and LGTQBI+ inclusive composed of 52 individuals, of which 31% were female and 71% were from local communities and indigenous groups. Within operational teams, 58% of staff were by local people from San José del Fragua.⁶⁸

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Government Decree 1649 of 2014 assigned Descontamina Colombia responsibility for the IMSMA database and mandated it to "compile, systematise, centralise, and update relevant information" to serve as a basis for programme planning.⁶⁹ Descontamina Colombia uses the IMSMA database and its own Periferico database. Poor information management has been a feature of the mine action programme since its inception. In 2018, an evaluation of information management was conducted and as a result the national authority, in partnership with FSD, elaborated an Improvement Plan 2018–19. According to the national authority this has led to a review of the IMSMA database, increased data sharing with external parties, increased information management capacity, and improved reporting procedures and data management.⁷⁰

The GICHD have also noted improvements since 2017 in data sharing and data quality following a significant review and correction of IMSMA data.⁷¹ Access to data has improved with IMSMA now available online and licences are granted to the operators for access to the Periferico database. Training has also been provided for operators in the management of the online platforms that are required to submit demining outputs.⁷² In addition, new data collection, analysis and processing tools have been introduced and promoted by the NMAA, UNMAS, and the GICHD with the support of ESRI Colombia (Survey 1,2,3, Collector, Dashboard, and Historical Maps, among others).⁷³ HI says Descontamina are willing to listen and provide support in solving problems.⁷⁴

Since 1990, Colombia has collected and reported on "events" related to anti-personnel mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO), and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). This data has been the main indicator of contamination and has formed the basis of demining planning and prioritisation.⁷⁵ IMSMA "events" are the main source of contamination information in areas that have not yet been surveyed and form the starting point for non-technical surveys carried out by operators.⁷⁶

Operators have found these IMSMA events are beset with errors, including duplications and inaccuracies. Despite some improvements to the registration of events and a clean-up of the database, when operators are assigned a task and investigate each event they are still finding that most do not contain either mines or UXO.⁷⁷ As a result, most of the investigated events are cancelled or discarded. The national authority conducted an analysis of IMSMA events in the database and found that 59% of the total number of hazardous areas that had been identified corresponded with sectors where IMSMA events had been found and investigated and that 30% of hazardous areas identified had an IMSMA event within 200m of the polygon.⁷⁸ Once non-technical survey has been carried out, there is a much clearer understanding of contamination and the data in the national information system for these areas become reliable.⁷⁹

There are frequent discrepancies between operators' data and the figures from the national authority. While the national authority provide a weekly update of all demining statistics, there is often a delay in information processing, which means that the publicly available figures are not always accurate or up to date.⁸⁰ Administrative delays between the National Authority, the external monitoring system (the Organization of American States; OAS) and operators contribute to delays with approvals taking time between various parties.⁸¹ Article 7 reports are submitted on a timely basis, and in March 2020, Colombia submitted its Article 5 deadline extension request which while there are some positives in that it presents an estimate of contamination that is at least partially based on non-technical survey, it fails to address longstanding issues around land release, task prioritisation, and quality management; contains data inconsistencies; and lacks clear and achievable targets for land release of all the contaminated land remaining to be addressed.⁸²

PLANNING AND TASKING

In 2019, Colombia developed a new Strategic Plan 2020–25 “Towards a Colombia free of the suspicion of anti-personnel mines for all Colombians”, which formed the basis of Colombia’s 2020 extension request. In March 2019, a participatory review of the mine action sector began. Operators and other sector stakeholders including UNMAS and FSD were asked to help redesign the mine action strategy through workshops, but these ceased in June 2019 as did feedback or progress updates from Descontamina.⁸³ According to operators, the consultation process was tokenistic and going forward the role of civil society is very unclear and nebulous with little indication the government intends to continue collaboration beyond 2021.⁸⁴ Some operators also reported concerns that the framework for the strategy lacks specific detail in addressing some key issues, such as prioritisation, technical survey, insecurity, and lack of capacity at the national authority.⁸⁵

Colombia included an operational plan for demining in its extension request and latest Article 7 report and has provided annual land release/clearance targets for 2020–23 for the 3.33km² of suspected and confirmed hazardous area that has been identified through non-technical survey in 156 municipalities (see Table 1). These tasks have already been assigned to operators, the majority of which at 64%, has been assigned to the Humanitarian Demining Brigade (Brigada de Desminado Humanitario, BRDEH).⁸⁶ It is not clear from the extension request how much of this will be released through survey and how much through clearance.

Table 1: Annual land release projections⁸⁷

Year	SHAs/CHAs	Area (km ²)
2020	194	1.02
2021	101	1.33
2022	140	0.95
2023	32	0.03
Totals	467	3.33

According to the plan, the additional 166 municipalities with reported anti-personnel mine contamination, but no ongoing operations, will be surveyed and cleared in 2024–25 although this is obviously heavily dependent on security conditions allowing for access to these areas and the amount of contamination that is found once access is granted. As at July 2020, access to 147 of these municipalities was restricted due to insecurity with 19 municipalities now accessible and ready to be assigned to operators.⁸⁸ Colombia plans to implement a micro-targeting methodology in these municipalities which will involve convening working groups to assess the available information about inaccessible areas that have suspected mine contamination.⁸⁹ Although not included in the annual targets, Colombia reports elsewhere in its 2020 Extension Request that an estimated 4.95km² of mined area located in areas where non-technical survey has yet to be completed in the 156 municipalities already assigned to operators will also require clearance.⁹⁰ Colombia projected it would release 80 municipalities with a total area of 1.62km² in 2019.⁹¹ It did not meet that goal, releasing just 1.40km². In 2020, Colombia plans to release 1.02km², however, in light of the outbreak of COVID-19 and the resultant lockdown it is unclear how realistic this target was. As at the beginning of July, demining operations had already been stood down for more than three

months. Taking this into account the national authority is in the process of updating its Operational Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2020–2025 which it will present at the APMB 18th Meeting of States Parties. In response to the outbreak, new safety protocols have been implemented and, as at September 2020, operations had been restarted in 102 municipalities.⁹²

Colombia prioritised its task allocation according to the IIDH and the Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Action against Antipersonnel Mines 2016–2021. The IIDH takes into account information provided by local bodies, the Early Warning System of the Ombudsman’s Office, and the General Command of the Military Forces, and Descontamina Colombia.⁹³ The Strategic Plan 2016–21 categorised municipalities in Type (Priority) I, II, and III, which are then proposed for task allocation to the demining organisations without a given order, hindering a systemic approach to demining. Of the 156 municipalities assigned to operators for land release in 2020–23, 53% are Type I and 40% are Type II.⁹⁴ Type I areas, which correspond to municipalities with human casualties from anti-personnel mines between January 2010 and December 2015, tend to have the highest levels of anti-personnel mine contamination and the most security issues. In these areas, contaminated territories are often inaccessible to operators or operators are forced to suspend survey and clearance operations due to security concerns. These suspensions can last anywhere from a few days to an indefinite period depending on how severely the situation disrupts operations.⁹⁵

In Colombia’s 2020 extension request information was included on a new model for prioritisation was alluded to but no detailed information was provided.⁹⁶ According to Colombia, this new model integrates IMSMA data with more than 40 indicators that take into account security conditions, public policy, and bids from demining operators.⁹⁷ However, there was no consultation with operators on this new model nor was this model discussed in the strategic review workshops.⁹⁸

Descontamina Colombia’s ability to coordinate has come under scrutiny, as it has been locking in operators to tasks before the extent of the challenge is known and without a clear appreciation of operators’ future capacities. In the view of UNMAS, in Descontamina Colombia’s push to assign tasks demonstrating the peace accord’s new opportunities, operators are often deployed into new areas disconnected from their existing areas of operation and without prior consideration of their capacity. This is not an efficient use of resources.⁹⁹ Under Article 6(8) of the APMB, States Parties receiving international assistance are obligated to cooperate with a view to ensuring the full and prompt implementation of agreed assistance programmes. In 2019, operators bid for municipalities of which all but one was assigned to the BRDEH despite a number of civil society operators having funding and teams in place ready to conduct clearance. According to NPA, the criteria for selection are biased towards the Demining Brigade without good reason.¹⁰⁰ In the operational plan, included in the extension request, Colombia indicates that in 2020–25 it will review the method for assigning tasks and it will reassign tasks where operations are not possible as part of the forthcoming land release NMAS.¹⁰¹

Within municipalities, operators prioritise tasks in agreement with municipal authorities, local leaders and the national mine action authority.¹⁰² There are no specific criteria for task prioritisation within municipalities and operators are at liberty to follow their own priorities.¹⁰³

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Colombia has 15 NMAS in place, including a glossary of mine action terms, up from just three when the 2016–21 strategic plan was launched.¹⁰⁴ In October 2019, a participatory review of every national standard began and workshops were held with all mine action stakeholders, with technical support provided by FSD, to discuss how the NMAS could be improved. It is planned that by the end of 2020 all current NMAS would be updated and new NMAS, including for land release and information management, would be implemented.¹⁰⁵ The information management NMAS is key to establishing consistent and meaningful procedures for collecting, analysing, reporting, and sharing information across and outside the sector.¹⁰⁶

In localities where security allows operators to conduct survey and clearance, contaminated areas are characterised as being low density and “low functionality”. The HALO Trust estimated that at least 90% of the ordnance they have found has degraded due to water ingress and is non-functional. However, the NMAS have not adapted to this context and are more appropriate to contamination that is high density and high functionality. This makes clearance extremely inefficient and expensive. Furthermore, the government has adopted an extremely conservative approach to risk management, with an over-reliance on full clearance.¹⁰⁷ The land release NMAS, which has been under development for over five years, was sent to the OACP for review as at May 2020.¹⁰⁸

The NMAS on technical survey was approved by Descontamina Colombia in December 2017 but is not yet implemented by all operators, as according to the standard if any contamination is found during survey full clearance

must be carried out, negating the efficiencies of technical survey.¹⁰⁹ A revised technical survey NMAS was expected to be approved by the end of 2019.¹¹⁰ As at April 2020, the NMAS had still to be approved.¹¹¹

There is also a lack of clarity about the destruction of items found by non-technical survey teams. If a non-technical survey team finds a mine, there are “open-for-interpretation” statements in the NMAS that may or may not allow the team to eliminate that immediate risk, dependent on whether the OAS gives the go-ahead. In some cases, the team needs to investigate further – if it was an isolated mine in a footpath for instance – or if they should report it as a hazardous area. In addition, there are restrictions on immediate investigation of possible isolated items using technical tools during non-technical survey operations, which may result in reporting areas for clearance when what is found is actually an isolated item of ordnance.¹¹²

In 2019, of the 14 tasks cleared by NPA, half were found to have no contamination.¹¹³ The HALO Trust cleared 44 areas with no mines found: approximately 60% of all minefields cleared in 2019.¹¹⁴ For HI, of the 19 areas cleared in 2019, no contamination was found in nine (42%).¹¹⁵ And for CCCM, of the 27 areas cleared in 2019, 14 had no contamination (52%).¹¹⁶ The national authority reported that, in 2019, no contamination was found in 58% of tasks cleared.¹¹⁷ According to Colombia’s 2020 Article 5 extension request the high proportion of clearance conducted on areas with no mine contamination was in part due to the high perception of risk from anti-personnel mines by affected communities.¹¹⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Colombia has a large operational clearance capacity at its disposal with a total of 11 operators accredited to carry out demining operations, although Humanicemos DH and ATEXX did not conduct any operations in 2019.¹¹⁹ By far the largest clearance operator is the National Army’s Humanitarian Demining Brigade (Brigada de Desminado Humanitario (BRDEH)). The Marine Corps Explosives and Demining Association (AEDIM), a smaller military operator, conducts clearance and destruction of anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in areas under the jurisdiction of the National Navy.¹²⁰ Demining is also conducted by international mine action NGOs. The HALO Trust, NPA and HI are the largest of these operators, while DDG and Perigeo also conduct limited survey and clearance. National NGOs CCCM and ATEXX were also active in 2019.

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019¹²¹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	EOD personnel	Comments
BRDEH	N/R	3,276	24 dogs	3	36	Increase from 2018
AEDIM	N/R	78	0	1	76	Increase from 2018
CCCM	6	24	0	0	2	Increase from 2018
HALO	31	228	0	1	9	No change from 2018
NPA	3	28	6 dogs	5	0	Reduction from 2018
HI	5	55	0	0	16	Reduction from 2018
DDG	3	27	0	0	10	Increase from 2018
Perigeo	N/R	7	0	0	7	N/K
Totals	N/K (48)	3,723	30 dogs	10	156	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.
N/R = Not reported N/K = Not known

The HALO Trust's clearance capacity remained approximately the same from 2018 to 2019. But the number of non-technical survey teams dropped by 70% (from 26 to 9 teams) as there was insufficient area assigned to continue their deployment. In 2020, the number of clearance teams will remain approximately the same. The number of non-technical survey teams is likely to continue shrinking unless new areas are assigned.¹²² In 2019, the HALO Trust had four dog teams consisting of five dogs, five handlers, and three supervisors. However, the dog teams were being trialled and were never operationally deployed. The teams were subsequently dissolved once the trials came to an end. In 2019, the HALO Trust increased operational efficiency through the accreditation and roll-out of a linear clearance method as well as the accreditation and deployment of its first mechanical asset that is used for vegetation removal and ground preparation in support of manual clearance.¹²³

HI's clearance capacity decreased in 2019 because operations were suspended due to lack of security in two municipalities in Cauca; there was a reduction in funding and focus on non-technical survey rather than clearance in Meta; and there was a reduction of funding for Caquetá. In 2020, there will be a further reduction in Caquetá due to security conditions; there will be an increase in Cauca of five new non-technical survey teams due to new task assignments; and a mechanical team is likely to start operations in Meta. The machine will be used for ground preparation, which is expected to be highly useful for supporting efficient operations in the Colombian context thanks to its small size and weight that allow easier mobility.¹²⁴

NPA's clearance capacity reduced by approximately 50% from 2018 to 2019 due to termination of funding from the United States. In 2018, NPA had two incidents where mines were found after clearance had been conducted by mine detection dog (MDD) teams. After thorough investigation it was concluded it was the way MDDs were used and not the effectiveness of the assets as such that was the problem. NPA developed detailed plans to correct the problems identified and is confident that MDDs are an effective asset for Colombia when used correctly.¹²⁵ NPA uses a toolbox comprising manual deminers, MDDs, and machines. In 2019, these assets were rebalanced to achieve optimal output, which was found to be a ratio of, three manual teams, three MDD teams, and two mechanical teams. Mechanical teams undertake ground preparation.¹²⁶ NPA decided to close its programme in Colombia as it was decided that the resources could be better deployed elsewhere. Survey and clearance operations ceased at the end of February 2020.¹²⁷

CCCM reported an increase in the amount of clearance personnel deployed in 2019 from 2018 as more contaminated areas had been reported in the municipalities which had been assigned so a larger number of clearance personnel was needed. CCCM also deployed 12 non-technical survey teams totalling 48 personnel in 2019 and plans to increase this by four teams totalling 16 personnel in 2020.¹²⁸

In 2019, DDG trained non-technical survey, clearance, and QA/QC teams, but due to long delays ascribed to the OAS they were only able to deploy their non-technical survey capacity.¹²⁹

Humanicemos DH, the demining organisation comprised of ex-fighters from the FARC-EP, was accredited in August 2017.¹³⁰ In March 2020, the United Nations and the Government of Colombia, with the support of the European Union, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) facilitating the demining operations of Humanicemos DH. The MoU designated UNMAS as the responsible agency for external quality management and monitoring of Humanicemos DH.¹³¹

The OAS serves as the body for accreditation and monitoring of humanitarian demining in Colombia, for all operators with the exception of Humanicemos DH. It has been criticised for being too focused on compliance rather than on supporting the operators to run effective demining operations. This has manifested itself in non-critical conformities being determined by rigid application and varied interpretation of national standards and/or SOPs, leading to delays in operations.¹³² Operators are most frequently given non-conformities based on excessive administrative scrutiny, with HALO reporting 140 of 231 (61%) of all non-conformities in 2019 coming from administrative errors. The impact of excessive oversight can often disrupt the continuity of operations, causing the shut-down of tasks for minor non-safety related issues.¹³³

At the request of Descontamina Colombia, FSD has been seeking to build capacity in the OAS, including by refocusing monitoring on QA and QC, rather than on minor administrative non-conformities.¹³⁴ In 2018, a new system of confidence levels was introduced into the revised quality management standard which was hoped would improve these processes. Each operator would be assigned a confidence level and an operator with good confidence levels would be subject to less frequent visits from OAS, allowing them to focus on operators that need more support.¹³⁵ In 2019, a pilot phase for this new system was in development.¹³⁶ However, as at August 2020, the revised quality management standard had stalled and the pilot programme had not been implemented.¹³⁷ According to FSD, in general, the OAS has been very resistant to external support and very little capacity building has been carried out.¹³⁸

There have also been long waiting times after paperwork has been submitted, which has also delayed operations. The HALO Trust reported that once a non-technical survey report has been submitted to the OAS, there can be a significant delay before the report gets approved.¹³⁹ NPA waited 127 days for approval to use its mechanical assets, with MDD assets standing idle as a result, despite the dog teams having already been accredited.¹⁴⁰ In 2019, NPA had major issues with reaccreditation of its MDD teams with 3 MDDs waiting six months to be reaccredited by the national authority and the OAS at great cost.¹⁴¹

DEMINER SAFETY

In February 2019, NPA staff were threatened at gunpoint and had a vehicle set alight in Puerto Lleras, Meta, and were informed that they should leave the area. The area where the incident happened was close to coca production and distribution routes. As a result, NPA suspended all demining activities in the Meta department until security conditions improved.¹⁴²

In August 2019, a HALO Trust non-technical survey team was held at gunpoint and their vehicle was stolen. No staff were injured in the incident.¹⁴³

In October 2019, in the department of Cauca, a team from HI were instructed at gunpoint to leave their vehicle which was taken. This led to the suspension of activities in the municipalities of Caloto and Corinto. In Caquetá, at the end of 2019, personnel received threats by phone-call, leading to the evacuation of the personnel from the operational camp and the suspension of operations in the municipality of San Vicente del Caguan. In March 2020, two staff members were attacked in their homes in the urban area of San Vicente del Caguan and a third one was also sought out, but was not at home; fortunately, no one was injured.¹⁴⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of nearly 1.40km² of mined area was released in 2019,¹⁴⁵ of which 0.79km² was cleared, 0.57km² was reduced through technical survey, and 0.03km² was cancelled through non-technical survey.

In addition, a total of 1.32km² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination was identified and added to the database.¹⁴⁶

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, 33,644m² was cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 3), a 30% decrease from the 48,405m² cancelled in 2017. Operators' figures differ significantly from those reported by Colombia in its latest Article 7 report.¹⁴⁷ According to operators, areas cancelled through non-technical survey are either cancelled during clearance but recorded through non-technical survey teams or are the values of the IMSMA events with the equivalent size of the area per cancelled event as defined by the national authority.¹⁴⁸

A total of 574,473m² was reported as reduced through technical survey in 2019 (see Table 4), a slight increase from the 524,936m² reduced in 2018. As in previous years, neither the HALO Trust, CCCM, HI, NPA, nor DDG, reported reducing any mined areas through technical survey, as the activity had not been properly implemented in the country.¹⁴⁹

Table 3: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019¹⁵⁰

Department	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Antioquia	N/R	4,699
Bolivar	N/R	1,228
Caldas	N/R	70
Caquetá	N/R	8,690
Meta	N/R	16,025
Putumayo	N/R	1,288
Tolima	N/R	813
Valle Del Cauca	N/R	831
Total		33,644

N/R = Not reported

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2019¹⁵¹

Department	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Antioquia	N/R	192,849
Caldas	N/R	44,045
Caqueta	N/R	100,574
Huila	N/R	35,392
Meta	N/R	15,813
Nariño	N/R	30,519
Putumayo	N/R	22,180
Santander	N/R	27,832
Sucre	N/R	11,717
Tolima	N/R	50,365
Valle del Cauca	N/R	43,187
Total		574,473

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 791,078m² was cleared and 268 anti-personnel mines destroyed (see Table 5), a 18% decrease from the 962,232m² cleared in 2018 (and 322 anti-personnel mines destroyed). In addition, seven municipalities across seven departments were declared free of contamination through qualification of information in 2019.¹⁵²

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019¹⁵³

Province	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Antioquia	N/K	N/K	155,368	89	9
Bolivar	N/K	N/K	11,778	5	3
Caldas	N/K	N/K	43,832	10	0
Caqueta	N/K	N/K	156,146	67	8
Cauca	N/K	N/K	4,344	0	44
Huila	N/K	N/K	48,957	3	6
Meta	N/K	N/K	83,090	32	158
Nariño	N/K	N/K	59,914	3	0
Putumayo	N/K	N/K	44,767	36	4
Santander	N/K	N/K	17,389	2	2
Sucre	N/K	N/K	11,666	2	0
Tolima	N/K	N/K	71,822	10	72
Valle del Cauca	N/K	N/K	82,005	9	1
Totals			791,078	268	307

AP = Anti-personnel

An additional 57 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed during spot tasks in 2019: 16 by HI; 24 by CCCM; 11 by DDG and 6 by HALO.¹⁵⁴

NPA clearance output rose slightly from 106,235m² in 2018 to 107,308m² in 2019. These figures include some re-clearance which NPA carried out following the missed mines incident with the MDDs. The clearance output in 2019 was achieved with an approximately 50% reduction in operational assets.¹⁵⁵ In 2019, HALO cleared 21,843m² more than the previous year. This is largely attributed to a slight increase in the number of teams deployed in 2019.¹⁵⁶ HI's clearance output fell in 2019 because it focused on non-technical survey and deployed its resources accordingly.¹⁵⁷ CCCM reported that in 2019 while the overall area cleared fell from 2018 to 2019 the number of areas increased: in 2018, the average area cleared was 1,902m² while in 2019 it was 1,203m².¹⁵⁸

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	0.79
2018	0.96
2017	0.38
2016	0.29
2015	0.36
Total	2.78

Under Article 5 of the APMB, Colombia is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2021. It will not meet this deadline and has submitted a request for a second extension of its Article 5 deadline in March 2020, for a period of four years and nine months, until 31 December 2025. It is unlikely that Colombia will be able to meet this new deadline given the numerous challenges it will have to overcome, some of which are outside of the control of the mine action programme (though some are of its own making).

It is also difficult to conduct an accurate assessment of whether it is feasible for Colombia to achieve completion of Article 5 during the requested extension as it is unclear how much contamination remains in the country. Based on the reported figures of 3.33km² of SHAs/CHAs identified through non-technical survey and an additional 4.95km² of projected contamination in areas yet to be surveyed, this would give a total of approximately 8.28km² of land to release from 2020 to 2025, in the 156 municipalities accessible to operators. From 2011 to 2019, Colombia released 5.95km², which averaging 0.74km² per year.¹⁵⁹ Although land release has increased in the past two years, with 1.54km² released in 2018 and 1.40km² released in 2019, Colombia would need to release an average of at least 1.66km² per year for the next five years. According to its extension request Colombia is aiming to release just over 1.02km² in 2020. However, on 18 March, President Duque announced a state of emergency and nationwide isolation measures that restrict movement to essential activities, which will undoubtedly have a significant impact on survey and clearance outputs for the year.¹⁶⁰

In addition, there are 166 municipalities where survey or clearance has yet to take place and which are currently inaccessible due to security problems. The extent of contamination in these 166 municipalities is not estimated in the extension request. Ongoing issues with security, with FARC-EP dissidents, the ELN, the EPL and paramilitary groups such as Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia fighting for control in certain areas, mean it is unlikely humanitarian demining organisations will be able to gain access any time soon. Focus for demining operations should remain on the high impact areas that can be accessed while ensuring that these operations are effectively and efficiently planned.

Non-technical and technical survey is vital to efficient demining operations and both are particularly important in Colombia when the initial information given at the task allocation stage has been found to be so unreliable. Despite the NMAS being under review, as at May 2020, the land release NMAS had yet to be finalised and the technical survey NMAS was still not implemented effectively. A high percentage of mined areas are being cleared without any mines found and, according to findings from The HALO Trust, up to 90% of mines that are found are non-functioning. The challenging terrain and climatic conditions along with an over-reliance on full clearance means that demining in Colombia is very expensive and, in this context, it is especially important that demining is conducted in the most effective and efficient way possible. Furthermore, Colombia should ensure that operators are tasked and deployed efficiently with ability to adapt to the changing security environment so that operators are not standing idle with no tasks to complete.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

There is an indication that Colombia will make substantial changes to residual risk management and post-clearance monitoring as part of its new land release NMAS. They planned to make it obligatory for an operator to be responsible for addressing any residual contamination in an assigned municipality for two years post-handover. Although subsequently this period was reduced to six months,¹⁶¹ this would still put operators in a difficult position as they would have to assume the cost of returning to a municipality and would be difficult to justify with donors.¹⁶²

- 1 In Colombia's 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request this is separated into 321 municipalities that have interventions and one that is "prioritised" for intervention.
- 2 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 58.
- 3 Email from Diana Marisol Peñalosa Mesa, Advisor, Comprehensive Action Group against Antipersonnel Mines, Office of the High Commissioner for Peace – Descontamina Colombia, 25 September 2020.
- 4 Descontamina Colombia, "Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Action against Antipersonnel Mines 2016–2021", p. 39; and email from Gabriel Vanegas Gómez, Descontamina Colombia, 9 October 2018.
- 5 Email from Arturo Bureo, Operations Manager, HI, 13 May 2020.
- 6 Email from Rupert Leighton, Country Director, NPA, 24 April 2020.
- 7 Email from Diana Marisol Peñalosa Mesa, Office of the High Commissioner for Peace – Descontamina Colombia, 25 September 2020.
- 8 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 58–60.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- 10 Email from Diana Marisol Peñalosa Mesa, Office of the High Commissioner for Peace – Descontamina Colombia, 25 September 2020.
- 11 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 12 Emails from Oliver Ford, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, HALO Trust, 23 April 2020; Rupert Leighton, NPA, 24 April 2020; Arturo Bureo, HI, 13 May 2020; Alejandro Perez, Operations Director, CCCM, 18 July 2020; and Juan Pablo Manríquez Möll, Head of Programme, DDG, 14 August 2020.
- 13 Email from Martha Hurtado Granada, Office of the High Commissioner for Peace – Descontamina Colombia, 20 September 2019.
- 14 Emails from Oliver Ford, Programme Support Officer, HALO Trust, 17 May 2018 and 6 August 2020.
- 15 Office of the High Commissioner for Peace – Descontamina Colombia, Humanitarian Demining Statistics, 31 August 2020, at: <https://bit.ly/34eNTXc>
- 16 Email from Oliver Ford, HALO Trust, 6 August 2020; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 "Colombia's Peace Deal Promised a New Era. So Why Are These Rebels Rearming?", *The New York Times*, 17 May 2019, at: nyti.ms/2YRCuf1.
- 19 FARC-EP dissidents are defined as those fighters never joined the peace process in the first place, or who have left the process since the signing of the peace agreement, or groups of fighters who were not part of the FARC-EP previously but have since joined.
- 20 International Crisis Group, "Risky Business: The Duque Government Approach", 21 June 2018; and interviews with Pauline Boyer and Aderito Ismael, HI, Vista Hermosa, 8 August 2018; Esteban Rueda, and Sergio Mahecha, NPA, Vista Hermosa, 9 August 2018; Hein Bekker, and Emily Chrystie, HALO Trust, San Juan de Arama, 10 August 2018; and John Charles Cagua Zambrano, and Francisco Profeta Cardoso, CCCM, Centro Poblado de Santo Domingo, 11 August 2018.
- 21 Email from Jan Philip Klever, UNMAS, 10 August 2020.
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ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2026
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

HEAVY, **30 KM²**
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

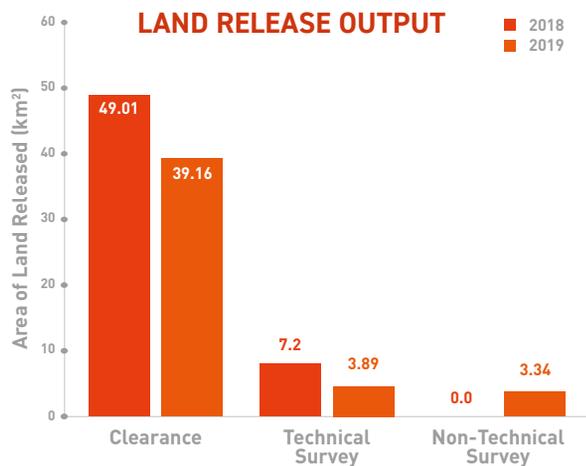
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

39.16 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

2,530

(INCLUDING 103 DESTROYED
AS PART OF THE "LESS
ARMS, FEWER TRAGEDIES"
PROGRAMME)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2019, Croatia cleared 39.16km² of mined area. While this was a 20% decrease on the 49km² cleared in 2018, Croatia achieved the clearance target in its annual plan for 2019 and exceeded the annual clearance target set in its 2018 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline extension request. However, annual mine clearance of military areas by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in 2019 fell well short the extension request target, as it did the year before, which is of continued concern.

Furthermore, survey output in 2019 was well below both the projected 2019 annual action plan forecast and the extension request target for the year. More worrying still is that rather than increase much needed non-technical and technical survey capacity, the number of survey personnel went down significantly in 2019, compared to the previous year. This was a result of the incorporation of the Croatian Mine Action Centre (CROMAC) into the Civil Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Interior (Mol), effective from the start of 2019. Many survey personnel previously employed by CROMAC were not taken on by the Mol under the new structure, and were either made redundant or retired.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC should increase its survey capacity in order to meet the targets outlined in its 2018 Article 5 deadline extension request.
- In addition to survey of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC should also review the basis on which confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) are established. In particular, it should conduct survey to confirm evidence of mine contamination before embarking on full clearance.
- The MoD should ensure sufficient capacity is in place and should significantly increase clearance to release mined areas on military land, in line with Croatia's revised work plan 2020–26.
- Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC should fulfil the pledge in Croatia's 2018 extension request to explore the potential for mine detection dogs (MDDs) to enhance the efficiency of technical survey. The 2015 demining law, which only allows use of MDDs in clearance, should be amended if necessary.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	6	While Croatia considers its current baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination to be reasonably accurate, evidence-based and complete, a high proportion (nearly 30%) of remaining mined area is SHA, indicating the need for evidence-based survey prior to clearance.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	8	There is strong national ownership of mine action in Croatia, with political will to implement Article 5. In January 2019, CROMAC and the Office for Mine Action (OMA) were integrated within the MoI.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	5	Gender policies and implementation regarding mine action in Croatia are addressed under the national Gender Equality Act, which includes guidelines of gender equality and regulates against gender-based discrimination. However, the proportion of women employed in mine action, both at Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC and in the commercial demining companies, is extremely low.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	8	8	Croatia has an information management system that is compliant with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and which allows disaggregation of contamination by type and land release by method. Croatia provides regular updates on its progress in Article 5 implementation at APMB meetings.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	7	Croatia has elaborated a new national mine action strategy 2020–26, which it expected to adopt by the end of 2020 to replace the previous strategy that expired in 2019. In addition, Croatia has elaborated a revised multi-year work plan 2020–26 and has annual operational work plans for mine survey and clearance, as well as annual targets in its Article 5 deadline extension request.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	6	The 2015 law on mine action encompasses national mine action standards. However, there is a continued need for robust evidence-based survey prior to any clearance, to avoid clearance of CHAs where no contamination was found. Unfortunately, though, rather than increasing survey capacity to meet this need, the survey capacity of the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC dropped significantly in 2019, in the context of the incorporation of CROMAC within the MoI.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	8	While clearance output in 2019 met Croatia's annual work plan target and the Article 5 deadline extension request target for 2019, survey output fell well short of targets. Furthermore, with regards to mined area under military control, the MoD cleared less than 6% of the 2019 output foreseen in Croatia's 2018 extension request.
Average Score	6.3	6.8	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Ministry of Interior (MoI), in which CROMAC and OMA were integrated within the Civil Protection Directorate, effective as of January 2019.

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Forty-five demining companies are accredited for mine clearance, of which 18 conducted clearance in 2019.
- The Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment, Croatian Armed Forces

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Croatia is affected by mines and, to a much lesser extent, explosive remnants of war (ERW), including cluster munition remnants (CMR), a legacy of four years of armed conflict associated with the break-up of the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Croatia for further information on cluster munition remnants).

At the end of 2019, Croatia reported a total of more than 309.7km² of mined area, excluding military areas. Of this more than 189.98km² was CHA, while mines were suspected to cover a further 119.72km² of SHA (see Table 1).¹ This represents a roughly 10% decrease in estimated contamination compared to the 220km² of CHA and 135km² of SHA, as at the end of the previous year.²

A further 31.4km² of confirmed mined area exists in areas under military control as at the end of 2019.³ More than 90% of this mined area is across three military training sites, but a barracks and three storage sites are also believed to be contaminated.⁴ The Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment is responsible for clearing all military facilities.⁵

A total of nearly 38.9km² was released through clearance (plus an additional 0.3km² cleared at military sites) and more than 7.2km² through survey in 2019.⁶ In addition, survey in 2019 added 0.2km² of previously unrecorded mined areas to Croatia's information management database.⁷

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by county (at end 2019)*⁸

County	CHA (m ²)	SHA (m ²)	Total mined area (m ²)
Karlovac	13,629,641	30,695,574	44,325,215
Lika-Senj	80,206,093	29,187,113	109,393,206
Osijek-Baranja	17,988,472	14,460,885	32,449,357
Požega-Slavonia	9,132,358	5,484,776	14,617,134
Split-Dalmatia	15,974,276	3,348,229	19,322,505
Sisak-Moslavina	29,065,905	24,357,010	54,422,915
Šibenik-Knin	12,009,009	3,717,123	15,726,132
Zadar	11,977,660	8,466,893	20,444,553
Totals	189,983,414	119,717,603	309,701,017

* A further 31.4km² of mined area exists in areas under military control.⁹

Eight of Croatia's twenty-one counties are still mine-affected. Sisak-Moslavina and Lika-Senj are the most heavily contaminated with anti-personnel mines, containing an estimated 12,479 and 11,129 mines, respectively, and accounting for 74% of the total number recorded as having been emplaced.¹⁰

At the end of 2019, 98.6% of mine contamination was on forested land, 1.1% was on agricultural land, and 0.3% was on other areas (e.g. water, marshland).¹¹ Of the total 309km² of estimated mined area (combined SHA and CHA), approximately 60% is defined as Nature 2000 protected area.¹² Much of the remaining mined area is in mountains and has not been accessed for 20 years, so the terrain and conditions will pose challenges to demining.¹³

According to Croatia's Civil Protection Directorate, the baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination has been established through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men, including, where relevant, with minority groups. Croatia considers its current baseline of contamination to be evidence-based and reasonably accurate, following the completion of a baseline survey.¹⁴ However, the high ratio of SHAs to CHAs and the fact that mined areas continue to be cleared without contamination being encountered, calls this into question.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In August 2018, the Croatian government formally concluded that some 54 government agencies, including CROMAC and the Office for Mine Action (OMA), were to be integrated within existing state administration bodies. This was formally concluded through two pieces of legislation enacted in December 2018 and which entered into force on 1 January 2019.¹⁵ As a consequence of these laws, CROMAC and OMA ceased to exist as separate government entities and CROMAC became an “operational sector” within the Civil Protection Directorate, under the Mol.¹⁶ The main rationale for this was “the establishment of a more relevant and operationally wider national institution (Civil Protection Directorate) that could more efficiently and effectively tackle all of the aspects of civil protection in the Republic of Croatia, including mine action activities”.¹⁷

Prior to 2019, both CROMAC (established in 1998 as the umbrella organisation for mine action coordination),¹⁸ and the OMA (created in 2012 as a government focal point for mine action),¹⁹ had operated as independent entities.

A new law on mine action was adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 21 October 2015.²⁰ While the 2015 Law, which was initiated by the OMA with the text drafted by the Mol, marked an improvement in certain respects (for instance, by permitting land release through technical survey), there were concerns that the new law would impede efficient and effective mine action.²¹

Regarding accreditation, the Mol now provides three separate permits: approval for manual mine detection; approval for mechanical mine detection; and approval for operations by mine and explosive detection dogs (EDDs). This replaces the former unified accreditation licence.²²

Since becoming a State Party to the APMB, more than €727 million has been invested in humanitarian demining in Croatia, of which the national budget has accounted for the majority (€417 million) for the Article 5 implementation.²³ Croatia estimates that the fulfilment of its Article 5 obligations will cost a further €459 million in total.²⁴ Funding for the remainder of demining under the extension request is expected to come from, respectively, the national budget (52.3%); European Union (EU)/European structural and investment (ESI) funds (21.8%); EU/cross-border cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) (15.3%); state budget of forest management positions (10.2%); and from private donations (0.4%).²⁵

In 2019, implementation of the annual Mine Action Plan, which amounted to costs of almost HRK 400 million (approximately €53 million), was realised using funding from the State budget (60.8%), EU funds (38.9%), and donations (0.3%). The large financial contribution from the State budget demonstrates a high level of national ownership and commitment by Croatia towards completing mine clearance.²⁶

Funds from the EU have steadily increased over the last few years. For 2020, Croatia reported that roughly half of the costs would be met from EU/ESI Funds (€28.47 million) with the other half coming from the general State budget (€22.97 million) and the State budget for forestry management (€5.41 million).²⁷

Croatia does not have a resource mobilisation strategy in place for Article 5 implementation.²⁸ There is also no formalised in-country platform for dialogue, to bring stakeholders together on a regular basis. Instead, the obligations of key stakeholder and their mutual dialogue are said to be regulated by legal provisions, such as the Act on Mine Action, and through the National Mine Action Strategy.²⁹

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

As an integral part of the Mol, the Civil Protection Directorate implements the Gender Equality Act (Official Gazette 82/08 and 69/17), which establishes national guidelines for gender equality, regulates against gender-based discrimination, and creates equal opportunities for men and women, including with regards to employment.³⁰

According to the national authorities, women, men, boys and girls are all effectively consulted during survey and community liaison.³¹ CROMAC survey data is not, however, disaggregated by sex and age.³²

Within the Civil Protection Directorate of the Mol, CROMAC employs 91 people, of whom 12 (13.2%) are women. As at April 2020, no women were employed in managerial or supervisory level positions in CROMAC. Furthermore, CROMAC's 27 deminers and 2 auxiliary workers were all men.³³

As at 30 March 2020, there were 45 accredited commercial demining companies, employing 443 deminers. Only six deminers (1.4%) were female and of the 131 work-site leaders/deminers, just one was a woman. Of the 78 auxiliary workers, 6 (7.7%) were female.³⁴

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

For the purpose of information management, CROMAC established a mine information system (MIS), which is said to be compliant with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and customised to meet CROMAC's needs. The MIS uses databases and a geographic information system (GIS) to deliver a fully integrated information management system.³⁵ There are ongoing efforts to improve the quality of mine-related data, as a part of the regular activities of CROMAC's survey personnel.³⁶

Croatia submits annual Article 7 transparency reports and reports on its progress in Article 5 implementation at the APMB intersessional meetings and meetings of States Parties.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Croatia's national mine action strategy for 2009–19 was drafted by CROMAC with the agreement of concerned ministries, the OMA, the National Protection and Rescue Directorate, and local administration and self-administration bodies whose responsibility covers regions with hazardous areas.³⁷ The strategy, which was adopted by the Croatian Parliament, included among its main goals the completion of mine clearance by 2019, which was not achieved.³⁸

The MoI has elaborated a new strategy, covering 2020–26 which it expected to be adopted by the Croatian Parliament by the end of 2020, assuming no unforeseen events.³⁹ In addition, a revised multi-year work plan for 2020–26 had also been elaborated, with projections of the number of areas and the amount of area to be addressed annually to achieve completion (see Table 6), and was expected to be adopted by the Croatian Parliament and presented at the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2020.⁴⁰

In 2018, Croatia submitted and was granted a seven-year request to extend its APMBC Article 5 deadline from 1 March 2019 to 1 March 2026. In its 2018 Article 5 deadline extension request, Croatia stated it has prioritised the remaining mined areas according to those which affect safety; pose barriers to socio-economic development; and impact the environment in other ways. Priorities at the operative level are elaborated in annual demining action plans.⁴¹

Based on approved funding, the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC drafts annual work plans, which are submitted to the responsible ministries and other state bodies for comment and approval.⁴² According to its 2019 annual mine action plan, the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC planned to release a total of 54.8km² in 2019: 39km² through clearance; 9.7km² through technical survey; and 6.1km² through non-technical survey.⁴³

In its 2020 annual mine action plan, the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC planned to release a total of 65.1km² in 2020: 51.1km² through clearance, approximately 5km² through technical survey; and approximately 9km² through non-technical survey.⁴⁴ According to a revised work plan the total land release target for 2020 was subsequently increased to 70.1km².⁴⁵ However, it is unclear the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic will affect implementation of the plan.

The Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment is responsible for clearance of all military facilities. The MoD submits its demining plan for military facilities to the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC annually.⁴⁶

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

A new law on mine action was adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 21 October 2015, incorporating developments from the IMAS agreed upon at that time, and specifically those relating to the use of technical survey to confirm the presence or absence of contamination.⁴⁷ The 2015 law introduces a new procedure for “supplementary general survey” (a form of non-technical survey) and enables “exclusion” (i.e. reduction) of SHAs through technical survey, which was not possible under the previous law.⁴⁸ The 2015 law has eliminated the need for standing operating procedures (SOPs), as all aspects of mine action are now clearly defined.⁴⁹ National mine action standards are also encompassed within it.⁵⁰

In recent years, a significant number of CHAs were cleared in which were found to have no contamination. Furthermore, other large, inflated CHAs were cleared with very few anti-personnel mines discovered. This calls into question the efficiency of the demining and strongly suggests the need for better use of pre-clearance evidence-based survey to confirm contamination before time- and cost-intensive full clearance is undertaken on mined areas recorded by the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC as “confirmed”.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Non-technical survey and technical survey in Croatia are conducted by the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC. In 2019, it had one non-technical survey team with two personnel and two technical survey teams totalling twenty-two personnel.⁵¹ This is a considerable decrease compared to 2018, when nine personnel were deployed for non-technical survey and approximately 40 deminers for technical survey (of whom 21 were previously employed by state-owned enterprise, MUNGOS which was dissolved in 2018, but from which the Croatian government decided to transfer MUNGOS employees to CROMAC to enhance quality control (QC) activities and increase survey capacity).⁵²

But, as noted, rather than increasing capacity, survey capacity at the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC subsequently decreased in 2019.⁵³ This is the result of technical survey and non-technical survey personnel employed by CROMAC not being taken on by the MoI following CROMAC's integration within the Civil Protection Directorate at the start of 2019. Some of the survey personnel previously employed by CROMAC were retired or moved to other companies.⁵⁴ The Civil Protection Directorate did not expect any further changes to survey capacity in 2020.⁵⁵

As a result of conditions for earlier World Bank funding, Croatia has an unusually commercialised mine action sector, with almost all civil clearance conducted by local companies competing for tenders. Much foreign donor funding is tendered by ITF Enhancing Human Security, while CROMAC manages tendering for the Croatian Government and European Union (EU) money in accordance with the Law on Public Procurement. The trust fund, “Croatia without Mines”, raises money from private sources.⁵⁶

In 2019, 44 commercial companies were accredited to conduct mine and CMR clearance.⁵⁷ Of this, 18 companies were engaged in mine clearance operations in 2019 (see Table 2).⁵⁸ Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are barred from competing for commercial tenders as CROMAC views their subsidy by other funds as unfair.⁵⁹ The Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment is responsible for clearing all military facilities.⁶⁰

Clearance operations in Croatia are conducted manually as well as with mechanical assets and with the support of MDDs. In accordance with the 2015 Act on Mine Action and its prescribed demining methodologies, MDDs are used only for clearance and not technical survey.⁶¹

Table 2: Clearance capacity (at end 2019)⁶²

Clearance capacity	Number
Deminers	534
Site leaders	147
Auxiliary workers	107
Mine detection dogs	108
Demining machines	42

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2014 needs assessment observed that in the preceding years the number of demining companies in Croatia had grown, but capacity overall had decreased.⁶³ A representative of the Croatian Employers' Association (CEA) – Humanitarian Demining Association – reported that the 2015 Mine Action Law had resulted in an increase in the number of demining organisations in Croatia.⁶⁴ This rise is in part due to deminers leaving employment and starting new firms, with the 2015 Law requiring a minimum of only five deminers per company.⁶⁵ The current number of demining companies is disproportionate to the number of deminers, and according to a representative from CROMAC, it would be better to have half the number of companies, but with each one being properly managed.⁶⁶

DEMINER SAFETY

There was one demining accident in 2019, in which one person was injured by a PROM-1 mine during DOK-ing operations in Lika-Senj county in July. The accident was investigated by the Lika-Senj police department while the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC QC department produced a detailed mine incident report. While demining companies are aware of a demining incident, no formalised lessons were shared between clearance organisations in-country.⁷⁵

In 2014, CROMAC reported it had started issuing larger value tenders, to allow companies to reduce the cost of their operations, saying that this had provided an incentive for companies to do better planning and to cooperate with each other.⁶⁷ A CROMAC representative claimed that although prices were lower, the larger tenders allowed continual work, resulted in fewer stoppages, and enabled companies to negotiate on better terms with hotels and services in their project areas.⁶⁸

The 2014 UNDP needs assessment recommended that CROMAC consider longer-term contracting to maximise use of operational assets in Croatia for both technical survey and clearance.⁶⁹ However, operations are planned on a yearly basis, in accordance with the annual and three-year demining plans set by the Government.⁷⁰

UNDP also noted that the current contracting of defined polygons is suitable for mine clearance but would not be conducive to effective technical survey, and called for a new procedure to be drafted once the law is changed.⁷¹ The Humanitarian Demining Association said it would be preferable if, where possible, technical survey was already undertaken on project tasks prior to tendering them, so that commercial companies have as much information as possible to accurately plan for the tender.⁷²

With the adoption of the new law, which enables use of technical survey, CROMAC planned to target demining on CHAs and to conduct technical survey on the remaining SHAs.⁷³ Croatia also reported previously that it planned to research and develop methods and techniques for the use of MDDs, especially for technical survey operations, as a potentially more effective tool to address mined areas in mountainous terrain.⁷⁴ However, this would require amendment to the 2015 demining law, which does not currently permit use of MDDs for technical survey.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

More than 46km² of mined area was released in 2019, of which nearly 39km² was cleared by commercial demining companies, a further 0.3km² was cleared by the Croatian army on military sites, and over 7km² was released by CROMAC through survey (3.3km² reduced through technical survey and almost 3.9km² cancelled through non-technical survey).⁷⁶

SURVEY IN 2019

CROMAC released a total of 7.23km² through survey in 2019, of which nearly 3.34km² was cancelled through non-technical survey and almost 3.89km² was reduced through technical survey (see Tables 3 and 4).⁷⁷ Compared to 2018, this is a slight increase on the 2.3km² cancelled through non-technical survey and a decrease on the 4.9km² was reduced through technical survey.⁷⁸

No data were available on survey by the MoD.

Table 3: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁷⁹

County	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Lika-Senj	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	198,522
Osijek-Baranja	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	1,407,133
Šibenik-Knin	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	493,666
Sisak-Moslavina	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	1,236,673
Total		3,335,994

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁸⁰

County	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Lika-Senj	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	691,412
Osijek-Baranja	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	1,010,290
Požega-Slavonia	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	438,642
Šibenik-Knin	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	430,229
Sisak-Moslavina	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	191,180
Zadar	Civil Protection Directorate - CROMAC	1,132,690
Total		3,894,443

In addition, survey in 2019 resulted in the addition of 0.2km² of previously unrecorded mined areas to Croatia's estimated mine contamination in its national information management database.⁸¹

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, nearly 39.16km² of mined area was released through clearance (nearly 38.86km² by operators working under the direction of the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC (see Table 5) and a further 0.3km² by the Croatian army). During land release, a total of 2,530 anti-personnel mines were destroyed (2,415 by the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC; 12 by the MoD; and 103 by the MoI (as part of the “less arms, fewer tragedies” programme)); and 2,902 anti-vehicle mines (2,846 by the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC and 38 by the MoI (again as part of the “less arms, fewer tragedies” programme)).⁸²

The 39km² of total mined area cleared in 2019 is a 20% decrease on 2018, when 49km² of mined area was released through clearance (48.8km² by operators working under the direction of CROMAC and a further 0.2km² by the Croatian army).⁸³

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019⁸⁴

Operator	County	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Capsula Interna	Lika-Senj	1,067,442	8	0	4
Cor	Lika-Senj/Osijek-Baranja/Split-Dalmatia/Sisak-Moslavina/Zadar	2,711,617	558	361	54
Detektor	Lika-Senj	201,017	13	0	0
Dok-ing Razminiranje	Osijek-Baranja/Sisak-Moslavina/Zadar	6,653,371	91	54	796
Fas	Lika-Senj/Šibenik-Knin/Sisak-Moslavina	1,115,674	18	0	188
Harpija	Lika-Senj/Split-Dalmatia/Šibenik-Knin/Sisak-Moslavina/Zadar	1,986,362	55	0	8
Heksogen	Karlovac/Lika-Senj/Zadar	1,628,944	101	0	910
Istraživač	Lika-Senj/Osijek-Baranja	9,834,671	266	83	165
Kripton	Zadar	7,135	0	0	7
Maper	Lika-Senj/Zadar	863,139	15	0	1
Mina Plus	Sisak-Moslavina	548,059	32	0	84
Orkan	Lika-Senj	38,025	3	0	0
Piper	Lika-Senj/Požega-Slavonia/Split-Dalmatia/Sisak-Moslavina/Zadar	1,744,161	131	0	41
Piton	Karlovac	602,471	59	3	7
Rumital	Karlovac/Osijek-Baranja/Sisak-Moslavina/Zadar	6,451,226	937	2,363	56
Tetrazen	Lika-Senj/Sisak-Moslavina	409,544	20	0	41
Titan	Karlovac/Lika-Senj/Zadar	674,110	85	0	102
Zeleni kvadrat	Lika-Senj/Šibenik-Knin/Sisak-Moslavina/Zadar	2,322,700	23	0	542
Totals		38,859,668	2,415	2,864	3,006

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

Clearance output equates to one anti-personnel mine destroyed for every 16,000 square metres of cleared area, indicating either very low density of contamination or poor targeting or clearance (or both). Even when anti-vehicle mines are added into the calculation, this still equates to one mine destroyed for every 7,000 square metres of cleared area.

In addition, the Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment of the Croatian army cleared 298,880m² of military facilities in 2019, during which 12 anti-personnel mines and 929 items of UXO were found and destroyed.⁸⁵ This is an increase on the 185,416m² of military facilities cleared in 2018.⁸⁶ As part of EOD spot tasks and the continued "less arms, fewer tragedies" programme, the Croatian Police (under the MoI), and in partnership with the UNDP, also collected 103 anti-personnel mines and 38 anti-vehicle mines, along with items of UXO and abandoned explosive ordnance, which were subsequently transported to Croatian military facilities and destroyed.⁸⁷

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBBC (and in accordance with the second extension (for seven years) granted by States Parties in 2018), Croatia is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2026. Croatia is not currently on track to meet this deadline based on current land release output, with clearance of military facilities in particular falling way behind schedule.

Croatia's 2018 request for a further seven-year extension to its Article 5 deadline was submitted on "the basis that this is a realistic but not unambitious amount of time given the extent of the remaining problem and the human, material and financial resources available or expected, and the demining and survey capacities currently available."⁸⁸ All relevant stakeholders in the Croatian mine action system are reported to have been involved in the analysis conducted as part of extension request process, and the request has also been "verified by the Croatian Government, which adopted the text of the 2nd Request thus giving it much needed political weight."⁸⁹

While Croatia has requested an extended deadline of 1 March 2026, it foresees that survey and clearance operations will be completed by the end of 2025, leaving only administrative/paperwork issues to be settled in the beginning of 2026.⁹⁰

As at the time of its 2018 extension request, remaining mined area during the period of Croatia's second extension (1 March 2019 to 1 March 2026) covered 387.3km². Implementing the extension request will require clearance of CHA (with minefield records), totalling 173.9 km² (including 32km² of mined area on MoD land); clearance of CHA (with no minefield records, but for which there is evidence of contamination), totalling 79.5km²; and survey and release of SHA totalling 133.9km².⁹¹ Survey will take place between 2019 and 2025, but any resulting clearance required, expected to be completed by the end of 2025.⁹²

In 2019, Croatia prepared an updated work plan for release of the 341km² of mined area remaining as at the end of 2019 (309.7km² under the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC and 31.4km² under the MoD's jurisdiction). In its revised work plan, Croatia planned to release 70.1km² in 2020; 58.6km² in 2021; 61.1km² in 2022; 151.6km² in 2023; 63.1km² in 2024; and 18.8km² in 2025 (see Table 6).⁹³ The vision of the plan remains to achieve fulfilment of Article 5 by 1 March 2026, and it envisages accelerated release of military sites.⁹⁴

Table 6: Planned land release output in km² (2020-26)⁹⁵

Area	Totals	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Clearance	210.4	51.1	39.1	37.1	38.3	35.0	9.8	0
Technical Survey	48.0	5.0	7.6	8.9	11.1	10.4	5.0	0
Non-Technical Survey	51.3	9.0	6.2	9.2	14.3	12.6	0.0	0
Sub Totals	309.7	65.1	52.9	55.2	63.7	58.0	14.8	0
Croatian Army (MoD area)	31.4	5	5.4	6.0	6.0	5.0	4.0	0
Sum totals	341.1	70.1	58.3	61.2	69.7	63	18.8	0

Considering that most of the remaining mined area is in more challenging terrain, which will significantly reduce the potential to use demining machinery, the 341.1km² of land release forecast by the end of 2025 is very ambitious, at the least without increased capacity or improved efficiency.

Demining of military facilities/MoD area is conducted by the Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment, according to an MoD plan.⁹⁶ The 4km² to 6km² per year planned for in Croatia's revised work plan 2020-26, is substantially more than what the armed forces have cleared in recent years, and in 2018 and 2019, the MoD cleared less than 0.3km² per annum.

Based on existing capacity, Croatia claimed in April 2020 that it was still on track to meet its Article 5 mine clearance deadline of 1 March 2026.⁹⁷ However, Croatia did not reach its planned survey output in 2019, calling into serious question whether it has sufficient (and sufficiently capable) survey capacity to meet its annual targets.

The remaining areas to be released are mainly forested (98.6%), therefore there will be a significant reduction in the use of demining machinery, especially medium and heavy machines.⁹⁸ Croatia foresees that more use will be made of small, mobile machines that can be efficiently transported and used in affected areas, and that the resulting increase in manual demining will reduce productivity and increase the cost of clearance and technical survey. Use of mechanical assets is also further restricted in the Nature 2000 protected area.⁹⁹ A total of more than 198km² of mined area in Croatia has been cleared over the last five years (see Table 7).

However, while annual clearance output exceeds the annual targets in Croatia's 2009–19 mine action strategy¹⁰⁰ and in Croatia's 2018 Article 5 Extension Request, the amount of land released through survey each year has fallen well behind the yearly targets. Likewise, with respect to its 2019 Annual Mine Action Plan, CROMAC met the planned clearance target (39km²), but fell short of the technical survey and non-technical survey targets of 9.7km² and 6.1km², respectively.¹⁰¹

In order to ensure Croatia meets its Article 5 obligation by 1 March 2026, the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC will need to significantly increase its capacity and implementation of survey operations to more accurately determine the size and location of contamination before starting clearance, and to cancel and reduce areas in which no evidence of contamination is found.

Table 7: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	39.16
2018	49.01
2017	30.38
2016	38.71
2015	40.94
Total	198.20

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

In 2019, the Civil Protection Directorate continued research cooperation and discussions with the Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), on the issue of national survey and clearance capacity to address explosive ordnance discovered after the release of contaminated areas or post completion (i.e. residual contamination). In August 2019, a joint study entitled "national capacities and residual contamination in Croatia" was published, documenting the progress made on this issue so far and highlighting the importance of a participatory and transparent long-term strategic planning progress.¹⁰²

The integration of CROMAC within the MoI, which took effect from January 2019, is reported to be one of the first steps to deal with residual risk and liability, and it is believed that this will elevate the importance of the issue within the MoI.¹⁰³ The integration also means that the challenge of residual risk will be handled within the responsibilities of the MoI – Police Directorate EOD teams and the Civil Protection Directorate – CROMAC.¹⁰⁴

1 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Head of Unit, Civil Protection Directorate, Ministry of Interior, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1. In its Revised work plan 2020–26, which was expected to be adopted and which Croatia planned to present at the 18th Meeting of States Parties in November 2020, the total CHA as at end of 2019 had increased to 210.4km² and the total of SHA had decreased to 99.3km².

2 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.

3 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.2.

4 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C; and email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.

5 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25.

6 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.2.

10 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 33; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.

11 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.

12 Ibid.

13 Interview with Nataša Mateković, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.

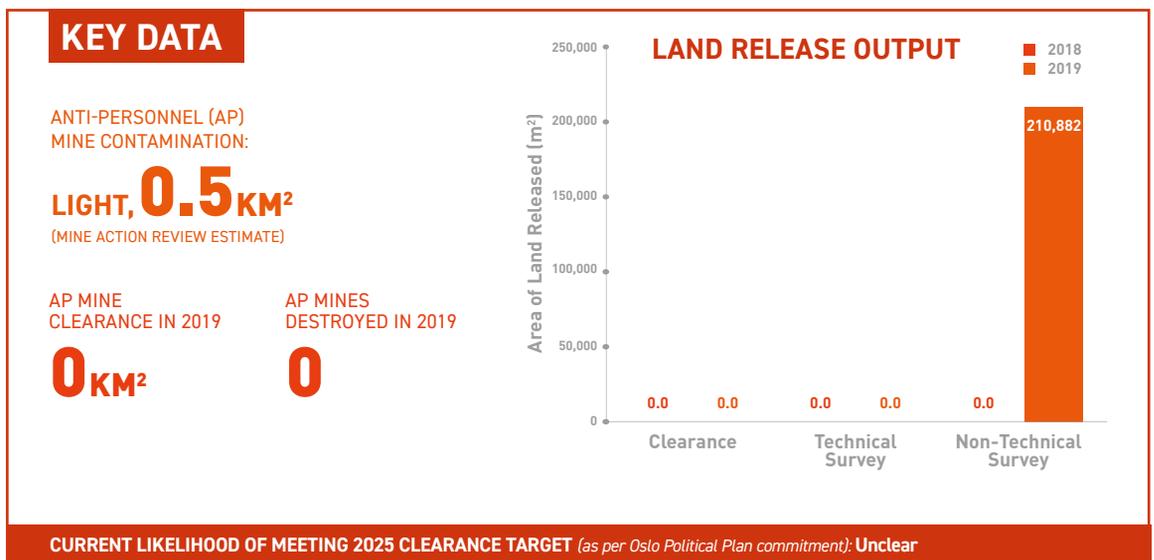
14 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.

15 Act on Amendments to the Act on Mine Action (OG No. 118/2018) and Act on Amendment to the Act on the Government (OG No. 116/2018).

16 Emails from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019 and 8 April 2020; and Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form J and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 1.

- 17 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.
- 18 CROMAC, "National Mine Action Strategy of Croatia 2009–2019", Zagreb, June 2009, p. 2.
- 19 Interviews with Dijana Pleština, (then) Director, OMA, in Geneva, 23 May 2012 and 10 April 2014; and email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 4 July 2013.
- 20 OG No. 110/15; and CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form A.
- 21 Interviews with Neven Karas, CROMAC; and Tomislav Ban, Assistant Director and Head of Sector for Operational Planning and Programming, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 22 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 24 August 2016.
- 23 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.
- 24 Ibid., p. 44.
- 25 Ibid., p. 45.
- 26 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.
- 27 Statement of Croatia on clearance, APMBC Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 28 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form C; Statement of Croatia, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 7 June 2018; and email from Davor Laura, CROMAC, 6 April 2018.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 17 April 2020.
- 33 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 CROMAC website, "CROMAC's Mine Information System", accessed 26 June 2018.
- 36 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 37 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25.
- 38 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2015), Form B.
- 39 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.6.
- 40 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.6; and Revised work plan 2020–26.
- 41 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8 and 11.
- 42 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 43 Ibid.; and email, 8 April 2020.
- 44 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 45 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.2.
- 46 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25.
- 47 National Gazette No. 110/15; and CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form A.
- 48 CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form A; and emails from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 13 and 18 May 2016.
- 49 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 13 May 2016; and CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2015), Form A.
- 50 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 13 May 2016.
- 51 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 52 Emails from Dejan Rendulić, CROMAC, 11 September 2018; and Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 53 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 13 May 2016.
- 57 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.
- 58 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 59 Interview with Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, Sisak, 14 April 2014.
- 60 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25.
- 61 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 62 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.
- 63 UNDP, "Mine Action Recovery Needs Assessment for Flooded Areas in Eastern Croatia", 2014, p. 16.
- 64 Interview with a representative of the CEA, Humanitarian Demining Association, Zagreb, 17 May 2017.
- 65 Interviews with Hrvoje Debač, OMA, 17 May 2017, Zagreb; and Tomislav Ban, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 66 Interview with Tomislav Ban, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 67 Interview with Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, in Zagreb, 16 March 2015.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 UNDP, "Mine Action Recovery Needs Assessment for Flooded Areas in Eastern Croatia", 2014, p. 4.
- 70 Interview with Hrvoje Debač, OMA, 17 May 2017, Zagreb.
- 71 UNDP, "Mine Action Recovery Needs Assessment for Flooded Areas in Eastern Croatia", 2014, p. 4.
- 72 Interview with a representative of the CEA, Humanitarian Demining Association, Zagreb, 17 May 2017.
- 73 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 21 October 2016.
- 74 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 43, 44, and 45; and Additional information submitted 21 June 2018, p. 1.
- 75 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form C.
- 79 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 82 Ibid; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.
- 83 Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form C.
- 84 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.
- 85 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1.
- 86 Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form C; and email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 87 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 88 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.
- 89 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional information submitted 21 June 2018, p. 1.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 39.
- 92 Ibid., pp. 41 and 42.
- 93 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.1; and Revised work plan 2020–26.
- 94 Croatia, "Submission of information for the Convention's website", Intersessional Meetings, 30 June–2 July 2020.
- 95 Revised work plan 2020–26, p. 9.
- 96 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 43.
- 97 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.
- 98 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 43.
- 99 Ibid., p. 45; and email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 100 National Mine Action Strategy of the Republic of Croatia, 2008, p. 10.
- 101 Emails from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019 and 8 April 2020.
- 102 GICHD, "National capacities and residual contamination in Croatia", August 2019, at: bit.ly/2EwKcTt.
- 103 Emails from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019 and 8 April 2020.
- 104 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 8 April 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JULY 2022
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Cyprus released 18 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), nine on each side of the buffer zone and totalling 0.2km². The release was according to confidence-building measures agreed by the Republic and the authorities in the north in February 2019, with the work being completed in December 2019. In addition, Turkish forces released 13,000m² to facilitate restoration of two churches located in the Buffer Zone.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot authorities in northern Cyprus should comply with the UN Security Council's renewed call for access to all remaining mined areas within and outside the buffer zone.¹
- Both sides should collaborate with the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in developing a work plan to complete clearance of all known mined areas.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None (Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and DOK-ING were last active in 2017)

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations (UN)-supported mine action in Cyprus is coordinated by the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) on behalf of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2019, Cyprus had an estimated total of 1.5km² of area contaminated by mines (including mixed anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mined area and anti-vehicle mined area), representing the first reduction recorded in three years. The number and size of confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) remains unchanged at 18, affecting 1.3km² but non-technical survey conducted as part of confidence-building measures resulted in a sharp drop in the number of hazardous areas from 47 to 29 and the estimate of suspected mined area by 44% to 0.24km² (see Table 1).²

Table 1: Mined area (at December 2019)³

Location	CHAs	Contamination	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Contamination	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
South of buffer zone (controlled by Cyprus)	13	AV mines	418,543	6	AV mines	174,014	592,557
Buffer Zone	4	AV mines (3 areas) Unknown (1 area)	703,581	0	N/A	N/A	703,581
North of buffer zone (controlled by Turkish Cypriot authorities)	1	Mixed	170,493	5	Mixed	65,281	235,774
Totals	18		1,292,617	11		239,295	1,531,912

Cyprus has been divided geographically and politically since 1974 by what was once a heavily mined, 180km-long buffer zone, following Turkish Forces' operations in the north of the island. Minefields were laid by both the Greek Cypriot National Guard and the Turkish Armed Forces. The exact extent of the remaining mine contamination across the island is not known, and permission for UNFICYP to access areas within and outside the buffer zone remains limited.⁴

TERRITORY CONTROLLED BY THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

The last Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 7 transparency report Cyprus submitted (covering 2019) stated that no anti-personnel mines remained in the minefields laid by the National Guard that are in territory under its effective control.⁵ In total, between becoming a State Party on 1 July 2003 and its original Article 5 deadline of 1 July 2013, Cyprus released all 20 mined areas under its effective control.⁶

BUFFER ZONE

Four mined areas remained in the Buffer Zone at the end of 2019, three of which belong to the National Guard and are contaminated with anti-vehicle mines. The fourth belongs to Turkish Forces and the mine type is unknown.⁷ The Government of Cyprus considers the three minefields contaminated with anti-vehicle mines to be under its control and not within the buffer zone.⁸

TURKISH CYPRIOT-CONTROLLED TERRITORY IN NORTHERN CYPRUS

The extent of mine contamination in areas controlled by Turkish Forces is not known. However, Cyprus claimed in its latest Article 7 transparency report (covering 2019) 21 minefields laid and maintained in the occupied areas by Turkish Forces remain to be cleared of anti-personnel mines, of which one is situated within the buffer zone near the vicinity of the village of Deryneia. According to Cyprus, these are overwhelmingly situated adjacent to the buffer zone.⁹

In addition, there is a minefield just north of the buffer zone in Mammari, where heavy rains led to mines being washed into the buffer zone in 2014 and 2015. UNFICYP has raised the issue of clearance of this minefield with the Turkish forces and has offered assistance in this regard.¹⁰ In 2017, a small area of the Mammari minefield was cleared by a Croatian commercial operator contracted by the Turkish Armed Forces.¹¹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

UN-supported mine action operations in Cyprus are coordinated by the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) on behalf of UNFICYP.¹² In July 2016, UNMAS became an integral component of UNFICYP, providing expertise in mine action planning and coordination, quality assurance (QA) oversight, and management of mine action information.¹³ UNMAS also provides assistance to the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) to ensure safe access to areas in which it conducts activities and to UNFICYP for explosive ordnance disposal call-out tasks.¹⁴

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

UNFICYP uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. In 2017, a review and reconciliation of all electronic and hardcopy minefield database documentation revealed that a number of SHAs had already been cleared and/or cancelled. Due to “capacity limitations” between 2011 and 2016, the information had not been removed from the database. The review resulted in the removal of seven SHAs (totalling more than 950,000m²) from the database.¹⁵ The database is due to be updated but as of July 2020 no date had been set for doing so.¹⁶

Cyprus has submitted annual Article 7 reports since acceding to the APMBC in July 2003 but as of 1 August 2020 had not submitted a report covering 2019. Cyprus has submitted three Article 5 deadline extension requests: in 2012, 2015, and 2018. Cyprus submitted most of the reports in a timely manner but provided only limited information due to it not having effective control over the remaining anti-personnel mined areas.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Neither the Republic of Cyprus nor the authorities in Turkish Cypriot-controlled northern Cyprus have disclosed plans to survey and/or clear remaining mine contamination.

Non-technical survey conducted in 2019 was initiated as a confidence building measure agreed in February 2019 by the President of Cyprus, Nicos Anastasiades, and the President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) Mustafa Akinci in the context of long-running discussions on a political settlement and “with a view to working towards a mine-free Cyprus”.¹⁷

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

All UN-supported mine action operations in Cyprus are said to be conducted in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).¹⁸ In 2016, UNMAS updated the national technical standards and guidelines that are used in UNFICYP to reflect current best practice and to ensure the highest standards are applied for UNFICYP clearance operations.¹⁹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

UNMAS conducts non-technical and technical survey in cooperation with representatives of the National Guard and Turkish Cypriot Security Force.²⁰ No clearance has been conducted since 2017 when the Turkish Armed Forces contracted DOK-ING to conduct clearance, and MAG to conduct QA of demining in the Mammari minefield.²¹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

UNFICYP announced the release of 18 SHAs covering 210,882m² in December 2019 under confidence building measures agreed in February 2019.²² The SHAs (nine on each side of the dividing line on the island) were selected by UNMAS in cooperation with the National Guard and forces in the north. The respective militaries conducted non-technical survey and UNMAS and UNFICYP then visited one site in the north and one site in the south to receive documentation certifying completion of the tasks. Some of the sites were located in military areas and respective military forces took the opportunity to conduct training resulting in some area reduction but no items were found.²³

Turkey's Aegean Army Command PMKI Team conducted confidence clearance of two churches, St. George and St. Jacobs, located in the disputed area of the buffer zone, to facilitate restoration work and released 13,000m². The operation was conducted between May and June 2019 but no explosive items were cleared.²⁴ Reporting of the operation conformed to international standards but as the sites were not listed as hazardous the release did not result in any adjustment to UNFICYP contamination estimates.²⁵

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the third extension (of three years) granted by States Parties in 2018), Cyprus is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 July 2022.

Cyprus reported clearing all anti-personnel mines in mined areas that it accepted were under its control within ten years of becoming a State Party, namely by 1 July 2013. In 2012, Cyprus submitted the first of its three Article 5 deadline extension requests, on the grounds that Cyprus does not have effective control over remaining contaminated areas. Cyprus has cited the same reason ever since.²⁶ Cyprus has stated: "Once Turkey ceases the military occupation of Cyprus and returns control of the occupied areas under proper conditions to the authorities of the Republic, they [the Republic of Cyprus] will be able to assume full responsibility and compliance with the provisions of Article 5 for the entire sovereign territory of the Republic of Cyprus."²⁷

Turkey received an eight-year extension of its Article 5 clearance deadline until 1 March 2022 but did not request additional time for clearance of the areas it controls in northern Cyprus.²⁸

The UN Security Council observed with regret in January 2019 "that the sides are withholding access to the remaining minefields in the buffer zone, and that demining in Cyprus must continue." It called on both sides to allow access to deminers and to facilitate the removal of the remaining mines within the buffer zone. In 2019 and most recently in January 2020 it urged both sides in Cyprus to agree and implement a plan of work to achieve a mine-free Cyprus.²⁹

Following the release of 18 SHAs in 2019, UNFICYP and UNMAS were reportedly working on another phase of confidence-building proposals but no agreement on further action had yet been reached as of July 2020.³⁰

1 UN Security Council Resolution 2453 (2019), para. 17.

2 Emails from Mark Connelly, Chief of Operations, UNMAS, 8 April and 26 June 2020.

3 Emails from Mark Connelly, UNMAS, 26 June and 3 July 2020.

4 Email from Julie Myers, UNMAS (based on information provided by Stefan de Coninck, UNMAS, and Maj. Rich Pearce, UNFICYP), 26 September 2017.

5 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.

6 APMBC Committee on Article 5 Implementation, "Observations on implementation of Article 5 by Cyprus", 23 June 2015; and Article 7 Report (covering 2013), Form G.

7 Emails from Julie Myers, UNMAS (based on information provided by Stefan de Coninck, UNMAS, and Maj. Rich Pearce, UNFICYP), 10 September 2018; and Mark Connelly, UNMAS, 17 July 2019. Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus, UN doc. S/2018/676, 6 July 2018, para. 44.

8 Interview with Demetris Samuel, Deputy Permanent Representative, Cyprus Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva, Geneva, 19 May 2016.

9 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.

10 Ibid.; and email from Julie Myers, UNMAS (based on information provided by Joseph Huber, UNMAS, and Maj. Rich Pearce, UNFICYP), 24 July 2017.

11 Email from Julie Myers, UNMAS (based on information provided by Stefan de Coninck, UNMAS, and Maj. Rich Pearce, UNFICYP), 10 September 2018.

12 Email from Julie Myers, UNMAS (based on information provided by Stefan de Coninck, UNMAS, and Maj. Rich Pearce, UNFICYP), 10 September 2018.

13 UNMAS, "Cyprus" webpage, accessed 27 July 2017, at: bit.ly/2GtTjXe.

14 Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus, UN doc. S/2018/25, 9 January 2018, para. 12.

15 Ibid.

16 Email from Mark Connelly, UNMAS, 3 July 2020.

17 Security Council Press Statement on Cyprus, 27 February 2019, SC/13722, at: bit.ly/2JKyYus.

18 Email from Julie Myers, UNMAS (based on information provided by Joseph Huber, UNMAS, and Maj. Rich Pearce, UNFICYP), 24 July 2017.

19 Ibid.

20 Email from Mark Connelly, UNMAS, 26 July 2019.

21 Ibid.

22 UNFICYP, "18 Suspected Hazardous Areas declared mine free", Press release, 9 December 2019.

23 Emails from Mark Connelly, UNMAS, 26 June and 3 July 2020.

24 Turkey Ministry of National Defence Mine Action Centre, Strategic Plan 2020-2025, undated but 2020, p. 3.

25 Email from Mark Connelly, UNMAS, 3 July 2020.

26 2012 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.

27 Permanent Mission of Cyprus in Geneva, "Disarmament and Non-proliferation" webpage, accessed 22 July 2019, at: bit.ly/2SAhPGP.

28 Turkey's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 29 March 2013. On the issue of Turkish jurisdiction, see, e.g., European Court of Human Rights, *Güzelyurtlu and others v. Cyprus and Turkey*, Judgment (Grand Chamber), 29 January 2019.

29 UN Security Council Resolution 2453 (2019), operative para. 17; and Resolution 2506, 30 January 2020, operative para. 13.

30 Email from Mark Connelly, UNMAS 3 July 2020.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



CLEARING THE MINES 2020

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JANUARY 2021
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 1 JULY 2022

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

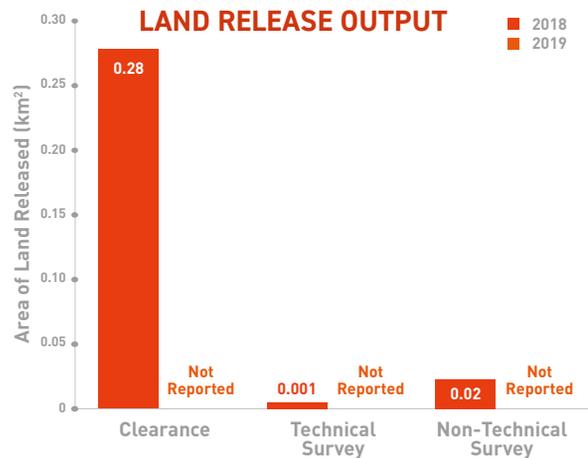
LIGHT, 0.1 km²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

NOT REPORTED

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

NOT REPORTED



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **HIGH**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) informed the Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in November 2019 that it had "no intention" of requesting an extension to its Article 5 deadline. Ten months later, however, the DRC requested an extension of 18 months to complete clearance of anti-personnel mines in mined areas, for consideration at the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2020. Survey in 2019 and early 2020 cancelled many suspected hazards that proved to have no mines, leading to a much reduced and more realistic estimate of remaining mine contamination.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The DRC should add details to its 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request, including a timeline for survey of remaining suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) and the operational capacity currently available for survey and clearance.
- The Centre Congolais de Lutte Antimines (CCLAM) should provide a detailed report on the scope and outcomes of survey and clearance in 2019.
- The DRC should submit prompt, comprehensive Article 7 transparency reports.
- The DRC should detail its plans for sustainable national capacity to tackle previously unidentified hazards.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	5	The DRC's estimates of contamination have for years looked inflated by explosive remnants of war (ERW) hazards misreported as mine contamination or included in the database without evidence, but survey conducted by DanChurchAid (DCA) and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) in 2019 and early 2020 sharply reduced the estimate.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	6	The Congolese Mine Action Centre coordinates mine action with financial support from the government but it relies on UNMAS and other international organisations for technical support and on international donors to fund operations.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	CCLAM recognised the significance of gender in mine action by including a section on it in the 2018–19 national mine action strategy. All activities, especially risk education and victim assistance, are required to take account of the needs of different age groups and genders, and women should participate in all essential stages of mine action planning.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	3	4	The DRC has been inconsistent in submitting Article 7 reports, providing only three in the last eight years. As of 1 August 2020, it had provided no account of mine action results in 2019. In 2019, CCLAM continued to receive support from the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and NPA for information management but operators say the quality of data from the database is poor and they are still being deployed for survey and clearance to tasks that have no mine contamination.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	4	5	As late as November 2019, the DRC said it would meet its Article 5 deadline of 1 January 2021 but in September 2020 it submitted a request for an 18-month extension, leaving scant time for the APMB to consider its request ahead of the Eighteenth meeting of States Parties in November. The request lacked detail on available survey and clearance capacity and resources needed for a clear understanding of the DRC's prospects of completing its Article 5 obligations within the extension requested.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	5	CCLAM has 24 chapters of National Technical Standards and Guidelines which it reportedly revised in 2018, making amendments to standards dealing with demining techniques and deminer safety. CCLAM still required support from UNMAS for quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC).
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	5	4	CCLAM did not report details of land release but significant amounts of resurvey and cancellation in 2019 sharply reduced the estimate of remaining contamination to a level that appears to put completion well within reach.
Average Score	5.1	4.9	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Centre Congolais de Lutte Antimines (CCLAM)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- National NGOs conduct non-technical survey and mine risk education

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
(ceased DRC operations in the first quarter of 2020)
- The Development Initiative (TDI)

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The DRC is affected by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), a result of armed conflict involving neighbouring states, militias, and armed opposition groups, which have increased since the late 1990s. DRC's estimates of mine contamination have fluctuated in recent years as a result of weak coordination between key mine action stakeholders and persistent information management challenges but fresh survey and data analysis in 2019 and 2020 have sharply reduced the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination estimated to remain.

DRC informed the APMBC Intersessional Meetings in July 2020 that it has 33 mined areas affecting a total of 128,842m² in nine provinces: Ituri, Kasai, Maniema, North Kivu, North Ubangi, South Kivu, Tanganyika, Tshopo, and Tshuapa. Hazardous areas ranged in size from one of 50m² in Beni province's Bulese village to one of 19,200m² in Tshopo province's Batiapoli area, but averaged 3,904m². The DRC statement and subsequent Article 5 deadline extension request added that further survey of possible mine hazards was still needed in the Dungu area of Haut-Uele province and the Aru area of Ituri province.¹ Earlier surveys have found suspected mined areas already in use or other ERW misreported as anti-personnel mines, and on the basis of that experience operators believe it is likely that some of the remaining hazards will be cancelled.²

Resurvey leading to cancellation has already contributed to a sharp fall in DRC's estimate of outstanding contamination in the past year. The DRC reported in November 2019 it had 49 hazardous areas in 11 provinces covering 469,338m² affecting 11 provinces.³ Half a year earlier, at the end of April 2019, DRC's Article 7 Report estimated that it had 53 remaining mined areas with a total size of 741,559m² in 12 provinces.⁴ In the national strategy for 2018–19 issued in November 2017, the DRC had identified 48 dangerous areas affecting 978,563m².⁵

The shrinking assessment of anti-personnel mine contamination underscores that DRC contends with a much larger threat from ERW left by years of conflict, including a small amount of cluster munition remnant contamination (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report). Successive conflicts have also left the country with significant quantities of abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO).

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area (at July 2020)⁶

Province	Area (m ²)
Ituri	5,750
Kasai	700
Maniema	16,563
North Kivu	12,760
South Kivu	851
North Ubangi	35,767
Tanganyika	6,943
Tshopo	48,188
Tshuapa	1,320
Total	128,842

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The mine action sector is overseen by the Commission Nationale de Lutte Antimines (CNLAM), a multi-sectoral body which is supposed to meet twice a year and is composed of deputies from both parliamentary chambers, officials from four ministries and representatives of five civil society organisations linked to mine action.⁷

Management of the sector is under the Centre Congolais de Lutte Antimines (CCLAM), which was established in 2012 with support from the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMACC) and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).⁸ It is responsible for setting strategy, accrediting operators, information management, budgeting, and resource mobilisation. Law 11/007 of 9 July 2011 underpins the national mine action programme.⁹ CCLAM took over from UNMAS as the national focal point for demining in early 2016 overseeing accreditation, issuing task orders, conducting quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) and managing the national database but lack of capacity remained a concern for operators.¹⁰ The government has provided funding for CCLAM's operating expenses, amounting to US\$530,000 in 2018, but has not provided funding for operations.¹¹

UNMACC, established in 2002 by UNMAS, previously coordinated mine action through offices in the capital, Kinshasa, and in Goma, Kalemie, Kananga, Kisangani, and Mbandaka. UNMACC was part of the UN Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO). In 2014, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 2147 (2014), humanitarian mine action was removed from MONUSCO's mandate.¹² UNMAS, working in 2019 with 18 international and 18 national staff, has continued to support CCLAM in planning, aiding the development of CCLAM's 2018–19 mine action strategy and capacity building CCLAM's information management department.¹³

Strategic goals set out in DRC's 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request included the protection of civilians, facilitating the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, clearing arable land to support a revival of cultivation and economic activity and to provide secure humanitarian access to communities for UN agencies and non-government organisations.¹⁴ CCLAM's priorities for the national programme in 2019 were improving the national database, conducting a new national contamination survey, organising a workshop to develop an annual work plan, and capacity building of operational staff.¹⁵ Key challenges, it said, included a lack of funding, the withdrawal of mine action operators from the country, the availability of good training of CCLAM staff to ensure coordination and quality management, a lack of adequate training for surveyors, and the absence of state budget to cover salaries of CCLAM staff.¹⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The DRC's national mine action strategy for 2018–19 stipulated that all mine action activities, particularly those related to risk education and victim assistance, must reflect the different needs of individuals according to age and gender, in a non-discriminatory manner. It also stated that the principles of non-discrimination against women as set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) are to be respected, ensuring that women are involved in all essential stages of mine action (planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation), and that activities take into account the special needs of women and girls.¹⁷

CCLAM reported that approximately 30% of operational staff in survey and clearance teams were female in 2019, but only around 7% of managerial or supervisory positions were held by women, reportedly due in part to barriers presented by local customs about the employment roles appropriate for women. CCLAM reported that mine action survey teams are gender balanced and that efforts are undertaken to ensure that all community groups, including women and children, are consulted. It also noted, however, the need to continue raising awareness on gender equality in certain communities as local customs can discriminate against women undertaking certain categories of work.¹⁸

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

CCLAM took over responsibility for information management from UNMAS in 2016 but has lacked the capacity and resources to manage data and operate effectively the national Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. The 2018–19 national strategy acknowledged a need to build staff capacity, improve data collection, update the database on a regular basis, and provide data disaggregated by age and gender.¹⁹ Continuing issues in 2019 included gaps in data, lack of maintenance, reporting on land release that did not comply with international terminology, misreporting items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) as mines which resulted in new areas of contamination being incorrectly added to the database as mined areas, and a lack of verification of incoming reports.²⁰

UNMAS continued its long-running support to the database in 2019, assisting monthly updates of data to improve operational coordination, collaborating on developing an information management work plan, and providing a range of hardware, including computers, printers, GPS and other equipment.²¹ Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) has also provided refresher training for CCLAM staff in use of IMSMA and the geographic information system.²²

DRC's reporting to the APMBBC has been inconsistent. It informed the Oslo Review Conference it would start implementing a new work plan in the first quarter of 2020 and so did not intend to request an extension to its Article 5 deadline.²³ CCLAM did not disclose a new work plan in the first quarter and it informed the July 2020 Intersessional Meetings that it would request an Article 5 deadline extension of 18 months until 1 July 2022.²⁴ DRC subsequently submitted its deadline extension request in September 2020. The DRC has submitted three Article 7 reports in the past eight years and as at 1 October 2020, had not provided a report covering 2019.

PLANNING AND TASKING

The National Mine Action Strategy 2018–19, prepared with support from UNMAS and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), focused on fulfilling the DRC's APMBBC Article 5 obligations by 2020, one year ahead of its extended 2021 deadline.²⁵ The strategy identified three strategic pillars: effective and efficient management of the explosive threat; ensuring the national programme had the capacity to manage residual contamination in a sustainable manner; and that the legal framework of the mine action programme was strengthened through the adoption of national laws and other implementing measures and adherence to relevant treaties.²⁶ Despite requests from the Committee on Article 5 implementation, the DRC did not produce work plans with clear milestones for addressing remaining contamination.²⁷

In announcing in July 2020 that it would apply for an extension of 18 months to its Article 5 deadline, CCLAM said capacity available from DanChurchAid (DCA), The Development Initiative (TDI), the national non-government organisation Afrilam²⁸ and the Armed Forces was sufficient to complete clearance of mined areas but it faced challenges including insecurity, lack of access, and disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁹

The Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in September 2020 sets out a monthly clearance schedule which provides for clearance of a total of 112,927m² in 2021 and 15,915m² in the first five months of 2022³⁰ but gives no details of a timeline for the survey or clearance of remaining areas of suspected contamination in Dungu, Haut-Uele province, and Aru, Ituri province. It projects the total cost of completion at around US\$3.9 million, of which US\$3,316,474 is intended to come from international sources and US\$564,221 is due to come from the government to cover costs of coordination and administration. International funding includes US\$1,868,205 for clearance, US\$568,270 for survey in Aru and Dungu, and US\$880,000 for risk education.³¹

Tasking continues to be challenged by the remote location of many mined areas and database weaknesses, including misidentification of ERW as mine contamination and the addition of hazards to the database without robust evidence of the presence of mines. Instead of prioritising tasks, NPA adopted a province-by-province approach as a more efficient way to deal with the logistical challenges and costs of tackling tasks separated by big distances.³²

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The DRC has 24 national standards developed with support from the GICHD³³ and the national strategy for 2018–19 called for revision of the standards and awareness raising of their content through training.³⁴ CCLAM reported in June 2019 it had revised the National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs) during 2018, amending mainly the standards relating to demining techniques and safety of deminers in the workplace.³⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The number of operators active in the DRC has fallen in the past two years to the point where DCA, NPA, and TDI were the only international organisations active in survey and clearance in 2019. Of those, NPA closed its operations in the first quarter of 2020.

Until 2018, Mines Advisory Group (MAG) had operated in North and South Ubangi provinces with two multi-task teams and two community liaison teams. When it halted its demining operations in August 2018, it was agreed among operators that NPA would continue survey and clearance in the north and north-west of the country, while DCA would continue to operate in central-eastern areas.³⁶ NPA operated with three teams conducting non-technical survey and manual mine clearance as well as explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks in 2019.³⁷ NPA continued survey in early 2020, but operations ended in February 2020 and the programme officially closed at the end of March 2020.³⁸

TDI continued operating in 2019 under contract to UNMAS, working with two teams and a total of 24 deminers. It carried out surveys in Ituri and Tanganyika provinces. It also conducted spot EOD and risk education in support of the UN peacekeeping operation, MONUSCO, working in the territories of Aru (Ituri province), Kalemie (Tanganyika province), and Shabunda town (South Kivu province).³⁹

UNMAS contracted three national NGOs—Afrique pour la Lutte Antimines (AFRILAM), Bureau des Actions de Développement et des Urgences (BADU), and Groupe Africain de Déminage, Développement et Environnement (GADDE) to conduct non-technical survey and explosive ordnance risk education in Ituri (Irumu, Djugu, Aru), and South Kivu (Kabare, Shabunda), Tanganyika (Katemie, Moba).⁴⁰

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

As at 1 October 2020, DRC had not released comprehensive data on land release in 2019.

CCLAM informed the Intersessional Meetings in July 2020 that operators had cleared 119 dangerous areas covering 1,692,601m² by December 2019 but did not clarify over what period of time this had occurred.⁴¹

SURVEY IN 2019

Operators are believed to have conducted extensive survey in 2019 but CCLAM did not provide details of the work or its results.

NPA re-surveyed a series of tasks in South Ubangi province between May and the end of July 2019 resulting in cancellation of 326,752m².⁴² Further re-survey conducted by NPA between November and mid-December 2019 led to removal of many tasks from the database and to cancellation of another approximately 150,000m².⁴³ CCLAM said NPA and DCA had reassessed 12 tasks between December 2019 and February 2020, resulting in cancellation of three tasks, but gave no further details.⁴⁴

UNMAS reported that three national NGOs AFRILAM, BADU, and GADDE conducted non-technical survey at 49 locations and TDI surveyed 42 tasks, which together resulted in cancelling 57,750m² and reduction of 9,361m².⁴⁵

CLEARANCE IN 2019

CCLAM reported clearance of a total of 422,461m² of mined area between January 2018 and the end of March 2019, of which 146,761m² was cleared in the first quarter of 2019. A total of 13 mines were destroyed in the 15-month period (11 PMA2 anti-personnel mines and 2 anti-vehicle mines), along with a total of 7,295 items of ERW. Results for the rest of 2019 were not immediately available.⁴⁶

TDI, working under contract to UNMAS, cleared three tasks affecting a total of 6,073m², two of them in Ituri province and one a 306m² task in Tanganyika. The operations resulted in destruction of one anti-personnel mine in Tanganyika, and one anti-vehicle mine and three items of UXO in Ituri.⁴⁷

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR THE DRC: 1 NOVEMBER 2002
ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 NOVEMBER 2012
FIRST EXTENSION REQUEST DEADLINE (3-YEAR EXTENSION): 1 JANUARY 2015
SECOND EXTENSION REQUEST DEADLINE (6-YEARS): 1 JANUARY 2021
ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: NO (EXTENSION REQUESTED) LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): HIGH

Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the six-year extension granted by States Parties in June 2014), the DRC is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 January 2021.

As recently as November 2019, the DRC said it intended to complete clearance by the start of 2021 and would not seek an extension,⁴⁸ but in July 2020 the DRC informed the Intersessionals meeting it would require an extension and in September 2020 it submitted its third extension request seeking an additional 18 months pushing back its deadline to 1 July 2022.⁴⁹

The DRC's first Article 5 deadline extension request in 2011 blamed poor survey by demining operators in particular for the failure to meet its deadline, though poor management and insufficient national ownership of the programme were also major factors.⁵⁰ The DRC's second extension starting in January 2015 called for six years in which to "(a) conduct technical surveys and clear the 130 identified mined areas; and (b) conduct non-technical and technical surveys as well as clear and/or release areas in the territories of Aru and Dungu in the Orientale province".⁵¹ The extension request estimated that on average 0.21km² would be cleared each year.⁵² Operators have largely met that clearance target (see Table 2) but poor survey, bad data, and weak coordination between key stakeholders are among the major factors holding back completion.

Table 2: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	N/R
2018	0.28
2017	0.23
2016	0.21
2015	0.31
Total	1.03

N/R = Not reported

There appear to be few reasons why the DRC will fail to meet its 1 January 2021 deadline. Progress cancelling suspected hazards in the past two years has narrowed the remaining area of contamination to a size that could have been addressed by its deadline. Moreover, operators believed a significant part of the 128,842m² still identified as contaminated can be released through non-technical survey and without requiring full clearance.⁵³

However, the extension request submitted in September 2020 leaves out details needed to clarify how the DRC plans to achieve completion within the requested extension. It does not present a timeline for survey of remaining SHAs or details of the recent annual clearance results. CCLAM's brief statement to the 2020 Intersessionals affirmed that the capacity of operators now working in DRC will suffice to meet the new July 2022 target.⁵⁴ The extension request says "five or six" army and police teams will support clearance⁵⁵ but it gives no details of what national or international operating capacity is available. A table linking areas of contamination to clearance by particular operators shows CCLAM had planned for clearance of North Ubangi province, representing more than a quarter of the remaining contamination, would be conducted by NPA, which ceased work in DRC in 2020.⁵⁶

The request does not indicate if donors have committed or pledged funding towards the estimated US\$3.9 million cost of completion. It says resource mobilisation will focus on efforts to try to raise the level of government funding for mine action, organising quarterly meetings with donors in collaboration with UNMAS and presentations at side-events to international meetings.⁵⁷

The DRC extension request attributes the need for an extension mainly to a decline in funding, a reduction in the number of demining operators, the lack of minefield maps, persistent conflicts, recurring epidemics, and the COVID-19 pandemic. It also draws attention to persistent insecurity and conflict.⁵⁸ The DRC statement to the 2020 Intersessionals meeting also identified the obstacles that could hold back progress: hazardous areas in North Ubangi, Tanganyika and Tshuapa are remote and difficult to access; access to Ituri and North Kivu provinces is limited by violent insecurity; and survey is still required of parts of Aru area in Ituri province and Dungu in Haut-Uele province.⁵⁹ Such issues serve to underscore the need for the DRC to ensure sustainable national capacity for tackling residual mine hazards identified after completion.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Despite the obvious need, as of July 2020, no formal planning had been undertaken for how to deal with mines found after fulfilment of DRC's Article 5 obligations. The national strategy for 2018–19 acknowledged the need to develop capacity for responding to residual mine and ERW contamination. It called for improved coordination between government and non-governmental organisation (NGO) mine action organisations; the creation of a joint army-police EOD rapid response team accredited by CCLAM; and the opening of a dedicated telephone number to report any discoveries of contamination.

- 1 Statement of DRC, Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020; and Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 10.
- 2 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, Programme Manager, NPA, 7 July 2020.
- 3 Statement of DRC, Fourth APMBRC Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.
- 4 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), pp. 2–6.
- 5 CCLAM, "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 8.
- 6 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 36, Table 19, pp.35–36.
- 7 Ibid., p. 11. The government ministries represented in CNLAM include defence, health, interior, and humanitarian affairs.
- 8 CCLAM, "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 11; and Response to Cluster Munition Monitor questionnaire by Michelle Healy, UNMACC, 29 April 2013.
- 9 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, Director, CCLAM, 3 June 2019.
- 10 Emails from Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 5 March 2018; Bill Marsden, MAG, 11 May 2018; and Guillaume Zerr, Humanity and Inclusion, 24 May 2018.
- 11 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, CCLAM, 3 June 2019.
- 12 UN Security Council Resolution 2147, 28 March 2014.
- 13 Email from Aurelie Fabry, Programme Officer, UNMAS, 13 April 2020.
- 14 Article 5 Extension Request, August 2020, p. 36.
- 15 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, CCLAM, 3 June 2019.
- 16 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, CCLAM, 10 July 2019.
- 17 CCLAM, "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, pp. 15–16.
- 18 Email from Maître Sudi Alimasi Kimputu, CCLAM, 3 June 2019.
- 19 CCLAM, "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 14.
- 20 Skype interview with Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 24 April 2019; and email, 24 May 2019.
- 21 Email from Aurelie Fabry, UNMAS, 13 April 2020.
- 22 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 24 May 2019.
- 23 Statement of DRC, Fourth APMBRC Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.
- 24 Statement of DRC, Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020.
- 25 CCLAM, "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines en République Démocratique du Congo 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 4.
- 26 Ibid., p. 5.
- 27 Committee on Article 5 Implementation, "Preliminary Observations on the Implementation of Article 5 by the Democratic Republic of Congo", Intersessional Meetings, 22–24 May 2019.
- 28 Afrique pour la Lutte Antimines/Africa for Anti-Mine Action (Afrilam), based in Kisangani, conducted clearance in partnership with Humanity and Inclusion (HI) between January 2016 and December 2017 but is not known to have engaged in clearance since HI ceased demining in DRC in 2017.
- 29 Statement of DRC, Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020.
- 30 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, Table 32, p. 117.
- 31 Ibid., p. 47.
- 32 Skype interviews with Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 24 April 2019 and 16 May 2020; and email, 24 May 2019.
- 33 Statement of DRC, Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020.
- 34 CCLAM, "Stratégie Nationale de Lutte Antimines en République Démocratique du Congo 2018–2019", November 2017, p. 34.
- 35 Skype interview with Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 24 April 2019; and email, 24 May 2019.
- 36 Email from Bill Marsden, MAG, 20 May 2019. MAG reported that its arms management and destruction operations continued in the DRC.
- 37 Skype interview with Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 24 April 2019; and email, 24 May 2019.
- 38 Skype interview with Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 16 April 2020.
- 39 Emails from Aurelie Fabry, UNMAS 20 June 2019 and 13 April 2020.
- 40 Email from Sasha Bhatnagar, Associate Programme Officer, UNMAS, 14 August 2020.
- 41 Statement of DRC, Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020.
- 42 Email from Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 7 July 2020.
- 43 Skype interview with Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 24 April 2019.
- 44 Statement of DRC, Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020.
- 45 Email from Sasha Bhatnagar, UNMAS, 14 August 2020.
- 46 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), pp. 6–7 and 18.
- 47 Email from Aurelie Fabry, UNMAS, 13 April 2020.
- 48 DRC statement to the Oslo Review Conference, 26 November 2019.
- 49 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 10.
- 50 2011 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 3 and 49.
- 51 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 48; analysis of DRC's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, submitted by the President of the Third Review Conference on behalf of the States Parties mandated to analyse requests for extensions, 18 June 2014, p. 5.
- 52 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 49. The extension request included annual projections of progress to be made during the extension period, though without providing a detailed work plan for each operator in each area in order to achieve them. It also foresaw expenditure of US\$20 million, of which some \$19.4 million would go to demining the 130 mined areas, while the remainder would be spent on survey and clearance in Aru and Dungu. It announced that the Government of the DRC had committed to contribute FC580 million (about \$600,000) a year to mine action activities, starting in January 2015. However, no such funding was provided by the government.
- 53 Skype interview with Jean-Denis Larsen, NPA, 16 April 2020; and email, 7 July 2020.
- 54 Statement of DRC, Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020.
- 55 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 13.
- 56 Ibid., Table 25, p. 108.
- 57 Ibid., p. 46.
- 58 Ibid., p. 10.
- 59 Statement of DRC, Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2022
 NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE IN QUESTION



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Ecuador's clearance output fell for the third consecutive year and, in 2019, it managed only a paltry 2,899m² putting its compliance with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in doubt. At the same time, its estimate of remaining contamination has more than halved: Ecuador has reported this is due to land being reassigned to Peru. However, this is not consistent with the figures provided in previous years.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ecuador should clarify the extent of remaining contamination.
- Ecuador should ensure it deploys its limited resources in the most efficient manner and that it conducts both non-technical and technical survey, as appropriate, before full clearance.
- Ecuador should provide clarity on the resources it is able to provide going forward and what, if any, additional support is required from the international community.
- Ecuador should elaborate a gender and diversity policy and mine action data should be systematically disaggregated by sex and age.
- Ecuador should develop a strategy for managing residual contamination post completion.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	6	Ecuador's estimate of outstanding mine contamination more than halved in 2019. This difference cannot be fully accounted for by land release or by the reassigning of a suspected hazardous area (SHA) to Peru.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	5	There is clarity of roles and responsibilities at a national level and Ecuador has necessary demining infrastructure in place. Ecuador had a funding shortfall in 2019 and support has been offered by the international community. It is, though, unclear whether Ecuador will commit sufficient resources to complete clearance by 2022.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	4	Ecuador does not have a gender and diversity policy or plan and does not employ any women in its mine action programme. Women, children, and ethnic minorities are consulted during risk education activities when they are also informed about planned demining operations.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	4	Ecuador's Article 7 report covering 2019 generally shows an improvement in the consistency and accuracy of the data within the report, something which has been an issue in previous years reports.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	6	Ecuador provided an updated plan for clearance based on the revised estimate of remaining mine contamination. It did not meet the land release targets for 2019 and has set itself a target for 2020 that should be achievable provided that sufficient resources are available.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	Ecuador claims to conduct survey and clearance according to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). All clearance is conducted manually and demining capacity is reported to have remained the same since 2018.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	2	3	Ecuador's land release output fell again in 2019 and the country is not on track to meet its Article 5 deadline even with the very small amount of remaining contamination it is now reporting.
Average Score	4.5	4.9	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Centre for Humanitarian Demining (CENDESMI)
- Army Corps of Engineers (CEE)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- CEE Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI"
- General Command for Demining and EOD (CGDEOD)
- Joint Ecuador-Peru Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit (Not operational in 2019)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Ecuador reported that, as at December 2019, 40,056m² of anti-personnel mine contamination remained across 27 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and 26 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) across four districts in Zamora Chinchipe province (see Table 1). This is less than half the amount of anti-personnel mine contamination reported at the end of 2018, despite Ecuador releasing only 2,899m² of contaminated land in 2019.¹ This is also wildly different from the contamination figures reported in Ecuador's Article 5 statement at the Fourth APMBC Review Conference at the end of November 2019 when Ecuador had 79,030m² of contamination and 3,233 anti-personnel mines to destroy in four mined areas.²

Ecuador reported that in June 2019 Peru conducted an analysis of the PV_La Media minefield and concluded that it is in Peruvian territory which reduced the amount of anti-personnel mine contaminated area within Ecuador.³ In Peru's Article 7 report covering 2018, the PV_La Media minefield was listed as being an SHA of 68,000m².⁴ The difference between Ecuador's 2018 and 2019 contamination figures is in the number and amount of CHAs: down from 34 CHAs to 27 (an unexplained reduction of 7) and from a total area of 72,717m² to 32,535m² (an unexplained reduction of 40,182m²). Despite these very significant discrepancies, Ecuador considers its current estimate of contamination to be accurate as it is based on evidence from field reports and technical records of mine laying in the border area between Ecuador and Peru. Affected communities, including women, were consulted during survey.⁵

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end 2019)⁶

Province	District	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total CHA/SHA	Total area (m ²)
Zamora Chinchipe	Chinchipe	1	7,009	0	0	1	7,009
	Yanzatza	3	6,565	0	0	3	6,565
	Nangaritzta	14	4,577	0	0	14	4,577
	El Pangui	9	14,384	26	7,521	35	21,905
Totals		27	32,535	26	7,521	53	40,056

Ecuador's contamination results from its 1995 border conflict with Peru. The most heavily mined section of the border is the Condor mountain range (Cordillera del Condor) which was at the centre of the dispute.

NEW CONTAMINATION

Ecuador reported that during 2019 a CHA of previously unregistered anti-personnel mine contamination covering 350m² in the Condor Mirador district of Zamora Chinchipe province was added to the database and then released through clearance. In addition, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were found during 2019 in the border between Ecuador and Colombia, but according to Ecuador, none of these meets the APMBC definition of an anti-personnel mine.⁷

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The national mine action programme is managed by the National Centre for Humanitarian Demining (CENDESMI). The Ecuadorian government created CENDESMI by an Executive Decree in 1999.⁸ It is an interministerial body chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and is made up of the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Public Health, and the Army Corps of Engineers (CEE) through the Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI" and the General Command for Demining and EOD (CGDEOD).⁹ CENDESMI is responsible for overseeing compliance with the APMBC, while the CEE is responsible for coordinating the planning of demining and COTOPAXI is tasked with conducting land release operations.¹⁰

Ecuador currently funds all of its demining operations. It has allocated almost US\$21 million for demining personnel, materials, and equipment for 2014–22.¹¹ This amounts to around \$2 million per year from 2019 to 2022. However, only \$821,953 was actually provided to the demining programme in 2019.¹²

Ecuador participated in the APMBC Individualised Approach, in 2019, in the course of which it claimed that it requires just over US\$8 million dollars to complete clearance. This will be used to replace personal protective equipment and other demining tools which are no longer usable, as well as for vehicles, training, food, and shelter for the deminers.¹³

At the Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Ecuador and Peru made a joint statement calling on the international community to support their mine clearance efforts.¹⁴ In response, the Organization of American States (OAS) has called upon its Member States and other international donors and partners to provide technical and financial assistance for both Ecuador and Peru.¹⁵ Ecuador reported that additional support has been offered by the United States of America and Italy in order to strengthen the capacity of its deminers and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel.¹⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, which chairs CENDESMI, has a gender and diversity policy but no similar policy exists that is specific to CENDESMI.¹⁷

Ecuador has stated that it considers all populations affected by mines, without discrimination, in the planning and execution of demining operations.¹⁸ Women, children, and ethnic minorities are targeted during risk education campaigns, which are conducted in Spanish as well as in native languages. Risk education teams are said to include indigenous people. During risk education activities, affected communities are also informed of planned demining operations, the prioritisation of operations, and the different land release activities being conducted.¹⁹

Mine action data is not disaggregated by sex or age.²⁰

Ecuador has trained women in both demining and the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.²¹ Since 2014, Ecuador has employed three female deminers, 3% of the total trained, however none is currently engaged in survey, clearance, managerial or administrative positions.²² Ecuador has reported that it will continue to include and train female personnel "according to their availability" ("de acuerdo a la disponibilidad de dicho personal").²³

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Ecuador uses the IMSMA database, which is said to be updated regularly.²⁴

Ecuador submitted its Article 7 report covering 2019 several months after the deadline, however, there is an improvement in the quality of the data with information presented consistently and accurately within the report, something which has been an issue across Ecuador's reports and statements in previous years.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Ecuador submitted an updated work plan for implementation of Article 5 in May 2019, as requested by the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties.²⁵ This included planned mine clearance in the last remaining contaminated province of Zamora Chinchipe for 2019 to 2022 (see Table 2). However, this action plan was based on an estimate of anti-personnel mine contamination that is now understood to be out of date.

Table 2: Planned mine clearance in Zamora Chinchipe in 2019–22 (Action Plan)²⁶

Year	District	Mined areas	Area (m ²)
2019	El Pangui	12	23,383
2020	Yanzatza; Centinela del Condor; Nangaritzá	12	18,299
2021	Chinchipe; Nangaritzá	10	20,688
2022	El Pangui	26	17,868
Totals		60	80,238

Ecuador presented a revised plan for mine clearance for 2020 to 2022 in its latest Article 7 report, based on the updated estimate of contamination as at end 2019.²⁷

Ecuador did not meet its land release targets for 2019 when it planned to clear 23,383m² of contamination from the El Pangui and expected to find and destroy 478 anti-personnel mines. Clearance was expected to take place in August and September with 12 demining teams.²⁸ In its Article 7 report covering 2019 Ecuador stated that due to lack of budget only two days of clearance operations took place in 2019. In 2020, clearance was planned of 11,285m² (with expected discovery of 1,362 mines) in El Oro and Loja in Zamora Chinchipe with seven demining teams working between June and August.²⁹

Ecuador prioritises contaminated areas for clearance according to the proximity of the local population and the impact on socio-economic development.³⁰

Table 3: Planned mine clearance in Zamora Chinchipe in 2020–22 (Article 7)³¹

Year	Mined areas	Area (m ²)
2020	12	11,285
2021	14	12,250
2022	27	16,521
Totals	53	40,056

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The process of humanitarian demining in Ecuador is carried out in accordance with the Binational Manual for Humanitarian Demining (Manual Binacional de Desminado Humanitario), developed under the Binational Cooperation Programme with Peru, and the Manual of Humanitarian Demining Procedures of Ecuador. These are said to be based on the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), but adapted to the Ecuadorian context.³² Ecuador has adopted the national mine action standards (NMAS) for land release, non-technical survey, technical survey, clearance requirements, and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD).³³ No updates were made in 2019 or early 2020.³⁴

In granting Ecuador's 2017 Article 5 deadline extension request, the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties noted that Ecuador should use the most relevant land release standards, policies, and methodologies, in line with IMAS, and encouraged it to continue seeking improved land release and certification techniques, which could lead to Ecuador fulfilling its obligations more quickly.³⁵ Ecuador stated in its 2017 extension request that non-technical and technical survey would be carried out to determine the location, size, and other characteristic of the mined areas before operations begin using records of mined areas.³⁶ No non-technical survey or technical survey was reported to have occurred in 2019.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Demining is conducted by Battalion No. 68 COTOPAXI and, in 2019, only manual clearance took place.³⁷ In the additional information provided alongside its 2017 extension request, Ecuador stated that the remaining clearance will be carried out only by manual deminers, due to the unsuitability of terrain for its machinery.³⁸ Mine detection dogs (MDDs) are used only for quality control (QC) following clearance.³⁹ Ecuador expected to maintain the same number of personnel in 2020.⁴⁰ As at July 2020, it is not known if this has changed due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in the country.

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁴¹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Non-technical survey teams	NTS personnel	Comments
Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI"	10	107	1	5	No change in the number of personnel from 2018 to 2019
Totals	10	107	1	5	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

The joint Ecuador-Peru Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit is deployed to areas that were at the centre of the conflict between the two nations but did not carry out any demining operations in 2019. In November 2019 in the "Tumbes Declaration" the presidents of Ecuador and Peru agreed to continue their binational cooperation and committed to assign the necessary resources to continue demining operations in both territories, but no further details were provided.⁴²

CENDESMI is responsible for observing and monitoring compliance of the demining, including QC and certification of clearance operations.⁴³ In 2018, QC was carried out in El Oro and Loja provinces.⁴⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 2,899m² of anti-personnel mined area was released in 2019, all of which was cleared.⁴⁵

SURVEY IN 2019

No non-technical or technical survey took place in 2019. In 2018, a total of 2,539m² was reduced through technical survey in the Tiwinza square kilometre by the Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit.⁴⁶

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, only 2,899m² was cleared and 62 anti-personnel mines destroyed. No additional mines were destroyed during spot tasks.⁴⁷ This is a sharp reduction from the already meagre 14,068m² that was cleared in 2018 with 247 anti-personnel mines destroyed.⁴⁸

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019⁴⁹

Province	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Zamora Chinchipe	Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI"	1	2,899	62	0
Totals		1	2,899	62	0

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

Ecuador reported that 350m² of this clearance was of an area of newly discovered contamination that was added to the database in 2019. During this clearance, 20 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.⁵⁰

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2019	2,899
2018	14,068
2017	15,476
2016	1,410
2015	66,414
Total	100,267

Ecuador has submitted three extension requests since the 2014 Maputo Review Conference. In May 2016, Ecuador announced that, of the remaining 0.13km² of contamination, 0.08km² would be cleared in 2016 and the remaining 0.05km² in 2017 prior to its October 2017 deadline.⁵¹ This did not happen. Instead, on 28 November 2016, Ecuador unexpectedly submitted a request to extend its mine clearance deadline to 31 December 2017. At the time of the request, Ecuador stated that "the technical survey and clearance in the provinces of Zamora Chinchipe and Morona Santiago (Tiwinza square kilometre) is about to conclude, pending the destruction of 5,478 anti-personnel mines in an area of 137,653 square metres." Ecuador explained that the failure to meet the 1 October 2017 deadline was due to a serious earthquake on 16 April 2016, which required the diversion of the armed forces away from demining, as well as to the physical characteristics of the land and climate conditions in the areas requiring clearance.⁵²

In its Article 7 report covering 2016, Ecuador suddenly and without explanation determined that it would need a further five years to fulfil its Article 5 obligations. It submitted another Article 5 deadline extension request in March 2017 and was granted a deadline extension to 31 December 2022.

Survey and clearance outputs fell from 16,607m² in 2018 to just 2,899m² in 2019, with just under half of output in 2018 from the Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit that has now completed operations in the Tiwinza square kilometre. Despite having 107 trained deminers, Ecuador failed to meet its land release target for 2019 as it had planned for only two days of clearance operations.⁵³ If, as has been reported, the amount of remaining anti-personnel mine is now only 40,056m², Ecuador should be able to meet its Article 5 deadline with its existing capacity.

Ecuador maintained that, in order to meet its 2022 deadline, it requires financial support from the international community.⁵⁴ Ecuador has since reported that additional support has been offered by the United States and Italy to strengthen the capacity of its deminers and EOD personnel and it believes it can now meet its Article 5 deadline.⁵⁵ However, this will not be possible without an accurate estimate of remaining contamination, a clear plan for completion, and a significant increase in land release output.

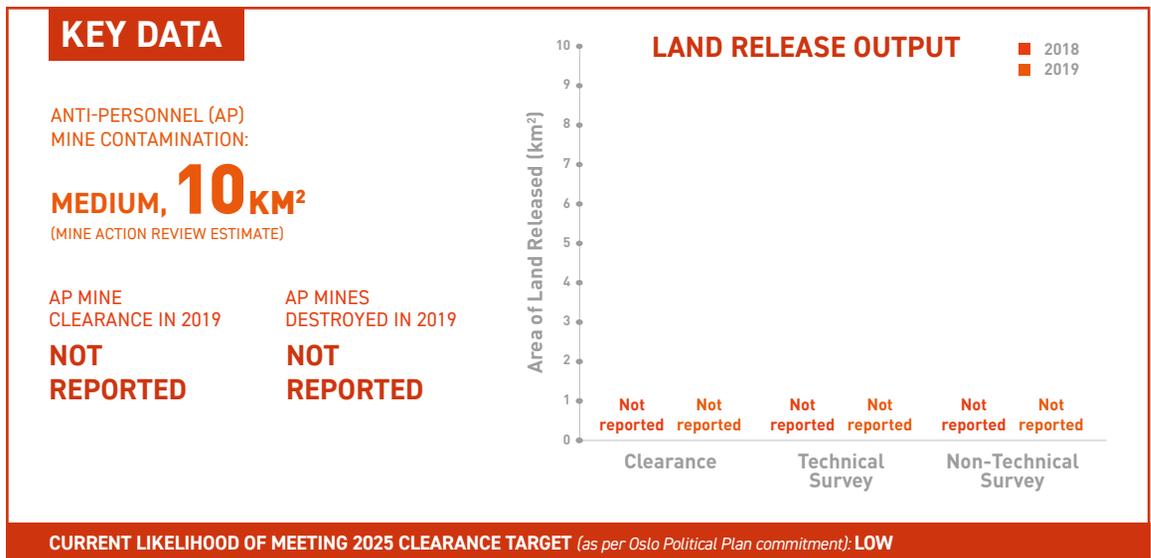
PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Ecuador does not have a strategy in place for managing residual risk post completion but has stated that it will use its current capacity to address areas of residual contamination.⁵⁶

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- 1 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Commander, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 2 Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
 - 3 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 4 Peru's Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form I.
 - 5 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 6 Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
 - 7 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 8 Executive Decree No. 1297, issued on 22 September 1999.
 - 9 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension request, Annex I.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, pp. 39 and 40.
 - 11 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 20.
 - 12 *Ibid.*; Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
 - 13 APMBC Individualised Approach Meeting at Intersessionals, "Mine Action Program of Ecuador Status and Challenges in Implementation", Geneva, 23 May 2019; and Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 21.
 - 14 APMBC Implementation Support Unit, "Governments adopt global anti-landmine action plan", 29 November 2019, at: bit.ly/3cwROBu
 - 15 Statement of the OAS, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
 - 16 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 17 *Ibid.*
 - 18 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 23.
 - 19 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 20 *Ibid.*
 - 21 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 17.
 - 22 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 39 and 41; and email from Lt. Col Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 23 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 20.
 - 24 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25; and email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 25 Decisions on the request by Ecuador for an extension of its Article 5 deadline, 16MSP, 21 December 2017.
 - 26 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, pp. 19–20.
 - 27 Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
 - 28 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
 - 29 Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
 - 30 Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 17.
 - 31 *Ibid.*
 - 32 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
 - 33 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
 - 34 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 35 Decisions on the request by Ecuador for an extension of its Article 5 deadline, 16MSP, 21 December 2017.
 - 36 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 15.
 - 37 APMBC Individualised Approach Meeting at Intersessionals, "Mine Action Program of Ecuador Status and Challenges in Implementation", Geneva, 23 May 2019.
 - 38 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information provided on 8 September 2017, p. 1.
 - 39 Ecuador Demining Action Plan 2019–2022, p. 18.
 - 40 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 41 *Ibid.*
 - 42 Statement of Peru, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
 - 43 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 39.
 - 44 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
 - 45 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 46 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
 - 47 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020; and Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
 - 48 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
 - 49 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020; and Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form D.
 - 50 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 51 Statement of Ecuador, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 19 May 2016.
 - 52 Letter from Efraín Baus Palacios, Director of Neighbourhood Relations and Sovereignty for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and President of the National Humanitarian Demining Center of Ecuador, to Amb. Patricia O'Brian, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations in Geneva, and Chair of the Article 5 Committee, Note No. 14839-DRVS/CENDESMI, Quito, 26 November 2016.
 - 53 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
 - 54 APMBC ISU, "Governments adopt global anti-landmine action plan", 29 November 2019, at: bit.ly/3cwROBu.
 - 55 Email from Lt.-Col. Hugo F. Avilés León, Engineers Battalion No. 68 "COTOPAXI", 25 March 2020.
 - 56 *Ibid.*

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2020

NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE AND MUST SEEK NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE IN VIOLATION OF THE CONVENTION



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Eritrea's Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline expires on 31 December 2020 after it was granted an interim extension in November 2019. Eritrea was expected to submit a more detailed extension request by 31 March 2020 but, as at June 2020, had not done so. Nor has it submitted an Article 7 transparency report since 2014 or responded to repeated requests for updated information from Mine Action Review, most recently in 2020.

Eritrea is failing to comply with its obligation under Article 5 of the APMBC to complete clearance as soon as possible. There is no indication of any demining since the end of 2013, which would amount to a violation of the Convention.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Eritrea needs to return to compliance with its obligations under the APMBC. The authorities should ensure that demining is undertaken for humanitarian and developmental purposes as a matter of urgency.
- Eritrea should urgently submit an extension request for its Article 5 deadline, which includes an up-to-date list of all known or suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) with anti-personnel mines and a detailed timeline of activities planned for the extension period sought.
- Eritrea must urgently submit its outstanding annual Article 7 reports, the latest of which was due by 30 April 2020.
- Eritrea should reconsider its policy of excluding international technical assistance in mine action, which would support efficient land release and re-open international funding paths.
- Eritrea should cooperate with Ethiopia in cross-border mine action activities, which will also help to consolidate peace with its neighbour.
- Eritrea should develop and make public a resource mobilisation strategy on the basis of a clear understanding of remaining contamination.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	4	The last estimate of mine contamination in Eritrea dates back to the end of 2013, when Eritrea reported that 434 mined areas remained with a size of 33.4km ² . All area is reportedly suspected hazardous area. Mine Action Review is unaware of any indication of progress in land release or updated information on the extent of contamination since this time.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	4	Eritrea's mine action programme is entirely nationally managed. The Eritrean Demining Agency (EDA) is responsible for mine clearance.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	3	It is not known if Eritrea has policies in place relating to gender and mine action.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	1	1	Details on Eritrea's current information management system are not known. However, its lack of submissions of Article 7 reports over the past six years is a violation of the Convention. It has failed to provide any updates on the status of its mine action obligations in recent years.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	1	1	Recent details on Eritrea's planning and tasking system are not available.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	4	4	Eritrea is reported to have National Mine Action Standards dating back to 2012. The EDA was responsible for the implementation of quality management activities.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	1	1	Eritrea has made little, if any, progress in land release to meet its obligations under its second Article 5 extension period. In 2014, Eritrea reported it expected to require a third extension. Eritrea submitted an interim request for a third extension in November 2019 with the intention of providing a more detailed request by 31 March 2020. As at July 2020, no such request is forthcoming and it remains in violation of the Convention for failing to complete mine survey and clearance as soon as possible, and for not respecting other procedural provisions of the Convention.
Average Score	2.7	2.7	Overall Programme Performance: VERY POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Eritrea Demining Agency (EDA)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Engineering units of the Eritrean Armed Forces

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Eritrea is affected by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) dating back to World War II, but largely as the result of the struggle for independence in 1962–91 and its armed conflict with Ethiopia in 1998–2000.

In May 2015, in response to Mine Action Review's request for updated information on the state of contamination and mine action activities in Eritrea, the Deputy General Manager of the Eritrea Demining Agency (EDA) reported "no significant progress registered by the EDA currently". He claimed, though, that the EDA was being reorganised in an effort to make "better progress".¹ Since then, the EDA has not responded to repeated requests from Mine Action Review for further information, most recently in the first half of 2020.

The last estimate of mine contamination in Eritrea dates back to the end of 2013, when Eritrea reported 434 mined areas covering an estimated 33.4km².² This was a two-thirds reduction on the earlier estimate of 99km² of June 2011,³ and significantly lower than the 129km² identified by the 2004 landmine impact survey.⁴

Table 1: Mined area by region (at end 2013)⁵

Zoba (region)	SHAs	Estimated area (m ²)
Semienawi Keih Bahri	166	9,462,537
Anseba	144	10,230,940
Gash Barka	63	6,252,951
Dehub	29	3,894,036
Maakel	24	2,423,325
Dehubawi Keih Bahri	8	1,169,029
Totals	434	33,432,818

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Eritrea mine action programme is entirely nationally managed. The EDA, established in July 2002, is responsible for policy development, regulation of mine action, and the conduct of mine clearance operations. The EDA reports directly to the Office of the President.

Eritrea projected that costs for its Article 5 extension period to 1 February 2020 would amount to more than US\$7 million, all to be raised nationally.⁶ In 2011–13, Eritrea managed to raise only \$257,000 annually. Eritrea acknowledged at the time that its progress in clearing mines would be slow due to its lack of resources, but it has never been clear how Eritrea intended to secure the funding necessary for its survey and clearance activities, particularly in light of its regrettable policy not to accept international technical assistance.⁷

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Eritrea did not respond to Mine Action Review's inquiries in 2020 about the national mine action programme's policies relating to gender.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Details on Eritrea's current information management system are not known. However, its lack of submissions of Article 7 reporting over the past six years is a violation of the Convention and as at 1 August 2020, Eritrea had yet to submit its latest Article 7 report covering 2019 (or any earlier years). It has also failed to provide an updated Article 5 work plan or detailed extension request.

PLANNING AND TASKING

There is no apparent recent information on how Eritrea plans its demining operations. Re-survey during the second extension period was planned to involve both technical and non-technical survey of all remaining mined areas across six regions, and to run concurrently with clearance in priority areas in the Anseba, Maakel, and Semienawi Keih Bahri regions.⁸

Eritrea submitted an interim Article 5 deadline extension request on 11 November 2019, which was granted at the Fourth Review Conference of the APMB (25–29 November 2019), but the request did not contain any updated information on the extent of remaining mined area or on Eritrea's plans to address it. Eritrea committed to submit a detailed follow-on extension request by 31 March 2020, but as at July 2020 had still to submit it.⁹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Eritrea reportedly has National Mine Action Standards that date back at least to 2012. It is not known if any updates to the standards have been made in the eight years since. It was reported that the EDA was responsible for the implementation of quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) activities.¹⁰

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In the past, demining has been primarily conducted by the engineering units of the Eritrean defence forces under the supervision of the EDA.¹¹ According to its 2014 Article 5 deadline extension request, Eritrea planned to deploy “at least” five demining teams during its second extension period.¹²

Since the expulsion of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in 2005, the authorities do not allow international operators to conduct survey or clearance in Eritrea.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Under its 2014 extension request, Eritrea projected that up to 15.4km² of mined area could be cleared within five years. It reported that 67.3km² of contaminated area had been cancelled through non-technical survey and that 5.7km² was cleared over 38 mined areas in 2011–13.¹³

Eritrea has not provided any updates to States Parties to the APMB, nor responded to Mine Action Review requests for information on any mine action activities (including survey) undertaken in since 2014. In 2013, Eritrea had reported release of 157 SHAs totalling 33.5km², leaving 385 mined areas of close to 24.5km² to be surveyed.¹⁴ Forty-nine new mined areas with a total size of 9km² were discovered in five of the country’s six regions during non-technical survey in 2013: Anseba, Debub, Gash Barka, Maakel, and Semienawi Keih Bahri.¹⁵

Likewise, Eritrea has not made public any information on any mine clearance undertaken in 2019 or recent years. In 2013, Eritrea seemingly cleared approx. 2.26km² of mined area, almost twice the amount cleared in 2012 (1.2km²).¹⁶ The number of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines destroyed in 2013 was not reported.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

As stated, no land release output, including survey or clearance, was reported in 2019.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

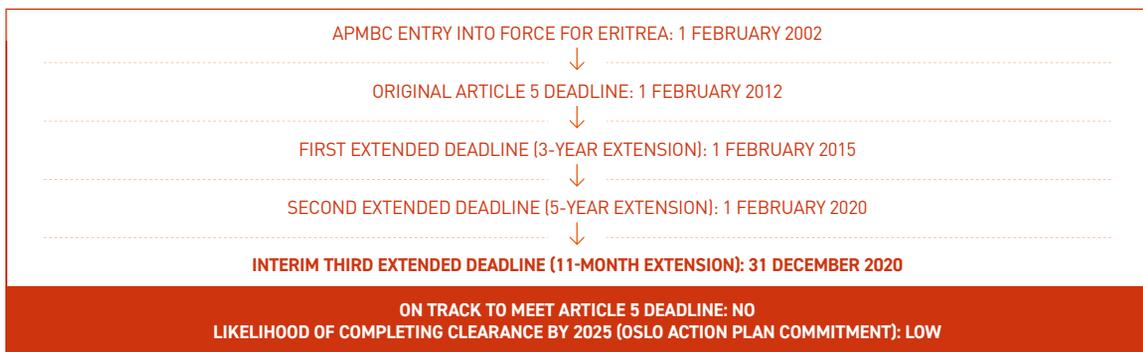


Table 2: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2019	N/R
2018	N/R
2017	N/R
2016	N/R
2015	N/R
Total	N/R

N/R = Not Reported

Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the three-year extension granted by States Parties in 2011, a five-year extension granted in 2014, and an interim 11-month extension in 2019), Eritrea is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2020. It is not on track to meet this deadline, is failing to comply with its Article 5 obligations, and as at June 2020 had not submitted a detailed request for an extension to its Article 5 deadline. Eritrea submitted its last extension request in November 2019, just before the Fourth APMBC Review Conference.

In January 2014, Eritrea submitted a second Article 5 deadline extension request seeking a further five years to continue clearance and complete re-survey of SHAs, but not to fulfil its clearance obligations under the treaty. In June 2014, however, States Parties granted Eritrea its extension request until 2020, but noted that five additional years beyond Eritrea's previous February 2015 deadline "appeared to be a long period of time to meet this objective".¹⁷

Based on a predicted clearance rate of 0.384km² per team per year and 1.92km² per five teams per year, Eritrea estimated that five teams operating at this pace could clear almost 15.4km² in the five-year period.¹⁸ It acknowledged, though, that this was "ambitious" and the amount projected still accounted for less than half of the total area Eritrea estimated as requiring either clearance or re-survey (33.5km²), leaving some 18km² unaccounted for.¹⁹

In April 2014, at the APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Eritrea stated that the extension period was designed to gain greater clarity about its mine problem, at which point Eritrea "could plan and think about the financial resources to be allocated for mine action".²⁰ It was further stated that Eritrea "won't complete clearance in the next five years", and will likely require a third extension.²¹ Eritrea did not submit an updated Article 5 deadline extension request or work plan as requested.

In the interim extension request submitted on 11 November 2019, just two weeks before the start of the Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Eritrea reported that it had not gained any clarity on the remaining anti-personnel mine contamination during the second extension period as Eritrea's demining capacity had been diverted to other government development programmes, such as construction and agriculture, and that mine action had faced financial and resource shortfalls and required external assistance to continue operations. Eritrea believes that it has the necessary experience and expertise to address the challenges but will require international support.

As at November 2019, the EDA was said to be in the process of restructuring and an interim request was submitted as no information could be provided on outstanding contamination, survey or clearance. Eritrea claimed it was planning to submit a more detailed extension request by 31 March 2020 with information on remaining mine contamination, progress made and a detailed work plan for implementation.²² As at July 2020, however, no additional extension request had been submitted with Eritrea remaining in violation of the Convention.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

As at June 2020, Eritrea had not provided any information on whether it has made any provision for a sustainable capacity to address previously unknown mined areas following completion.

-
- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 1 | Email from Habtom Seghid, Deputy General Manager, EDA, 6 May 2015. | 11 | Ibid. |
| 2 | 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7. This was despite finding 49 previously unrecorded suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) in five regions across an estimated area of 9km ² during non-technical survey in 2013. Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, submitted by the President of the 13th Meeting of the States Parties on behalf of the States Parties mandated to analyse requests for extensions, 20 June 2014, p. 2. | 12 | Ibid., p. 10. |
| 3 | Eritrea's reply to questions from the Article 5 Analysing Group about its Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 7 June 2011, p. 2. | 13 | Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 20 June 2014, p. 2. |
| 4 | Survey Action Center (SAC), "Landmine Impact Survey, Eritrea, Final Report", May 2005, p. 7. | 14 | Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 23 January 2014, p. 7. |
| 5 | 2014 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8. | 15 | Analysis of Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 20 June 2014, p. 2. |
| 6 | Ibid., p. 11. | 16 | Article 7 Report (covering 2012), Form F, p. 10. |
| 7 | Statement of Eritrea, 13th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 6 December 2013. | 17 | Decision on Eritrea's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Third APMBC Review Conference, Maputo, 26 June 2014. |
| 8 | Statement of Eritrea, Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Geneva, 9 April 2014. | 18 | Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 23 January 2014, p. 10. |
| 9 | Interim Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 11 November 2019, pp. 2-3. | 19 | ICBL Comments on Eritrea's Article 5 Extension Request, March 2014. |
| 10 | Article 7 Report (covering 2012), Form F, p. 5. | 20 | Statement of Eritrea, Standing Committee on Mine Action, Geneva, 9 April 2014. Notes by ICBL. |
| | | 21 | Ibid. |
| | | 22 | Interim Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 11 November 2019, pp. 2-3. |

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2025
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

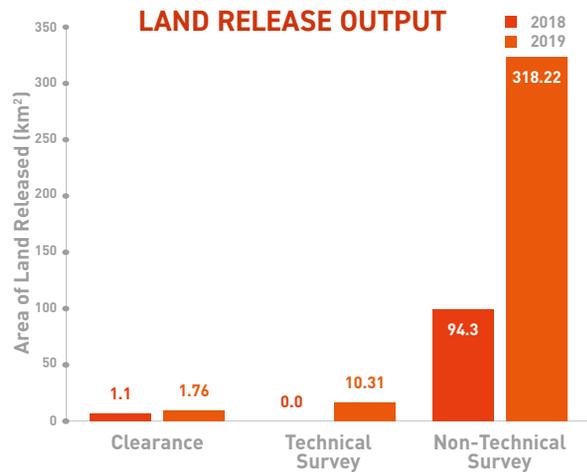
MEDIUM, 20KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

1.76KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

128



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2019, Ethiopia submitted and was granted a second extension to its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline. Ethiopia's land release output rose massively in 2019 to a total of 330km² of mined area, most by cancellation, but which included a 60% increase in clearance compared to the previous year. It is still unclear whether Ethiopia will meet its land release targets going forward as obstacles include the remoteness of certain mined areas, technical and logistical challenges, a lack of basic infrastructure, and a critical lack of funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ethiopia should conduct a re-survey of the Somali region to establish an up-to-date and accurate baseline.
- Ethiopia should ensure the re-established national mine action authority has sufficient resources to sustain an effective mine action programme and to ensure the mobilisation of resources to complete clearance.
- Ethiopia should clarify its ability to meet the annual land release targets in its extension request and provide more information on the size of the demining capacity it requires to address the remaining challenge.
- Ethiopia should produce an updated work plan by 30 April 2021, with revised estimates of contamination, annual survey and clearance targets, and a detailed budget, in accordance with the terms of its latest extension.
- Ethiopia should cooperate with Eritrea in cross-border mine action activities, which will also help to consolidate peace with its neighbour.
- Ethiopia should reconsider use of mine detection dogs (MDDs) to help cancel suspected hazardous areas (SHAs).
- Ethiopia should re-establish conditions that would allow international demining organisations to return.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	5	Ethiopia has an inflated baseline of mine contamination, 99% of which are SHAs in the Somali region. Ethiopia estimates that only 2% of the total mined area actually contains mines. In 2019, Ethiopia requested international assistance for a baseline survey to revise contamination data from the 2001–04 landmine impact survey.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	5	In 2019, it was announced that the national programme would report directly to the Ministry of Defence, with a view to raising the profile of mine action, and improve the efficiency of operations and availability of national resources. As at June 2020, it was not known if this has taken place.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	3	Ethiopia claimed to have a gender policy in place for its mine action centre and reflected in its national mine action standards. It reported that, according to the policy, there is equal access for employment for qualified men and women in survey and clearance teams, including for managerial positions. As at June 2020, it was not known if any women were involved in survey or clearance in 2019.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	4	Ethiopia's reporting improved in its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request and Article 7 report covering 2019, although a lack of detail persists and there are inconsistencies in the use of land release terminology.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	5	5	Ethiopia's second Article 5 deadline extension request (2019) contained annual targets for survey and clearance. It greatly exceeded its survey target for 2019 but fell short of its clearance target. According to the work plan Ethiopia will need to more than double its clearance output in 2020. Whether the work plan to 2025 is realistic and achievable, based on the demining capacity and rates of clearance projected, is questionable.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	An update to the National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) is long overdue and, as at June 2020, Ethiopia had not reported on whether this has happened. All clearance is conducted manually, but Ethiopia should consider expanding to re-employ MDDs if it is to meet its ambitious land release targets.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	5	In 2019, Ethiopia was granted a second Article 5 deadline extension until the end of 2025. Land release output rose dramatically in 2019 largely due to a massive increase in cancellation through non-technical survey though clearance output also increased compared to 2018. Ethiopia could still meet its 2025 deadline, but challenges remain around capacity, funding, and access (due to insecurity).
Average Score	5.2	4.9	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Head Office of the Ministry of Defence
- Ethiopia Mine Action Office (EMAO)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- National Demining Companies (Ethiopian Armed Forces)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at 30 April 2020, Ethiopia reported that it had a total of 152 suspected and confirmed hazardous areas with a size of 726km² remaining, see Table 1.¹ Almost all of the anti-personnel mine contamination is in SHAs, with just under 99% of the total estimate located in the Somali region. Ethiopia stated in its 2019 extension request that only 2% of the SHA are expected to contain mines.² As such, as at the end of 2018, the request projected a total of 27.3km² (6.3km² of existing CHA and 21km² of the SHA reported) will require clearance, while 1,029km² will be cancelled or reduced.³

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end April 2020)⁴

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHA/CHA	Total Area (m ²)
Somali	18	1,027,500	82	718,769,532	100	719,797,032
Gambela	0	0	20	838,000	20	838,000
Afar	6	1,755,049	8	1,915,300	14	3,670,349
Tigray	3	691,989	0	0	3	691,989
Oromia	0	0	13	1,026,105	13	1,026,105
Benishangule Gumuze	2	45,000	0	0	2	45,000
Totals	29	3,519,538	123	722,548,937	152	726,068,475

The estimate of mine contamination does not include the contaminated area along the border with Eritrea as this area has not been surveyed due to lack of access and delineation between the two countries.⁵ It is expected that survey of the buffer zone will be undertaken once demarcation of the border area is completed.⁶ Positively, the second extension request predicted negotiations through a joint border commission would allow mine action in previously inaccessible areas to begin. Specifically, new “military humanitarian demining” operations were expected to start in the Tigray border minefield.⁷ The 2019 extension request also states that access to mined areas in Afar and Somali regions continued to present a challenge for operations due to insecurity and their remoteness, while technical and logistical challenges and a lack of infrastructure continued to hamper access to Gambela and Benishangule regions.⁸

In 2001–04, a landmine impact survey (LIS) identified mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in 10 of Ethiopia's 11 regions, with 1,916 SHAs across more than 2,000km² impacting more than 1,492 communities.⁹ The Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO) stated that the LIS overestimated the number of both SHAs and impacted communities, citing lack of military expertise among the survey teams as the major reason for the overestimate.¹⁰ Since 2002, EMAO, with support from donors and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), have carried out efforts to confirm the results of the LIS and conduct mine clearance throughout the country.¹¹ In November 2019, Ethiopia requested international assistance to conduct a new baseline survey.¹²

Ethiopia's mine problem is a result of internal and international armed conflicts dating back to 1935, including the Italian occupation and subsequent East Africa campaigns (1935–41), a border war with Sudan (1980), the Ogaden war with Somalia (1997–98), internal conflict (1974–2000), and the Ethiopian-Eritrean war (1998–2000).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In 2001, following the end of the conflict with Eritrea, Ethiopia's Council of Ministers established EMAO as an autonomous civilian body responsible for mine clearance and mine risk education reporting to the Office of the Prime Minister.¹³ EMAO developed its operational capacities with technical assistance from NPA, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).¹⁴ In 2011, however, EMAO's governing board decided that the Ministry of Defence was better suited to clear the remaining mines. It was claimed that a civilian entity such as EMAO would struggle to access the unstable Somali region.¹⁵

In response to the decision to close EMAO and transfer demining responsibility to the army's Combat Engineers Division, NPA ended its direct funding support and had completed the transfer of its remaining 49 MDDs to EMAO and the federal police by the end of April 2012. The Combat Engineers Division took over management of the MDD Training Centre at Entoto in early 2012. The transition of EMAO to the Ministry of National Defence appeared to be in limbo until September 2015, when Ethiopia reported that oversight of national mine action activities had been re-established as “one Independent Mine Action Office” under the Combat Engineers Main Department.¹⁶ In 2017, Ethiopia confirmed that this “autonomous legal entity” had been re-named EMAO, and was responsible for survey, clearance, and risk education.¹⁷

In 2019, however, Ethiopia reported that the responsibility for the national mine action programme had been transferred back to the headquarters of the Ministry of Defence. This was, it said, to enable the Ministry to directly manage resources and activities; to improve access to remaining CHAs; and to raise the profile of mine action at a time when resources are increasingly limited.¹⁸

According to Ethiopia's second extension request (2019), just under US\$41 million is required to fulfil its Article 5 obligations by 2025, a decrease from the \$46 million reported in its 2017–20 work plan, which it said was due to progress made in land release in 2016–18. The request includes a breakdown of the budget required: \$28.7 million for demining, \$6.1 million for coordination and administration, \$4.1 million for training and equipment to manage “residual issues”; and \$2 million for quality assurance and information management.¹⁹ Of the total \$41 million sought, the government pledged to cover 20% (\$8.2 million).²⁰

Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request notes the availability of trained and highly experienced demining teams.²¹ In 2018, the Ethiopian government was the sole funder of mine action operations.²² EMAO had informed Mine Action Review that it expected to receive increased funding in 2019.²³ As at June 2020, Ethiopia has not reported on whether this happened. Ethiopia has also made numerous requests for international assistance, most recently, for vehicles, detectors, and personal protective equipment (PPE); assistance to conduct a baseline survey; and for Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) training for staff.²⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In August 2019, EMAO claimed to have a gender and diversity plan in place and to have mainstreamed gender in the national standards. It stated that all groups affected by anti-personnel mines are consulted during survey and community liaison through face-to-face interviews and using elders to disseminate information to local communities. It also noted, though, that no female deminers were employed in the demining companies. It claimed that, according to EMAO's policy, there is equal access for employment for qualified men and women in survey and clearance teams, including for managerial positions, but acknowledged that in practice no women had been engaged in survey or clearance in 2018.²⁵ As at June 2020, Ethiopia had not provided information on whether women were involved in survey or clearance activities in 2019.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Although a version of the IMSMA database software was installed and customised by EMAO prior to 2015, in 2019, Ethiopia continued to report it was still using an “alternative data processing package” alongside the IMSMA database, due to a “gap” in the IMSMA system's installation. It reported that efforts to upgrade capacity and data processing had been ongoing under EMAO, and that it requested additional IMSMA training and assistance from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to finalise the transfer of the database.²⁶ The GICHD, however, has no record of a request for such assistance nor for any application by Ethiopia for its mine action personnel to attend any training courses.²⁷

Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 extension request contains a number of discrepancies in reporting, possibly due in part to previous inconsistencies in reporting on area remaining in its 2017 updated work plan and first Article 5 extension request.²⁸ The figures in Ethiopia's latest Article 7 report, covering April 2019 to April 2020, are accurate but the report lacks detail on survey and clearance capacity and land release methodology, and reporting would benefit from an updated work plan and detailed budget. However, both documents are evidence of significant improvements in reporting compared to previous years.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Ethiopia's second Article 5 extension request for the period 2020–25 aims to achieve the following:

- Address the remaining 1,065km² of mine contamination
- Complete survey of the buffer zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea once demarcation is completed
- Obtain the support of donors and international advisors
- Fully equip and train the demining companies, Rapid Response Teams (RRTs), and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams
- Implement risk education in affected communities and mark SHAs
- Finish the building of the demining training centre.²⁹

In 2019, Ethiopia planned a “rearrangement” of the RRTs and demining companies in the Somali region, and to release 171.5km² through survey and 1.9km² through clearance.³⁰ As at June 2020, Ethiopia has not reported on whether it restructured its demining capacity in the Somali region. Ethiopia far exceed its survey target, releasing nearly 329km², but did not quite meet its clearance target of 1.9 km², clearing only 1.76km².³¹ In 2020, Ethiopia planned to continue demining in the Somali region and expected to release 171.5km² through survey and to clear 4.3km² (see Table 2).³²

The work plan raises a number of critical questions as to whether it is realistic and achievable. For example, Ethiopia does not provide detail on how the significant jump in projections for clearance from 1.9km² in 2019 to 4.3km² in 2020 is to be realised. The request indicates that one additional “demining company” will be added during the extension period, but does not specify at what time this will occur or the number of deminers who will form the company. EMAO informed Mine Action Review that it was 90 deminers.³³ The request also foresees that one deminer will clear on average 40–50 square metres per day, 22 days a month, 10 months a year; projections which would seem improbably high.³⁴

Ethiopia is due to submit to the States Parties, by 30 April 2021 and then a second time by 30 April 2023, updated work plans for the remaining period covered by the extension request. The Review Conference requested that these work plans contain an updated list of all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, annual projections of which areas would be dealt with each year and by which organisations during the remaining period covered by the request, and a revised detailed budget.³⁵

Table 2: Planned land release in 2019–25

Year	Area to be reduced/cancelled (m ²)	Area to be cleared (m ²)	Totals
2019	171,507,352	1,905,438	173,412,790
2020	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2021	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2022	171,507,353	4,300,000	175,807,353
2023	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2024	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2025	0	3,900,000	3,900,000
Totals	1,029,044,113	27,305,438	1,056,349,551

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Ethiopia previously reported in 2017 that its NMAS would be “developed and updated” and that standing operating procedures (SOPs) for mine clearance and other land release would be revised according to the IMAS. It had also reported that this would happen in 2015, according to its extension request targets.³⁶ As at June 2020, Ethiopia had not reported that the revisions had been completed.

Ethiopia's second extension request details the land release methodology it intends to employ in demining operations.³⁷ The request claims that manual demining is the most efficient and least costly method of clearance, and states that machines cannot be used due to the terrain of the remaining contaminated areas.³⁸ However, with such large projections for cancellation and reduction of SHA, Ethiopia should consider other options beyond manual clearance, particularly MDDs for technical survey.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

All survey and clearance in Ethiopia are conducted by the national demining companies of the Ethiopian Armed Forces. Ethiopia's second extension request foresees that following a “rearrangement” of its four demining companies and four RRTs, which included two technical survey/RRTs and two specialist EOD teams in 2019, these four demining companies and four RRTs will be deployed each year through to the end of its Article 5 extension period in 2025.³⁹ According to EMAO, two companies were deployed for clearance in 2018, along with two technical survey teams, and one EOD team.⁴⁰ As at June 2020, Ethiopia had not reported on operational capacity deployed in 2019.

The request claims that the manual clearance, technical survey, and EOD teams have carried out extensive trainings and “are enough capable to implement the activities mentioned in the detailed work plan”.⁴¹ Ethiopia has reported that while it has six ground preparation machines, these were not in use as all remaining hazardous areas are located in remote areas, which it claims are only suitable for manual clearance.⁴²

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 330.28km² of mined area was released between end-April 2019 and end-April 2020 across 128 hazardous areas, of which 1.76km² was cleared, 10.31km² was reduced through technical survey, and 318.22km² was cancelled through non-technical survey. A total of 128 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.

SURVEY IN 2019

From end-April 2019 to end-April 2020, a total of 328.52km² was released through survey all in the Somali region, of which the vast majority was cancelled through non-technical survey at 318.22km² compared to 10.31km² reduced through technical survey.⁴³ This is a massive increase over 2018 when a total of 94.3km² was cancelled through non-technical survey and there was no reduction through technical survey.⁴⁴

Table 3: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁴⁵

Region	District	Area cancelled (m ²)
Somali	Kebribeyah	130,320,758
	Gerbo	55,149,713
	Sagiagi	132,746,037
Total		318,216,508

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁴⁶

Region	District	Area reduced (m ²)
Somali	Kebribeyah	3,691,936
	Gerbo	1,849,425
	Sagiagi	4,765,260
Total		10,306,621

CLEARANCE IN 2019

From end-April 2019 to end-April 2020, a total of 1.76km² was cleared in the Somali region with 128 anti-personnel mines and 5,812 items of UXO found and destroyed. All the areas were released through manual clearance because the area is mountainous and remote.⁴⁷ This is an increase from the just under 1.1km² cleared in 2018, when 582 anti-personnel mines, 3 anti-vehicle mines, and 7,265 items of UXO were destroyed.⁴⁸

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019⁴⁹

Province	District	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Somali	Kebribeyah	N/K	534,132	28	1,779
	Gerbo	N/K	472,112	23	1,124
	Sagiagi	N/K	751,703	77	2,909
Totals			1,757,947	128	5,812

AP = Anti-personnel

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Ethiopia is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025.⁵⁰ In its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request, Ethiopia listed the following reasons for its inability to comply with its Article 5 obligations: insecurity in and around some mined areas; the lack of basic social services and infrastructure necessary for operations in rural areas; continuous redeployment of demining teams in scattered mined areas; lack of funding; the identification of additional hazardous areas; climate (such as a three-month rainy season); and a lack of precise information on the number and location of mined areas.⁵¹

Ethiopia has been at best, overly ambitious, or at worst, negligent in its projections and estimations for completion of survey and clearance in recent years. Its 2017–20 work plan, submitted in October 2017, stated that it was "realistic" that all 314 areas then remaining could be addressed using "all available demining assets in Ethiopia" within the extension time period, and that donor funding will enable it "successfully to complete the clearance of contaminated areas from land mines and fulfil the legal obligations of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention by 2020".⁵² This did not occur.

The second extension request clearly sets out primary assumptions and risk factors in implementing its targets: that donor funding will increase steadily; that old demining equipment is replaced by “licensed” demining equipment; that one deminer will clear on average as much as 50 square metres per day, 22 days a month, and 10 months a year; and that one additional demining company will be added, for a total of five deployed. As noted, however, the average clearance average per deminer appears unrealistically high.⁵³

Ethiopia’s clearance output rose by 60% from 2018 to 2019 to 1.76km² and though this was short of its clearance target for the year it exceeded its land release through survey target by 91%. This is, however, for the period April 2019 to April 2020 rather than calendar year 2019. Ethiopia has not reported on its deployed operational capacity during this period, so it is unclear how these massive increases in productivity were achieved and its annual clearance targets still seem very ambitious. While Ethiopia has reported improvements in border security and greater access for mine action operations, discussions with Eritrea are still ongoing and clearance cannot be completed until these issues are resolved. It is not impossible for Ethiopia to meet its Article 5 deadline, but it would benefit from providing an updated work plan with realistic and costed annual targets for land release.

Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019**	1.76
2018	1.1
2017	0.40
2016	*0.50
2015	N/R
Total	3.76

* Estimated clearance based on report for 2016–18

**Reporting year is 31 April 2019–31 April 2020

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

The scope of residual contamination remains unknown in Ethiopia. Ethiopia acknowledges that landmines may have been left because of lack of information during clearance operations, because of ground movements, or exposure to rain. It is also possible that more mines have been laid in recent armed conflicts.⁵⁴ As at June 2020, Ethiopia had not reported on whether it has a strategy for managing residual risk post-completion.

- 1 Article 7 Report (covering April 2019–April 2020), Form D.
- 2 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 35; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
- 3 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 48.
- 4 Article 7 Report (covering April 2019–April 2020), Form D.
- 5 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 9 and 35. Ethiopia said it was difficult to determine which areas were under the responsibility of Ethiopia or Eritrea. The area was previously under the control of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). Ethiopia reported in 2015 it had conducted clearance behind its own defensive lines, but said it was not possible to enter the area between the two countries' defensive lines due to security concerns, and clearance would have to wait for demarcation to be completed.
- 8 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 35.
- 9 Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), "Landmine Impact Survey Report, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia", May 2004.
- 10 In 2012, Ethiopia reported that subsequent technical survey and non-technical (re-)survey of SHAs identified during the LIS had confirmed mine contamination in only 136 areas. However, 60 previously unrecorded hazardous areas were also identified, which were confirmed as mined through technical survey, resulting in a total of 196 areas confirmed as mined. Also in 2012, Ethiopia reported that 358 SHAs across an area of 1,200km² from the LIS data needed to be re-surveyed.
- 11 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p.8.
- 12 Statement on Article 5 deadline extension request, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 13 Council of Ministers, Regulation No. 70/2001, 5 February 2001.
- 14 A. Borchgrevink et al., "End Review of the Norwegian People's Aid Mine Action Programme in Ethiopia 2005–2007: Final Evaluation", *Norad Collected Reviews* 36/2008, June 2008, p. 5.
- 15 Statements of Ethiopia, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 25 June 2015, April 2014, and 24 May 2012.
- 16 Statements of Ethiopia, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 9 April 2014 and 25 June 2015; "Response to Committee on Article 5 Implementation request for additional information on its Article 5 deadline Extension Request", submitted 26 September 2015; and Analysis of Ethiopia's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 19 November 2015, p. 3.
- 17 Revised National Mine Action Plan for 2017–20, October 2017, pp. 2 and 32.
- 18 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 23 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.
- 24 Statement on Article 5 deadline extension request, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 25 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.
- 26 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 30–31.
- 27 Email from Dominic Wolsey, Advisor, Gender and Diversity, GICHD, 17 July 2020.
- 28 Ethiopia's reporting on the number and size of areas suspected or confirmed to be mined has been plagued with inconsistencies, including the figures contained within its 2015 Article 5 extension request, its response to subsequent requests for clarification, statements at APMBBC meetings, and its last Article 7 transparency report on the status of contamination as at 30 April 2017. Ethiopia has been asked by States Parties to the APMBBC on numerous occasions to clarify its estimates of contamination and to present accurate information on the number and estimated size of CHAs and SHAs. "Response to Committee on Article 5 Implementation request for additional information on its Article 5 deadline Extension Request", submitted on 26 September 2015; and Analysis of Ethiopia's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 19 November 2015, p. 3.
- 29 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 10–11.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 31 Article 7 Report (covering 31 April 2019–31 April 2020), Form D.
- 32 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, p. 5.
- 33 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.
- 34 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 42.
- 35 Decision on 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 29 November 2019.
- 36 Revised National Mine Action Plan for 2017–20, October 2017, p. 12; and 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 11.
- 37 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 24–25 and 27–29.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- 39 *Ibid.*, pp. 46–48.
- 40 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.
- 41 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 50.
- 42 *Ibid.*
- 43 Article 7 Report (covering 31 April 2019–31 April 2020), Form D.
- 44 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.
- 45 Article 7 Report (covering 31 April 2019–31 April 2020), Form D.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 Article 7 Report (covering 31 April 2019–31 April 2020), Form D.
- 48 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.
- 49 Article 7 Report (covering 31 April 2019–31 April 2020), Form D.
- 50 Ethiopia's original Article 5 deadline expired on 1 June 2015. In March 2015, Ethiopia submitted a request for an extension of five years until 1 June 2020 to complete survey and clearance of all remaining mined areas. It failed, however, to submit an extension request with sufficient time to allow States Parties to consider extending the deadline prior to its expiry, thus placing Ethiopia in violation of the convention until the approval of the late request by the Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties on 4 December 2015.
- 51 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 40–41; and 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 14–15.
- 52 For example, in just one year, 2018, the work plan stated that more than 518.5km² would be addressed through non-technical and technical survey by concluding survey of Afar, Benishangul, Gambela, and Oromia regions, along with ongoing survey in Somali region, and the clearance of just under 8km².
- 53 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 42.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 FEBRUARY 2028
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
 MINE CONTAMINATION:

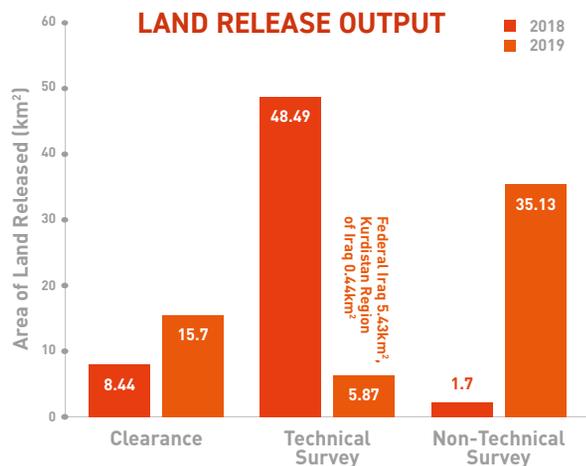
MASSIVE, 200 KM²
 (MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
 CLEARANCE IN 2019

15.7 KM²
 (MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINES
 DESTROYED IN 2019

14,253
 (MINE ACTION REVIEW CALCULATION)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) appointed a new acting director in June 2019, who took steps to address delays in the issuance of task orders while the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) ceased issuing task orders and came under DMA tasking authority. A transfer of responsibility within the government for issuing permits for movement between Federal Iraq's governorates in November 2019 resulted in severe bottlenecks that left some operators unable to deploy survey and clearance teams to their area of operations for months, causing a serious loss of productivity.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Iraq should resolve as a matter of urgency delays in issuing movement permission and visas resulting in prolonged stand down of operational assets.
- The Iraqi government should provide the DMA with the legal authority, funding, equipment, and training for staff to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.
- International donors should address the severely limited capacity and resources in the national mine action structures.
- Iraq should explicitly recognise mines of an improvised nature as part of its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) treaty obligation and both national mine action authorities should amend reporting forms to allow recording of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, rather than recording them as improvised explosive devices (IEDs).
- The DMA should tackle the persistent inability of its information management system to provide comprehensive, disaggregated data on the results of survey and clearance, detailing the contribution of every active organisation.
- The DMA should review and revise information management procedures to ensure timely entry of survey and clearance results into the database.
- Iraq's two national mine action authorities should adopt a common format for reporting results of survey and clearance consistent with the International Mine Action Standard (IMAS).
- Iraq should consider establishing an in-country platform bringing together the authorities, donors, and key stakeholders to help strengthen national coordination.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	6	Iraq has a broad understanding of the location of legacy mined areas and is keen to conduct further survey to determine more precisely the extent – when resources are available. In the meantime, it continues to make progress surveying areas liberated from Islamic State and which are heavily contaminated with improvised mines.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	4	Federal Iraq has not provided the DMA with the legal status and institutional authority to effectively manage the mine action activities of key ministries. Transfer of authority for issuing movement permits for demining operators to the NGO Directorate in late 2019 resulted in paralysis and loss of months of operations by internationally funded survey and clearance teams.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	4	The DMA has engaged with UNMAS and other international organisations to strengthen gender diversity in mine action but progress remains slow in a male-dominated society. While demining operators employ women in administrative and support roles and community liaison, their employment in demining operations remains limited and dependant on social norms that vary according to locality.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	4	Iraq presented a timely and much improved Article 7 transparency report covering 2019 but information management continues to be a major challenge. The DMA introduced an online tasking system to promote efficiency but delays in uploading results left operators without access to timely, accurate information and gaps in official data made it difficult to determine progress in mine action.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	4	3	Operators experienced major delays in issuance of task orders by the DMA in early 2019. Discussions between the DMA, UNMAS, and other stakeholders eased tensions over the issue but out-of-date data accompanying task orders remained a concern for operators.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	5	Iraq's national mine action standards are old, exist only in Arabic, and do not address contemporary challenges such as clearance of improvised mines or search and clearance of buildings. The DMA has started discussions on updating standards with international partners but so far without result.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	6	Iraq appears to have released significant amounts of land through survey and clearance in 2019 but the weakness of data prevents precise determination of how much. Iraq will find it difficult to sustain this level of clearance in the face of shrinking international donor support and the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns.
Average Score	5.1	4.9	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Federal Iraq:
 - Ministry of Health and Environment
 - Directorate of Mine Action (DMA)
- Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI):
 - Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Interior: Civil Defence, EOD Directorate
- IKMAA
- Akad International Co. for Mines
- Al Danube
- Al Fahad Co. for Demining
- Al Khebra Co. for Demining
- Al Safsafa
- Alsiraj Almudhia for Mine Removal
- Arabian Gulf Mine Action Co.
- Al Waha
- Eagle Eye
- Nabaa Al-Hurya
- Ta'az Demining
- Wtorplast Demining

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Demining Group (DDG)
- The HALO Trust
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI, formerly Handicap International)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)
- G4S
- Optima

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Iraq remains the world's most mine-contaminated country but lacks a credible baseline estimate of the extent of mined area. Iraq's mine action authorities estimated total mine contamination at the end of 2019 at 1,866km². Federal Iraq accounted for close to 90% of the total or about 1,652km², but the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) also ranked on its own among the world's most heavily affected areas with 214km² of anti-personnel mined area.¹

The estimated total for end 2019 was almost 10% more than a year earlier, partly as a result of a higher estimate of the extent of improvised mine contamination in Federal Iraq and also due to the inclusion of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) in the KRI, not cited in the previous Article 7 transparency report.

FEDERAL IRAQ

Most of Federal Iraq's AP mine contamination consists of "legacy" mined areas heavily concentrated in southern governorates, which date back to the 1980–88 war with Iran, the 1991 Gulf War, and the 2003 invasion by the United States (US)-led coalition (see Tables 1 and 2). They include major barrier minefields on the border with Iran stretching from Basrah to Missan and Wassit governorates. The estimate of these mined areas remains largely unchanged since the previous year but is based on rapid survey conducted more than a decade ago.

The DMA is confident that re-survey of these minefields would result in cancellation of significant areas.² Iraq, however, has also reported discovery of previously unrecorded minefields totalling 31.9km² almost entirely located in the southern governorates of Basrah, Missan and Muthanna. More than three-quarters of this was made up of a single mined in Muthanna reported to cover more 25km². It also included 0.39km² in Ninewa governorate's Sinjar district and two small hazardous areas in Salah al-Din's Baiji district.³

Table 1: Mined area in Federal Iraq (at end 2019)⁴

Contamination type	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
Anti-personnel mines	293	1,008,304,514	48	17,290,546	1,025,595,060
Improvised devices*	752	344,500,329	352	281,781,708	626,282,037
Totals	1,045	1,352,804,843	400	299,072,254	1,651,877,097

* The area attributed to mines of an improvised nature

Table 2: Legacy AP mined area in Federal Iraq by governorate (at end 2019)⁵

Governorate	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
Anbar	0	0	1	1,580	1,580
Basrah	55	882,104,181	1	962,731	883,066,912
Diyala	1	0	28	15,791,646	15,791,646
Missan	200	47,204,517	3	400,183	47,604,700
Muthanna	4	38,978,577	0	0	38,978,577
Ninewa	2	390,786	9	132,792	523,578
Salah al-Din	1	43,274	6	1,614	44,888
Wassit	30	39,583,179	0	0	39,583,179
Totals	293	1,008,304,514	48	17,290,546	1,025,595,060

Since 2017, demining operations have focused on clearing liberated areas resulting in release of large areas in the past two years but the estimated area of improvised mine contamination increased slightly in 2019 to 626km² at the end of 2019, up from 611km² a year earlier (see Table 3).⁶ Estimated contamination rose particularly in Anbar governorate where operators only started systematic non-technical survey in 2019; and in Nineveh, one of the governorates most densely contaminated by Islamic State improvised mines and also the subject of comprehensive non-technical survey in 2019.

Table 3: IED/Improvised mined area (at end 2019)⁷

Province	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
Anbar	261	17,634,929	70	131,972,120	149,607,049
Baghdad	0	0	1	3,577,320	3,577,320
Diyala	6	206,540,876	12	47,617,198	254,158,074
Kirkuk	29	62,489,538	13	804,591	63,294,129
Ninewa	372	49,725,284	246	97,243,165	146,968,449
Salah al Din	84	8,109,702	10	567,314	8,677,016
Totals	752	344,500,329	352	281,781,708	626,282,037

Iraq continues to report contamination in areas liberated from Islamic State as IEDs, but confirms that the vast majority of devices cleared are victim-activated making them anti-personnel mines. Of 9,726 improvised devices that the DMA reported were destroyed in Federal Iraq in 2019, just two were command detonated.⁸ International operators have encountered a wide variety of improvised devices left by Islamic State but report particularly common variants are initiated by a pressure plate or “crush necklace” wires sufficiently sensitive to be detonated by the weight of a child and connected to an explosive charge of ammonium nitrate and fuel. The size of the charge typically ranges from 3kg to 100kg.⁹

KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ

The KRI recorded confirmed mine contamination of 182km² at the end of 2019, and SHAs amounting to a further 31.5km².¹⁰ Although the total is higher than shown in 2019 it represents a 5% drop from the amount recorded at the end of 2017.¹¹ The KRI has recorded very little contamination by IEDs or improvised mines, reporting only 6 CHAs affecting 161,722m² and 14 SHAs affecting 1,141,539m².¹² KRI data do not include areas on the border with Turkey which have never been surveyed because of continuing fighting and Turkish airstrikes.¹³

Table 4: KRI Mined area by province (at end 2019)¹⁴

Province	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
Dohuk	401	20,303,678	0	0	20,303,678
Erbil	336	48,503,023	0	0	48,503,023
Halabja	0	0	9	1,988,806	1,988,806
Slemani	2,374	113,287,594	120	29,506,016	142,793,610
Totals	3,111	182,094,295	129	31,494,822	213,589,117

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The mine action programme in Iraq is managed along regional lines. The Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) represents Iraq internationally and oversees mine action for humanitarian purposes in Federal Iraq covering 15 of the country's 19 governorates.¹⁵ Mine action in the KRI's four governorates is overseen by the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA), which reports to the Council of Ministers and is led by a director general who has ministerial rank.

FEDERAL IRAQ

The inter-ministerial Higher Council of Mine Action,¹⁶ which reports to the Prime Minister, oversees and approves mine action strategy, policies, and plans. The DMA “plans, coordinates, supervises, monitors and follows up all the activities of mine action.” It draws up the national strategy and is responsible for setting national standards, accrediting, and approving the standing operating procedures (SOPs) of demining organisations and certifying completion of clearance tasks.¹⁷

The DMA said it asked the government for \$30.6 million a year for survey and clearance¹⁸ but it has not reported how much it received or provided any details of government expenditure on any aspect of mine action.

Coordinating the planning, tasking, and information management among all the actors has remained a significant challenge. As a department of the Ministry of Health and Environment, the DMA has less authority than the politically powerful Ministries of Defence and Interior, which manage significant explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and mine clearance capacity, as well as the Ministry of Oil. Additionally, the DMA's status is not formally established by law.¹⁹

Rapid turnover of directors has also hampered management and policy continuity. Essa al-Fayadh, who was at least the tenth director since 2003, was transferred to a different office in February 2019. Deputy Minister of Health and Environment Kamran Ali took over as acting director of the DMA until June 2019 when Khaled Rashad Jabar al-Khaqani, a former DMA director, was reappointed to the position. As of June 2020, his appointment had still not been confirmed. The DMA, meanwhile, appointed a new operations manager in the second half of 2019 and changes in Iraq's political leadership in 2020 raised the possibility of further management changes.

The DMA oversees three Regional Mine Action Centres (RMACs):

- North: covering the governorates of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Nineveh, and Salah ad-Din;
- Middle Euphrates (MEU): Babylon, Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf, Qadisiyah, and Wassit;
- South: Basrah, Missan, Muthanna, and Thi-Qar.

RMAC South, located in Basra City, maintained its own database and was responsible for tasking operators in its area of operations. RMAC North and MEU were located in Baghdad but RMAC North also opened a satellite office in Mosul in August 2019.²⁰

Federal Iraq's spending on the DMA and mine action is unknown. The sector remains heavily dependent on international donor funding, most of it channelled through UNMAS and bilateral funding to clearance operators. In the past two years, the Iraqi government and donors have given priority to tackling massive contamination by mines of an improvised nature in areas liberated from Islamic State, leaving scant resources for tackling contamination by explosive remnants of war (ERW) in others areas of Iraq, including the substantial cluster munition remnant threat concentrated in the south.

Iraq has taken steps to streamline procedures for operators who are required to register with the NGO Directorate or the Ministry of Trade before they can be accredited by the DMA, a process that in the past could take years. Operators reported that frequently changing bureaucratic procedures governing tasking, reporting, team deployments, and residency consumed considerable time and energy, significantly hampering productivity. DMA management changes in 2019 reportedly smoothed relations between the DMA and UNMAS and appeared to pave the way for some internal restructuring within the DMA.²¹

However, operators reported another major setback in November 2019 when the government transferred responsibility for issuing the permissions to move between governorates, which operators are required to renew monthly, from the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre to the NGO Directorate. The transfer appears to have taken place without

adequate preparation, resulting in procedures for issuing the permits coming to a halt. Some operators were able to obtain movement permits from local authorities in some governorates but many demining teams were left unable to access their area of operations forcing them to halt work for a period of months. The NGO Directorate reportedly issued some movement permits in mid-March 2020, but they arrived just before a COVID-19 lockdown came into effect, leaving affected operators no opportunity to restore operations.²²

KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ

IKMAA functions as a regulator and operator in the KRI. It reports directly to the Kurdish Regional Government's Council of Ministers and coordinates four directorates in Dohuk, Erbil, Garmian, and Sulimaniya (Sleman). Financial constraints halved salaries for all staff for the last three years and resulted in a number of posts being left vacant, but in 2019 payment of salaries resumed and IKMAA planned to fill vacant posts.²³

IKMAA did not respond to requests for information about its capacity, priorities, and operating results.

OTHER ACTORS

UNMAS established a presence in Iraq in mid 2015 to assess the explosive ordnance hazard threat in liberated areas and set three priorities: explosive threat management to support stabilisation and recovery, including the return of people displaced by conflict; deliver risk education, nationally and locally; and build capacity of government entities to manage, regulate and coordinate Iraq's response to explosive contamination. In 2019, it employed 100 staff, of whom 43 were internationals.²⁴

Funding through UNMAS has declined sharply since 2017 when international donors mobilised to tackle the humanitarian emergency arising from Islamic State occupation and the threat from massive improvised mine contamination left in areas liberated from its control. UNMAS received US\$76.9 million in 2019, some of it for activities in 2019–20. In 2020, it received US\$31.15 million, some of it for 2020 and 2021. By May 2020, it had received pledges of an additional US\$11.9 million. UNMAS total expenditure on mine clearance operations in 2019 amounted to US\$37.8 million.²⁵

As part of its technical support to national mine action authorities in 2019, UNMAS, in close collaboration with the DMA, assessed DMA capacities by co-locating mine action technical advisors at the joint mine action coordination committee. Other activities included gender mainstreaming externally and internally, providing explosive hazard management support and risk education in areas retaken from Islamic State; and training the Ministry of Interior's EOD capacity.²⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The Iraq National Strategic Mine Action Plan specifically refers to gender equality and gender mainstreaming within mine action activities as objectives of an effective programmatic response.²⁷

The DMA has had a Gender Unit since 2017. It was led in 2019 by the deputy head of the Planning Department²⁸ and is said to encourage women to apply for employment in mine action.²⁹ UNMAS developed terms of reference for the Gender Unit and designed and implemented a training plan. It also developed the Gender Unit's first Action Plan laying out activities designed to mainstream gender throughout the DMA. Additional support provided by UNMAS included two training workshops for risk education, planning teams on developing gender-sensitive indicators and mainstreaming gender issues in their activities. IKMAA also reportedly established a Gender Committee in 2019 and UNMAS reported developing terms of reference setting out responsibilities and a reporting structure.³⁰

UNMAS conducted a baseline assessment of the DMA's gender policy and practice in 2019, which concluded it had succeeded in raising awareness of gender both internally and in other government institutions engaged in explosive hazard management. Despite that progress, UNMAS observed challenges remained for recruitment, promotion and involving women in all levels of decision-making. UNMAS observed that "a highly patriarchal society, male dominated work force and general misunderstanding of what exactly 'gender in mine action' means in the day to day practical application of activities, continues to hinder widespread changes in mind sets and behaviours".³¹

International operators and their national partners recruit women for a variety of roles, subject to cultural sensitivities that vary in different parts of the country. Most operators

employ women in administrative office roles; many also have a significant representation of women in community liaison and risk education functions; while some also employ women in clearance teams, including as team leaders. The possibilities for employing women depend on cultural sensitivities that varied between regions.³² Most international NGOs reported having a 50-50 balance between women and men in community liaison teams but recruitment of women in clearance operations is more problematic as a result of cultural barriers and the social unacceptability of women working alone or outnumbered by men.

The proportion of women engaged in operational roles ranged from around 6% for HALO Trust (12% across all roles), which hired women to join non-technical survey teams since 2018,³³ to 17% for Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), which had mixed gender teams working in the north and west of Iraq in 2019. It planned to set up an all-woman multitask team in 2020 that would allow women to develop technical and leadership skills before moving on to become team leaders of mixed gender teams.³⁴ The Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) recruited and trained an all-female clearance team in 2019 supervised by a male team leader but planned on training a woman team leader in 2020.³⁵

Mines Advisory Group (MAG) employed 105 women making up 10% of its total staff in 2019, 87 of them in operational roles representing 6% of operations personnel. These included 26 deminers, 4 team leaders, and 4 deputy team leaders, as well as one mechanical operator and five medics. In Sinjar district's Yazidi community, MAG employed women for manual clearance and as mine detection dog handlers. All community liaison teams consisted of one woman and one man. As teams are recruited locally, they also represented the ethnic composition in those areas.³⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The DMA and IKMAA maintain databases using Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation with technical support from iMMAP, a commercial service provider based in Erbil and working under contract to the US Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA).

Federal Iraq's mine action database is located at the DMA's Baghdad headquarters. RMAC South (RMAC-S) maintains a database in Basrah, receiving reports from demining organisations in its area of operations, which is synchronised with Baghdad's at intervals determined by the volume of data to be uploaded.³⁷

Operators are required to submit results to DMA in hard copy in Arabic delivered by hand every month. DMA then uploads results manually into the database. The procedure meets Iraqi legal requirements, which do not recognise electronic copies, but can cause delays of several months before results of survey and clearance are uploaded. As a result, operators say task orders issued by the DMA have often lacked the most up-to date information.³⁸ The fact

that task orders and completion reports are not permitted electronically and are not archived complicates the process of tracking communications.³⁹ Operators working on projects funded through UNMAS report in English directly to UNMAS from the field through a UN reporting system, Survey123. UNMAS-approved data is then submitted to the DMA. Although iMMAP coordinates data on behalf of the DMA and IKMAA, operators report the extent to which information was shared by all national actors is unclear.⁴⁰

The DMA gave operators access to an online dashboard presenting mine action data and in 2019 introduced an Online Task Management System which it claimed as the first in the world and through which operators can request IMSMA data relating to specific tasks. Operators said the utility of these tools was limited by the slow entry of operating results into the database, the variable quality of data, depending on the source, and the patchy availability of information on land use and livelihoods, which is useful for planning and prioritisation but is not shared systematically.⁴¹

Since 2019, the DMA regularly convened meetings of an Information Management technical working group involving all demining organisations but proceedings and decisions reached were mostly unrecorded and were not followed up. As a result, operators said personnel changes in the DMA often resulted in changes to procedures. Reporting forms enable collection of the necessary data but provide little guidance on how they should be completed and what data can be reported under different activities.⁴²

Iraq has submitted Article 7 reports annually. Its report covering 2019 was one of the earliest submitted in 2020 and a major step forward in the breadth and depth of information provided. But it continued to report mines of an improvised nature as IEDs, underscoring shortcomings in IMSMA reporting forms which do give operators an option to record anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature as separate from other IEDs that are not victim-activated and which therefore do not meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Iraq submitted an Article 5 deadline extension request in April 2017 that laid out a general direction for mine action and issued a national strategic plan for 2017–21 that defined roles of national institutions and summarised the findings of previous surveys. Both documents were largely superseded by the emergency response to address massive contamination by mines of an improvised nature and ERW in areas occupied by Islamic State between 2014 and 2017 in order to facilitate the return of internally displaced persons, rehabilitation of public services, and restoration of the economy.

The scale of that challenge, which is concentrated in north and west Iraq, largely marginalised efforts to address legacy minefields and cluster munitions contamination in southern governorates.⁴³ Iraq informed the Oslo Review Conference in November 2019 it had formed a committee to prepare an updated national strategic plan covering the period up to its next Article 5 deadline in February 2028.⁴⁴

In the KRI, IKMAA started work on a five-year strategy in the last quarter of 2017, which focused on clearance of legacy minefields. IKMAA's priorities remain unchanged and include clearing agricultural land, infrastructure, tackling CHAs close to populated areas as well as areas reporting most mine incidents and casualties.⁴⁵ Population return from cities and big towns to rural areas as a result of changing socio-economic conditions has increased pressure for rural area clearance.⁴⁶

In Federal Iraq, tasking and reporting requirements proved a source of tension between the DMA, UNMAS, and international operators in 2018 and 2019, prompting action to try to resolve problems arising from weak coordination and frequent shifts in official procedures. The DMA had reported that operators requested task orders for survey or clearance of areas that had already been surveyed or cleared and failed to follow up some task orders issued by the DMA.⁴⁷ International actors reported multiple concerns, including long delays in receiving DMA responses to task order requests, holding back productive use of survey and clearance assets, the poor quality of data accompanying task orders, and lack of clarity or consistency in reporting requirements.⁴⁸

Before February 2019, UNMAS had issued task orders unilaterally for projects funded through the UN, a significant irritant for the DMA. After February, UNMAS came under DMA tasking authority and a "dual key" system was introduced according to which implementing partners needed both a DMA task order and an UNMAS work order before starting work on UNMAS-funded contracts. The DMA, IKMAA, and UNMAS agreed a new Task Order Process in July 2019, clarifying the roles of national mine action authorities and government entities, including the ministries of defence and interior, and reportedly resulting in more efficient tasking. From late 2019, UNMAS reported engaging in regular task coordination meetings at the DMA.⁴⁹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Iraq has national mine action standards for mine and battle area clearance, non-technical survey, and technical survey that were written in 2004–05. The standards exist in Arabic only and operators report even that version has been hard to locate. Some standards have been updated, but standards on land release reportedly have not kept up with amendments to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) or developments in the threat environment in Iraq.⁵⁰ No standards exist for survey and clearance of improvised mines and operators have followed internal SOPs which are reviewed and approved by the DMA in the course of accreditation.

Iraq also lacks standards for search and clearance of buildings and operators conducting building clearance either worked according to their own SOPs or UNMAS's Standard Working Practices (SWP) for implementing partners.⁵¹ UNMAS produced a revised SWP on Residential Area Clearance including new tasking procedure aligned with the DMA's, guidance on housing, land, and property due diligence and standardised handover forms.⁵²

The DMA set up a committee in October 2019 to review and update standards with the intention of producing draft revisions by the end of the year. The DMA consulted a number of stakeholders, including international demining organisations and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) but as of mid 2020, the process was still a work in progress.⁵³

The DMA acknowledged in 2019 that its quality assurance (QA)/quality control (QC) capacity had struggled to keep up with the sharp growth in mine action and to back up its six two-person QA teams it accredited five commercial companies and six NGOs for QA.⁵⁴ UNMAS had limited capacity to QA work by organisations it contracted early in 2018, but in the course of the year hired additional QA staff.⁵⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The DMA reported a total of 61 organisations accredited for some aspect of mine action in 2019 but identified only 17 as active in mine survey or clearance: Al-Waha, Al-Danube, Al-Fahad Co. for Demining, Alsiraj Almudhia for Mine Removal, Arabian Gulf Co., Civil Defence, Danish Demining Group (DDG), HALO Trust, HI, MAG, Ministry of Defence, Nabaa al-Hurya Co., NPA, RMAC-South, FSD, TAAZ, and Wtorplast Demining Co.⁵⁶

The Ministry of Defence reported in 2019 that it had twelve 600-strong engineer battalions conducting EOD and clearance of mines of an improvised nature in which approximately half the personnel (equating to several thousand men) were operators. Army engineers worked on tasks identified as priorities by local government authorities.⁵⁷ In Federal Iraq, the Army remained the only organisation authorised to conduct demolitions.⁵⁸ The Ministry of Interior's Civil Defence units employed 494 personnel divided into teams deployed in every governorate tackling unexploded ordnance and other ERW but were not systematically clearing IEDs or mines of an improvised nature.⁵⁹ The DMA said it was working with Ministry of Defence, Border Guard Forces, and the Directorate of Energy police on setting up additional capacity for survey and clearance operations.⁶⁰

IKMAA remains the biggest mine action operator in the KRI focused on clearance of legacy mined areas. IKMAA reported in 2018 that it had 37 demining teams employing 444 personnel, 7 mechanical teams, 3 EOD teams, 5 survey teams, 37 QA teams, and 10 risk education teams⁶¹ but has not since responded to requests for information.

Six international humanitarian demining organisations continued in 2019 to focus on survey and clearance of areas liberated from Islamic State. DDG employed around 164 people, including 104 EOD/clearance staff operating in Salah al-Din, Kirkuk, and Basrah governorates, but it was forced to downsize after Iraq's NGO Directorate suspended its registration on a technicality in May 2019. This blocked renewal of its accreditation with the DMA and led to a suspension of all operations for a period of several months.

As a result, DDG closed offices in Tikrit and Kirkuk while retaining an operational presence in Erbil, Mosul, and Basrah. In 2020, it focused operations on Ninewa (Mosul) and Basrah but planned, subject to availability of funding, to return to Salah al-Din.⁶²

FSD underwent significant expansion in 2019, adding four clearance teams to bring total clearance capacity to 12 teams with 93 deminers, as well as creating three risk education/non-technical survey teams and starting up a mechanical clearance team equipped with an armoured front-end loader and front-end excavator. All assets operated in Ninewa governorate's Al Hamdaniya, South Mosul and Makhmur districts clearing improvised mines.⁶³

HALO Trust had a total staff of 65 working at the end of 2019, slightly smaller than a year earlier, operating in Salah al-Din and Anbar governorates, starting an UNMAS-funded project in Ramadi in July 2019. HALO's capacity included two manual demining teams and a higher proportion of mechanical than most other operators with three teams operating front end loaders, tracked excavators as well as tipper trucks. Despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it believed additional funding in 2020 would allow expansion in 2020.⁶⁴

MAG, which has worked in Iraq for 28 years, remained the biggest international operator in 2019 with 1,071 employees and 81 operational teams. MAG expected some funding to end in 2020 and was preparing to stand down around 300 people in the course of the year.⁶⁵ In Federal Iraq, MAG's capacity included 42 demining and 22 survey/community liaison teams supported by five mechanical teams and three MDD teams. Its mechanical assets included 11 front end loaders, 8 excavators and seven Backhoes. MAG's IED Disposal dogs received accreditation in 2019 although difficulties obtaining movement permissions hindered their use. In the KRI, MAG had a further 21 teams, of which 12 were multi-task demining and BAC/EOD teams, 5 survey teams, 3 MDD and 1 mechanical.⁶⁶

After a second successive year of significant growth, NPA had a total staff of 208 at the end of 2019, including 90 deminers working in 14 teams, another 57 staff in six EOD/battle area clearance teams and 54 people deployed in 11 survey teams. It also doubled the number of mechanical teams from two to four, operating two armoured front-end loaders, a Bobcat backhoe which has proved particularly useful lifting improvised mines and a Komatsu. Since 2018, NPA's clearance operations have focused mainly on Ninewa governorate but in 2018 it opened a project office in Ramadi to support operations in Anbar, in 2019 it opened a sub-office in Anbar's Haditha district and in 2020 it will halt land release operations in Ninewa, shifting its focus to Anbar. Two of its eight Ninewa teams have been trained for QC and will continue in Ninewa providing QC support to the DMA's RMAC North.⁶⁷

Table 5: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers	Dogs and handlers	Machines*	Comments
Army	12	est. 3,000	0	0	
IKMAA	37	444	0	7 teams	
DDG	N/R	104	0		DDG closed offices in Tikrit and Kirkuk while retaining an operational presence in Basrah, Erbil, and Mosul.
FSD	12	93	0	1 team	
HALO	2	49	0	3 teams	
MAG (Federal Iraq)	42	518	Personnel 13	5 teams	
MAG (KRI)	12	207	21	1 team	
NPA	14	90	0	4 teams	NPA doubled its mechanical teams in 2019.
Totals	131	4,505	21 dogs	21 teams	

* Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

OPERATIONAL TOOLS

FSD, HALO Trust, and MAG prepared to add drones to their inventories for use particularly in building searches but security services have yet to authorise their use in operations.⁶⁸ NPA has also applied for permission to use drones and planned to conduct a research project using drones for survey in southern Iraq on minefields and cluster munition strikes.⁶⁹

MAG and NPA are also exploring use of mine detection dogs (MDDs) for tackling improvised mine contamination. MAG, which has already received accreditation for its dogs, prepared to deploy them in Sinjar district, using them for land release of low- and medium-risk areas and planned to conduct a pilot programme using MDD in non-technical survey and building search.⁷⁰ NPA took delivery of its first dogs in Iraq in February 2020 and was preparing to accredit three teams for use on improvised mine belts, particularly in areas where machines cannot work, and searching building perimeter and checking rubble. NPA saw the deployment as an opportunity to test the dogs' capacity for use in other improvised mine-rich environments such as Yemen.⁷¹

DEMINER SAFETY

FSD reported the death of an international staff member in September 2019 as he was dealing with an improvised mine in a mine belt in Erbil governorate's Makhmur district. The device is believed to have been a VS500 type but the cause of the detonation is not known. None of the other devices in the belt had anti-lift devices but FSD changed its render-safe procedure to have the area around VS500s cleared and the device removed by a remote pull.⁷²

The army acknowledged in 2019 it had "sacrificed a lot of people" in clearance operations but gave no details⁷³ and the DMA and IKMAA did not respond to requests for information.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Operating results reported by Iraq in its Article 7 report suggest it released significant amounts of confirmed or suspected hazardous areas for the second successive year in 2019, but the gaps in Iraq's data and major inconsistencies with operating results reported by international operators continue to prevent a clear determination of the progress achieved.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Iraq reported release of a total of 87.15km² of mine and improvised mine contamination in 2019, including 46.13km² through clearance. The total figure was less than two-thirds of the amount Iraq reported in 2018. Of the total area released, 81.7km² was attributed to Federal Iraq and 5.45km² to the KRI.⁷⁴

Federal Iraq said it released 75.38km² of "IED area" referring to land contaminated by mines of an improvised nature. Of this total, it reported 35.13km² was cancelled through non-technical survey, and 40.24km² released by clearance. Additionally, it released 6.33km² of "legacy" mined area, 85% of it or 5.43km² reduced through technical survey and the remaining 898,022m² by clearance.⁷⁵

IKMAA said the KRI released 2.27km² of mined area, including 439,919m² that was reduced and the remaining 1.83km² was released through clearance. It also released a further 3.18km² of area affected by improvised mines.⁷⁶

Survey and clearance by military, humanitarian and commercial operators continued to concentrate on liberated areas heavily contaminated by Islamic State improvised mines, leaving minimal resources or capacity available for Federal Iraq's legacy mined areas. Ninewa governorate was a particular focus of operations, accounting for nearly 90% of land cancelled and 58% of land cleared, according to official data,⁷⁷ although operators recorded significant activity in areas where official data showed little land released.⁷⁸

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2018, Federal Iraq reported minimal amounts of land cancelled through non-technical survey and very large areas reduced through technical survey. In 2019, the DMA data reversed those outputs. In liberated areas that were the main area of operation for the military and international operators it showed no area reduction and recorded 35.13km² as having been cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 6). Iraq also reported in 2019 that non-technical survey had established that three governorates—Baghdad, Babylon, and Karbala—had no (legacy) mine contamination.⁷⁹

International operators, however, recorded substantially higher levels of land release through non-technical survey, reporting cancellation of nearly 49km² in 2019, together with area reduction through technical survey of 5.1km². NPA recorded cancelling 23.9km² in Anbar governorate and DDG reported 11.2km² in Salah al-Din, both governorates in which official data showed almost no cancellation.⁸⁰ Similarly, MAG said it cancelled 5km² in Ninewa and released more than 3km² through area reduction.⁸¹

No non-technical survey or cancellation occurred in Federal Iraq's southern legacy minefields where clearance operations are believed to have been conducted largely by the military, civil defence, or commercial companies working under contract to the Ministry of Oil. But 85% of the 6.33km² land that the DMA said was released in 2019 was reduced through technical survey.⁸²

The KRI did not record any cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019 but reported 439,919m² was area reduced, of which 40% was in Erbil governorate.⁸³

Table 6: Cancellation through non-technical survey in Federal Iraq in 2019⁸⁴

Governorate	Area cancelled (m ²)
Anbar	6,806
Baghdad	0
Kirkuk	3,760,127
Ninewa	31,230,379
Salah al-Din	135,995
Total	35,133,307

Table 7: Reduction through technical survey in Federal Iraq in 2019⁸⁵

Governorate	Area reduced (m ²)
Basrah	3,943,024
Missan	1,384,431
Thi-Qar	99,728
Total	5,427,183

CLEARANCE IN 2019

FEDERAL IRAQ

Federal Iraq's official results indicated that around 41km² was released through clearance in 2019 (see Table 8), approximately half the area said to have been cleared in 2018, but the limited and poor quality of official data available in both years prevented a clear determination of what was achieved and the claim was not credible. The DMA did not disaggregate the results of clearance by operator, including the Army's demining teams, the Ministry of Interior's Civil Defence teams, commercial companies, and international NGOs.

In addition to the clearance in areas liberated from Islamic State, which targets mainly improvised mines, the DMA said 0.9km² was cleared in Basrah and Missan governorates, resulting in clearance of 2,941 anti-personnel mines.

Five of the six international humanitarian operators working in Federal Iraq reported clearing 10.6km² in 2019, more than double the amount they cleared in 2018 (see Table 9). The area clearance by these INGOs represented barely one-quarter of the total recorded by the DMA in liberated northern governorates, yet their results shows they cleared more improvised mines in 2019 than the total reported by the DMA for all operators.⁸⁶ Clearance conducted in tasks funded through UNMAS, which included tasks undertaken by commercial company G4S in Ninewa governorate's Mosul and Sinjar districts, amounted to 5,272,670m² and resulted in clearance of 52 structures and the destruction of 571 IEDs as well as 80 anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.⁸⁷

Table 8: Mine clearance in Federal Iraq in 2019⁸⁸

Governorate	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines, including improvised mines, cleared
Liberated area		
Anbar	9,766,819	2,920
Baghdad	5,697,887	635
Kirkuk	1,181,706	118
Ninewa	23,540,669	5,332
Salah al-Din	57,305	249
Sub-total	40,244,386	9,254
Legacy minefields		
Basrah	75,141	140
Missan	822,881	2,801
Sub-total	898,022	2,941
Totals	41,142,408	12,195

Table 9: International NGO clearance in Federal Iraq in 2019⁸⁹

Operator	Governorate	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines, including improvised mines, cleared
DDG	Salah al-Din, Kirkuk	64,170	9
FSD	Ninewa	3,989,293	3,185
HALO	Salah al-Din, Anbar	355,110	528
HI	N/R	N/R	N/R
MAG	Ninewa	5,340,306	3,758
NPA	Anbar, Ninewa	824,363	1,967
Totals		10,573,242	9,447

N/R = Not reported

KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ

The KRI reported clearance of 1,827,821m² in 2019 mostly in Duhok, Erbil, and Slemani governorates, resulting in destruction of 1,768 anti-personnel mines and 19 anti-vehicle mines as well as 6,815 items of UXO. IKMAA accounted for about two-thirds of the cleared area but reported that MAG cleared 586,804m² in Duhok and Slemani, about one quarter more than the area that MAG reported clearing in the KRI.⁹⁰

IKMAA also reported release of 90 areas covering 3.17km² resulting in clearance of 45 devices identified as IEDs together with 17 anti-personnel mines and 133 items of UXO, but it did not identify the location or operators involved.⁹¹

MINE ACTION REVIEW CONSOLIDATED CLEARANCE FIGURES

Table 10 sets out the basis for Mine Action Review's figure for clearance in Iraq in 2019, including the means by which figures were estimated. This undoubtedly understates total clearance in Iraq in 2019. The Army, Ministry of Interior Civil Defence and police conducted some clearance in all governorates but results were not reported for security reasons. Mine Action Review prefers a conservative approach given the weaknesses of both the data and of Iraq's information management processes and reporting.

Table 10: Mine clearance in Iraq in 2019 (Mine Action Review consolidated figures)

Operators	Governorates	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines, including improvised mines, cleared	Comments
DDG, FSD, HALO Trust, MAG, NPA	Anbar, Basrah, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din	10,573,242	9,447	
DMA	Basrah and Missan	898,022	2,941	
Army	Anbar and Ninewa	2,400,000		Estimate based on 2,000 men working for 120 days, clearing an average of 10m ² a day.
IKMAA, MAG	Duhok, Erbil, and Slemani	1,827,821	1,768	
IKMAA	Not reported		17	Additional destruction during technical survey
G4S	Ninewa		80	
Totals		15,699,085	14,253	

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the ten-year extension granted by States Parties in 2017), Iraq is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 February 2028. Iraq will not meet the deadline given the sheer scale of the contamination remaining.

Iraq has the potential to achieve major reductions in estimates of remaining contamination in the course of its extension period. The DMA is confident that estimates of the extent of legacy contamination, now in excess of 1,000km², can be reduced by at least a quarter in the course of re-survey.⁹² With heavy donor investment in mitigating the impact of Islamic State's occupation, Iraq appears to have released large amounts of land in the last three years. Available data does not make it possible to provide a clear statement of results but suggests operators may have released at least 50km² through survey and clearance in 2019. Operators believe clearance of Ninewa governorate's Hamdaniya district is in sight of completion.⁹³ Survey and clearance are also gaining momentum in Anbar governorate.

It looks doubtful, however, that Iraq will be able to sustain the pace of the past two years. Poor coordination between government institutions and complex bureaucratic procedures continue to present serious obstacle to efficient use of assets. A bottleneck in issuing movement permits to operators from November 2019 cost months of operations that may have tested donor patience even before the onset of COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in a lockdown in March 2020, pausing most demining operations for additional months. These setbacks came at a time when international donor support was already on a downward trajectory, as indicated by the sharp fall in funding channelled through UNMAS in 2019, and some operators expected to make significant cuts in capacity in 2020.

Political uncertainty fuelled by street protests and changes in government leadership have slowed decision-making in the mine action sector. Continuing activity by Islamic State cells did not hold back mine action in 2019 but caused interruptions to work on some tasks and also adds a degree of uncertainty to mine action's future prospects.

Table 11: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance*

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	15.7
2018	8.4
2017	23.3
2016	16.4
2015	5.2
Total	69.0

* These figures significantly understate the true extent of clearance but some of the figures provided by the Government of Iraq are not credible.

- 1 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), pp. 20-23.
- 2 Interview with Nibras Fakhir Matrood, Director, DMA RMAC South, Basrah, 29 April 2019.
- 3 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 13.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 20, 22.
- 5 Ibid., p. 14.
- 6 Ibid., p. 22.
- 7 Ibid., p. 22.
- 8 Ibid., p. 41.
- 9 Interviews with Mick Beeby, Technical Operations Manager, MAG, 24 July 2017; Craig McNally, Northern Iraq Operations Manager, NPA, 22 July 2017; and interview with Simon Woodbridge, Operations Manager (Mosul), G4S, Mosul, 8 May 2019.
- 10 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 21.
- 11 Email from Khatab Omer Ahmed, Director of Planning, IKMAA, 8 May 2018.
- 12 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 23.
- 13 Email from Khatab Omer Ahmed, IKMAA, 8 May 2018.
- 14 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 21.
- 15 DMA presentation to 2015 Mine Action Country Planning Workshop for Iraq, Istanbul, 13 May 2015; Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), "Capacity Development Support to National Mine Action Authorities in Iraq, Phase 1: Initial Assessment Mission", February 2012.
- 16 The council is led by the Prime Minister and includes representatives of the ministries of defence, interior, oil, and environment, as well as the National Security Adviser and the head of IKMAA.
- 17 "Document of roles and responsibilities", undated but 2019, received by email from the DMA, 13 May 2019.
- 18 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 71.
- 19 Interviews with the DMA, Baghdad, 3 and 5 May 2019.
- 20 Interview with Gus Guthrie, Country Director, NPA, in Geneva, 12 February 2020.
- 21 Interviews with mine action stakeholders in Iraq, 29 April-6 May 2019.
- 22 Telephone interview with Portia Stratton, Country Director, MAG, 28 June 2020.
- 23 Interview with Siraj Barzani, IKMAA, Erbil, 9 May 2019.
- 24 Emails from Shinobu Mashima, Programme Officer, UNMAS, 4 May 2019 and 6 April 2020.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Emails from Shinobu Mashima, UNMAS, 6 April 2020.
- 27 National Strategic Mine Action Plan, pp. 12, 18, 20, and 30.
- 28 Email from Shinobu Mashima, UNMAS, 6 April 2020.
- 29 Email from Peter Smethers, Country Director, FSD, 20 April 2020.
- 30 Email from Shinobu Mashima, UNMAS, 6 April 2020.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Interviews with mine action stakeholders in Iraq, 28 April-6 May 2019.
- 33 Email from Nicholas Torbet, Deputy Head of Region, Middle East, North Africa and Afghanistan, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020.
- 34 Email from Gus Guthrie, NPA, 11 May 2020.
- 35 Email from Peter Smethers, FSD, 20 April 2020.
- 36 Emails from Portia Stratton, MAG, 13 May 2019 and 28 June 2020.
- 37 Interview with Nibras Fakhir Matrood, DMA RMAC South, Basrah, 29 April 2019.
- 38 Interviews with operators in Iraq, 28 April-6 May 2019.
- 39 Emails from international operators, April-June 2020.
- 40 Interviews with operators in Iraq, 28 April-6 May 2019.
- 41 Emails from international operators, April-June 2020.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Interview with Baker Saheb Ahmed, DMA, Baghdad, 5 September 2018.
- 44 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 27.
- 45 Interview with Siraj Barzani, IKMAA, Erbil, 9 May 2019.
- 46 Email from Portia Stratton, MAG, 13 August 2019.
- 47 Interview with Shawket Tayeh Massod, DMA, 5 May 2019.
- 48 Emails from and interviews with operators in Iraq, 28 April-6 May 2019.
- 49 Email from Shinobu Mashima, UNMAS, 6 April 2020.
- 50 Interviews with operators in Iraq, 28 April-6 May 2019.
- 51 Emails from international operators, April-June 2020.
- 52 Email from Shinobu Mashima, UNMAS, 6 April 2020.
- 53 Interview with Gus Guthrie, NPA, in Geneva, 12 February 2020; and email from GICHD, 12 June 2020.
- 54 Interview with Shawket Tayeh Massod, DMA, Baghdad, 5 May 2019.
- 55 Email from Shinobu Mashima, UNMAS, 4 May 2019.
- 56 Email from Ahmed Aljasim, DMA, 7 May 2019.
- 57 Interview with Brigadier-General Hassan, Ministry of Defence, Baghdad, 3 May 2019.
- 58 "Document of roles and responsibilities", undated but 2019, received by email from the DMA, 13 May 2019.
- 59 Interview with General Salah, Ministry of Interior, at the DMA, Baghdad, 3 May 2019.
- 60 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 72.
- 61 Email from Khatab Omer Ahmed, Planning Manager, IKMAA, 8 May 2018.
- 62 Email from Marie-Josée Hamel, Regional Programme Advisor - Middle East, DDG, 31 May 2020.
- 63 Email from Peter Smethers, FSD, 20 April 2020.
- 64 Email from Nicholas Torbet, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020.
- 65 Interview with Portia Stratton, MAG, 28 June 2020.
- 66 Email from Portia Stratton, Country Director, MAG, 28 June 2020.
- 67 Email from Gus Guthrie, NPA, 11 May 2020.
- 68 Emails from Nick Torbet, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020 and from Portia Stratton, MAG, 28 June 2020.
- 69 Email from Gus Guthrie, NPA, 11 May 2020.
- 70 Telephone interview with Portia Stratton, MAG, 28 June 2020.
- 71 Telephone interview with Gus Guthrie, NPA, 25 June 2020.
- 72 Email from Peter Smethers, FSD, 2 July 2020.
- 73 Interview with Brig.-Gen. Hassan, Ministry of Defence, Baghdad, 3 May 2019.
- 74 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), pp. 24-28.
- 75 Ibid., pp. 24, 26.
- 76 Ibid., pp. 25, 28.
- 77 Ibid., p. 26.
- 78 For example, DDG reported cancelling 11.2km² in Salah al-Din governorate and 6.4km² in Kirkuk. Email from Marie-Josée Hamel, DDG, 31 May 2020. Iraq's Article 7 report covering 2019 recorded cancellation of 0.14km² in Salah al-Din and 3.76km² in Kirkuk.
- 79 Iraq statement to the Oslo Review Conference, 27 November 2019.
- 80 Emails from Gus Guthrie, NPA, 11 May 2020; and Marie-Josée Hamel, DDG, 31 May 2020.
- 81 Email from Portia Stratton, MAG, 28 June 2020.
- 82 Ibid., p. 24.
- 83 Ibid., p. 25.
- 84 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 26.
- 85 Ibid., p. 24.
- 86 Emails from Marie-Josée Hamel, DDG, 31 May 2020; Peter Smethers, FSD, 20 April 2020; Nicholas Torbet, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020; Portia Stratton, MAG, 28 June 2020; and Gus Guthrie, NPA, 11 May 2020.
- 87 Emails from Shinobu Mashima, UNMAS, 6 April and 5 September 2020.
- 88 Ibid., pp. 24, 26.
- 89 Emails from Marie-Josée Hamel, DDG, 31 May 2020; Peter Smethers, FSD, 20 April 2020; Nicholas Torbet, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020; Portia Stratton, MAG, 28 June 2020; and Gus Guthrie, NPA, 11 May 2020.
- 90 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), pp. 25, 38. MAG reported clearing 466,712m² in the KRI in 2019.
- 91 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 28.
- 92 Interview with Nibras Fakhir Matrood, DMA RMAC South, in Basrah, 29 April 2019.
- 93 Telephone interviews with Gus Guthrie, NPA, 2 June 2020; and Portia Stratton, MAG, 28 June 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2009
NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE NEEDED

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Mali should resume active engagement with the machinery of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).
- In order to return to compliance with the APMBC, Mali should submit an Article 7 transparency report as a matter of urgency and provide other States Parties with an updated assessment of anti-personnel mine contamination and action to address it.
- Mali should set up a national mine action centre with UN support to coordinate a systematic humanitarian response to explosive hazards.
- Mali should develop capacity for explosive threat mitigation that is outside the context of military counter-improvised explosive device (IED) operations and responsive to humanitarian imperatives.
- Mali's mine action sector should apply International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) relating to survey and distinguish between non-technical survey and community visits.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Army, police

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)
- Operation Barkhane

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Mali faces a rising threat from improvised explosive devices, including mines of an improvised nature, as a result of escalating conflict involving multiple armed non-state actors. The upsurge in conflict since 2012 resulted in what UNMAS described as "targeted" use of anti-vehicle mines by armed groups¹ and later in use of improvised explosive devices including many that are victim activated and qualify as anti-personnel mines under the APMBC. There is no estimate of the area affected.

The UN recorded 194 explosive incidents in 2019 of which 99 were reported to involve victim-activated devices. The 194 incidents caused in total 229 casualties, of whom 61 people were killed. The number of incidents involving improvised mines was an increase on the 76 reported the previous year. The great majority of incidents occurred in the central Mopti region and in Kidal (see Table 1).² A further 35 incidents were recorded in the first two months of 2020.³ The UN said nearly two-thirds of explosive incidents and 96% of civilian casualties occurred in the central region.⁴ Many casualties are victims of devices targeting major roads used by civilians as well as military and other security forces.⁵

Table 1: Mine incidents recorded by UNMAS (2014–19)⁶

Region	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Gao	4	16	9	8	12	8
Kidal	28	26	25	19	29	27
Timbuktu	0	2	2	4	3	6
Mopti	0	0	0	2	27	53
Segou	0	0	0	0	5	5
Totals	32	44	36	33	76	99

The presence or extent of other mined areas is unclear. In its last Article 7 report, submitted in 2005, Mali had stated it had no areas affected by anti-personnel mines.⁷ DanChurchAid (DCA) and Association Mixte Belhadi reported the presence of three suspected mined areas in the Kidal region's Tinzawatène district in 2016 but they were in insecure areas, located far from inhabited areas and the areas were never investigated. UNMAS says it has no evidence confirming the existence of these areas and has not recorded the presence of any minefields.⁸

Around two-thirds of known IED incidents are victim-activated, typically equipped with an explosive charge of 6kg to 30kg, while the remaining one-third involve command-operated devices. Some improvised devices are constructed with Belgian PRB M3 minimum-metal anti-vehicle mines, which armed groups also employ individually to target vehicle traffic.⁹

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Mali does not have a national mine action authority or programme. The government has agreed in principle to establish an authority within the Secrétariat permanent de la Lutte contre la prolifération des Armes Légères et Petits Calibres (ALPC). UNMAS said "it is supporting this endeavour."¹⁰ Mine action observers have questioned whether the ALPC has sufficient seniority within the government to provide an effective platform.

UNMAS first deployed to Mali in January 2013 to conduct an emergency assessment of explosive threats. Since April 2013, UNMAS has been referred to in UN Security Council resolutions that define the mandate for MINUSMA, acting as the focal point for mine action pending the creation of a national authority.

Mali has no programme of systematic mine survey and clearance. UNMAS comments that "strategic planning will be linked to the establishment of a national authority."¹¹

UNMAS co-chairs the Humanitarian Mine Action Working Group (Groupe de travail sur la lutte antimines humanitaire – GT-LAMH) reportedly involving United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and international and national mine action non-government organisations. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) participate as observers. UNMAS reported the group usually convenes once a month in Bamako. Sub-national working groups are also convened when needed, for instance in Mopti region, Timbuktu or Gao involving actors working in the area.¹²

UNMAS operates an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database for Mali (IMSMA NG Version 6). Since July 2013, UNMAS has recorded all known explosions and verified mine or IED incidents, providing data for maps that detail the explosive hazard threat and facilitate planning in affected areas. UNMAS said it shares technical data with all mine partners engaged in explosive threat mitigation.¹³ The Mine Action Working Group agreed in early 2020 that it would classify and report victim-activated devices as landmines.¹⁴

The UN humanitarian response plan for Mali in 2019 called for collection and analysis of information relating to explosive incidents, risk education, and non-technical survey to better understand the extent of contamination.¹⁵ The UN humanitarian response plan for 2020 called for:¹⁶

- Increased risk education with a view to lowering casualties from explosive hazards and light weapons.
- Facilitating the safe return of internally displaced persons by clearance of explosive hazards and providing information on contamination levels.
- Collection of information on explosive hazards and their clearance.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Malian and international security forces serving with MINUSMA and Operation Barkhane, led by French forces, are the only organisations clearing mines and IEDs.¹⁷ Clearance is limited to counter-IED operations and largely restricted to areas where they have security.¹⁸ Operators do not employ any mechanical assets or mine detection dogs.¹⁹

UNMAS did not provide details of results of EOD activities in 2019. The UN said 13,380 explosive remnants of war were cleared in 2019.²⁰ However, communities are reportedly reluctant to take the risk of reporting the presence of IEDs as there is little likelihood EOD teams will deploy to areas of insecurity to clear them.²¹

Mali has no national mine action standards. Malian defence and security forces are reportedly in the process of developing national EOD standards consistent with international standards. MINUSMA forces are governed by UN IED Disposal standards, the UN Guidelines on IED Threat Mitigation in Mission Settings, and the UN Peacekeeping Missions Military EOD Unit Manual.²²

The UN reported that surveys were conducted in 152 locations as part of explosive threat assessment efforts in 2019 but gave no details of who conducted them or the affected areas. It said risk education activities had reached more than 62,580 people.²³

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBBC, Mali was required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control not later than 1 December 2008. Since the expiry of this deadline Mali has encountered new anti-personnel mine contamination, in particular of an improvised nature, laid by non-state armed groups.

Under the Convention's agreed framework, in the event mined areas are discovered after the expiry of a State Party's Article 5 clearance deadline, it should immediately inform all other States Parties of this discovery and undertake to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines as soon as possible. Mali has not submitted an Article 7 transparency report since 2012.

Given the extent of apparent contamination from mines of an improvised nature, Mali should request a new extended Article 5 deadline, which should be no more than two years, affording it the opportunity to conduct the requisite assessment and, if necessary, survey. It must also fulfil its reporting obligations under the APMBBC, including by reporting on the location of all suspected or confirmed mined areas under its jurisdiction or control and on the status of programmes for the destruction of all anti-personnel mines therein.²⁴

1 Email from Emily Kathleen Zeidler, Desk Officer for Iraq and Syria, UNMAS, New York, 3 September 2020.

2 Email from Marta Farres Rodrigues, Programme Officer, UNMAS, Bamako, 26 May 2020.

3 UNMAS, "Mali: Explosive threat overview", 29 February 2020.

4 "Mali, Plan de réponse humanitaire 2020", UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, March 2020, p. 89.

5 Email from Marta Farres Rodrigues, UNMAS, Bamako, 26 May 2020.

6 These include mines of an improvised nature recorded as victim-activated IEDs.

7 Article 7 Report (covering 2014), Form D.

8 Email from Marta Farres Rodrigues, UNMAS, Bamako, 26 May 2020.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Email from Benoit Poirier, Country Director, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), 11 March 2020.

15 "Plan de réponse humanitaire, Janvier à decembre 2019", OCHA, December 2018, p. 41.

16 "Mali, Plan de réponse humanitaire 2020", OCHA, March 2020, p. 89.

17 Email from Marta Farres Rodrigues, UNMAS, Bamako, 26 May 2020.

18 Skype interview with Sebastian Kasack, Senior Community Liaison Adviser, MAG, Bamako, 27 May 2020.

19 Email from Marta Farres Rodrigues, UNMAS, Bamako, 26 May 2020.

20 "Mali, Plan de réponse humanitaire 2020", OCHA, March 2020, p. 89.

21 Skype interview with Sebastian Kasack, MAG, Bamako, 27 May 2020.

22 Email from Marta Farres Rodrigues, UNMAS, Bamako, 26 May 2020.

23 "Mali, Plan de réponse humanitaire 2020", OCHA, March 2020, p. 89.

24 Final Report of the APMBBC 12th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 21 January 2013, p. 10.

MAURITANIA



CLEARING THE MINES 2020

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JANUARY 2021
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 1 JANUARY 2022

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

TO BE DETERMINED

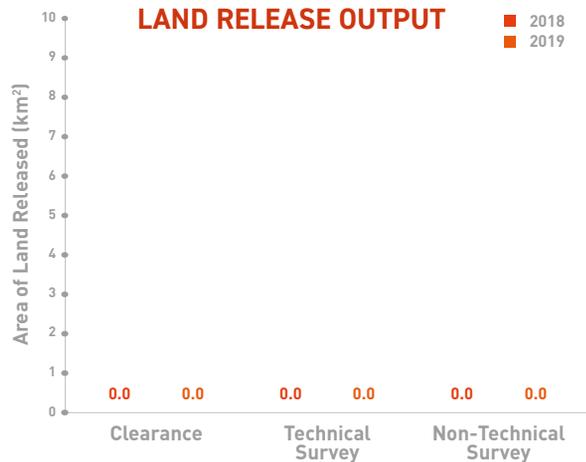
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

0

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **HIGH**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Having previously declared fulfilment of its Article 5 obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in November 2018, Mauritania submitted a request in June 2020 to extend its Article 5 deadline by one year having discovered mined areas under its jurisdiction or control. During the requested extension period, and once circumstances regarding the COVID-19 pandemic permit, the National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (Programme National de Déminage Humanitaire pour le Développement, PNDHD) plans to conduct an assessment of suspected and confirmed mined areas, with the support of Norwegian People's Aid (NPA).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Mauritania should clarify whether the mined areas in question are currently under Mauritania's effective control. If so, and they are also under its jurisdiction, they should proceed with all speed to undertake an assessment mission with NPA, as soon as funding and restrictions regarding COVID-19 permit. If, however, the areas are under Mauritania's effective control but not under its jurisdiction, discussions need to be held as a matter of urgency with others concerned, in particular Morocco and the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic.
- Mauritania should confirm whether the mined areas identified are newly discovered or if any of the areas were already recorded as mined but were previously thought to be not under Mauritania's jurisdiction or its control.
- Mauritania should report more accurately and consistently on the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination, including using the classification of suspected hazardous area (SHA) and confirmed hazardous area (CHA) in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (Programme National de Déminage Humanitaire pour le Développement, PNDHD)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Army Engineer Corps

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

In June 2020, after having declared fulfilment of its Article 5 obligations on 29 November 2018 at the Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC, Mauritania reported the discovery of mined areas (or "Zones", as Mauritania refers to them).¹ Mauritania has requested a one-year extension to its Article 5 deadline, during which the PNDHD, in collaboration with NPA, plans to investigate the mined areas and "possibly discover other areas not currently known".² One reported mine accident occurred in 2019, in the Nouadhibou region.³

Mauritania has now reported a total of over 8km² of mined area (4.7km² of CHA and nearly 3.4km² of SHA) (see Tables 1 and 2).⁴ However, it is unclear how the size and location of the 32 "zones" has been determined, and estimates of the size of mined areas is only provided for the region of Tiris Zemmour (in the north of the country), but not the other three provinces affected.

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end 2019)⁵

Province	Confirmed "zones"	Suspected "zones"	Total mined "zones"	Confirmed mined area (m ²)	Suspected mined area (m ²)	Total mined area (m ²)
Adrar (central)	N/K	2	2	N/K	N/K	N/K
Dakhlet Nouadhibou (west)	11	4	15	N/K	N/K	N/K
Tagant (central)	N/K	N/K	1	N/K	N/K	N/K
Tiris Zemmour (in the north)	10	4	14	4,710,666	3,375,000	8,085,666
Totals	21	10	32	4,710,666	3,375,000	8,085,666

* N/K = Not known

It is also unclear whether all of the mined areas identified in Mauritania's 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request are currently under Mauritania's effective control, and, if so, whether they are also under its jurisdiction. If the areas are under Mauritania's effective control but not under its jurisdiction, Mauritania will need to discuss this as a matter of urgency with others concerned, in particular Morocco and the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic. It is also unclear to what extent the mined areas identified in its 2020 Article 5 extension request are newly discovered or if any of the mined areas were already known but were previously thought to be not under Mauritania's jurisdiction or its control.

Table 2: Anti-personnel mined area by zone (at end 2019)⁶

"Zone" name	CHA (m ²)	SHA (m ²)
Boudheir	270,000	
Boukhzame	450,000	
Boukweima	740,000	
Boulenoir		420,000
Dhara el Kelba		105,000
Elmetlani		850,000
EzireEzargha	167,944.7	
Lemriera		2,000,000
Oudyatte Bouzeyanne	450,000	
Oudyatte Lekhyame	254,000	
PK24	81,380.8	
PK55	255,285.4	
Tamreikett	210,000	
TIGERT2,1	2,000,000	
Totals	4,878,610.9*	3,375,000

* The table sums to 4,878,610.9m², but in Mauritania's extension request and its Article 7 report, the total is stated to be 4,710,666.2m².

Mauritania previously declared completion of its Article 5 obligations in November 2018, at the Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties.⁷ Prior to this, at the end of 2015, Mauritania had reported that it had released all known areas of anti-personnel mine contamination (which had totalled 40 mined areas covering 67km²),⁸ but that other contaminated areas were thought to exist close to Western Sahara, which depending on the demarcation of the border, could be inside Mauritanian territory and thus within its jurisdiction.⁹ In its 2015 request for a second extension to its Article 5 clearance deadline, Mauritania stated that it "suspects that the security system along the border with Western Sahara, which comprises fortifications and minefields, crosses Mauritanian territory, especially since there is no natural border between the two". It also said that border markers from the colonial period were unclear, non-existent and/or found at intervals of between 115 and 175 kilometres.¹⁰ At the end of 2017, Mauritania reported no known or suspected areas containing anti-personnel mines following technical survey and clearance of an area with an estimated size of 1km², in Ain Bintilli district, Tiris Zemmour region.¹¹ The area had contained both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines.¹²

In its 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request, Mauritania reported release of a total of 130km² of area since becoming a State Party to the APMBC in January 2001, with the destruction of 8,078 anti-personnel mines, 890 anti-vehicle mines, and 14,960 explosive remnants of war (ERW).¹³ This figure looks to include release of all contaminated areas, including those with ERW and not only mines.

Mauritania's mine contamination was a legacy of the conflict over Western Sahara in 1976-78.¹⁴ A 2006 Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) had found a total of 65 SHAs covering 76km² and affecting 60 communities. This proved to be a significant overestimate of the actual extent of the mine threat. In 2010, Morocco provided detailed maps of minefields laid during the Western Sahara conflict. The minefields had been partially cleared using military procedures prior to the entry into force of the APMBC.¹⁵ In its 2020 extension request, Mauritania said that the large-scale use of mines in Mauritania was typically haphazard and without the use of plans or maps.¹⁶

Mauritania has also reported discovering cluster munition remnant contamination.¹⁷ Please see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Mauritania for more information.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (Programme National de Déminage Humanitaire pour le Développement, PNDHD), which was created in 2000, coordinates mine action operations in Mauritania.¹⁸ Since 2007, the programme has been the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior and Decentralisation, with oversight from an interministerial steering committee.¹⁹ The PNDHD has its headquarters in the capital, Nouakchott, and a regional mine action centre (RMAC) in Nouadhibou.

Mauritania estimates that it requires a total five-year budget of US\$5.5 million, including \$3 million to be provided by the PNDHD and the remaining US\$2.5 million to be mobilised from other sources. PNDHD's national contribution reportedly represents 54% of the total cost of its programme and, according to Mauritania, demonstrates its political will. Mauritania's national contribution will include the provision of demining teams, support for deminers, the setting up of regional offices, assistance to victims, and logistical support.²⁰

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

It is not known if the PNDHD has policies in place relating to gender and diversity in its mine action programme, and gender and diversity are not referenced in Mauritania's 2020 Article 5 Extension Request or its Article 7 report covering 2019.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The national mine action database is held at the PNDHD. As at December 2017, Mauritania had strengthened its information management capacity by providing additional training to an information management specialist and migrating to Version 6 of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) software.²¹

PLANNING AND TASKING

In March 2017, Mauritania reported that a new national mine action strategic plan for 2016–20 had been developed with primary aims and targets, including verification of Mauritania's borders and clearance of any newly identified contamination by 2020; continuing risk education and victim assistance; and maintenance of national mine clearance capacities.²² According to its latest Article 7 report, submitted in 2020, part of the international cooperation and assistance sought by Mauritania is to support its efforts to draft a new mine action strategy.²³

The main aims of Mauritania's work plan for 2017–20 were to complete clearance of the remaining contaminated areas, establish a strategy for residual contamination, and declare their compliance with Article 5 before 1 January 2021.²⁴ Mauritania declared compliance with Article 5 at the Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2018,²⁵ but then subsequently submitted an Article 5 deadline extension request in June 2020, having newly discovered mined areas.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Survey and clearance operations are conducted in accordance with the Mauritanian National Mine Action Standards (NMAM), which are said to accord with IMAS. The NMAM include standards on non-technical survey, technical survey, mine clearance, and quality control (QC). The NMAM, which were adopted in 2007, were elaborated with the support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and in partnership with operators, most notably NPA.²⁶ The NMAM are supposed to be reviewed once every three years,²⁷ but have not been revised since 2006.²⁸

Mauritania reports that non-technical survey is used to identify each CHA ("Zone Dangereuse Confirmée" or "ZDC") and to cancel areas in which there is no evidence of mine contamination; and technical survey is then typically used to identify a "Zone Dangereuse Définie" (defined hazardous area or "DDZ").²⁹

In December 2019, Mauritania attended the Arab Regional Cooperation Programme 7th Annual Conference, which was organised by the GICHD in Jordan. In the conference, the PNDHD, along with other national authorities from the region, discussed and approved recently translated IMAS into Arabic and shared experiences of their own national standards.³⁰

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In accordance with a 2006 decree, all clearance activities were conducted by the Army Engineer Corps operating under the PNDHD. In 2011, NPA signed a memorandum of understanding with Mauritania to provide support for mine and battle area clearance (BAC) in the country. NPA subsequently worked in Mauritania both as an operator and in a capacity-building role as a technical advisor for PNDHD until the end of 2015.³¹

The PNDHD has requested NPA's support in 2020 to conduct an assessment mission to determine the details of mined areas discovered since its declaration of Article 5 completion in November 2018.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Mauritania did not release any mined area in 2019.

SURVEY IN 2019

Mauritania did not release any mined area through survey in 2019, but it did report that PNDHD teams and "foreign experts" conducting non-technical survey to confirm new mined areas.³² Non-technical survey was reportedly conducted by the PNDHD following information from shepherds and nomads in the region of Tires Zemmour (in the north of the country), and by fishermen in the region of Dakhlet Nouadhibou (in the west of the country).³³

According to Annex II of Mauritania's latest Article 7 Transparency report submitted under the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), an international organisation, GEODE, conducted a needs assessment of Mauritania's demining programme on 3–7 January 2020. The assessment mission took place in Nouakchott, then in Noadhibou, where several mined areas were assessed by GEODE. According to GEODE's report (incorporated as Annex II to Mauritania's CCM Article 7 report covering 2019), four mined zones were identified in the Noadhibou peninsular with a total estimated size of over 13km² ("PK24", 0.9km² in size; "Guerguerat", 0.3km²; "Zire Zargue", 7.35km²; and "PK55", 4.5km²). Photographs of mines at these four sites were included in GEODE's needs assessment report for Mauritania.³⁴ It is not possible to reconcile two of these minefield names with data reported by Mauritania under the APMBBC (see Table 2 above), and the sizes of the mined areas do not seem consistent with the other information provided by the authorities.

CLEARANCE IN 2019

Mauritania did not release any mined area through clearance in 2019.³⁵

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Mauritania's original Article 5 deadline of 1 January 2011 was previously extended twice and currently ends on 1 January 2021. Mauritania had previously declared fulfilment of its Article 5 obligations at the Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2018, but in June 2020, Mauritania submitted a third interim extension request to its Article 5 deadline, reporting that it had discovered new mined areas in the regions of Dakhlet Nouadhibou, Tiris Zemmour, and Adrar.³⁶

Mauritania has requested a one-year extension of its deadline until 1 January 2022, in order to clarify the mined areas and confirm they are in Mauritanian territory.³⁷ According to the request, the size of the suspected and confirmed mined areas totals over 8km²,³⁸ but it is unclear how this figure has been determined and whether it only includes mined area or cluster munition remnant contamination too.

Mauritania plans to conduct an assessment mission, with the support of NPA, as soon as restrictions due to COVID-19 permit, in order to obtain additional information on the mined areas and inform its Article 5 planning.³⁹ The PNDHD requires international funding and cooperation to finalise its work plan in northern Mauritania.⁴⁰

Mauritania is requesting financial support for logistics (replacement of IT equipment; PNDHD offices and vehicles, and demining equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE)); organisational support (establishment of a functioning working environment for PNDHD; updating frameworks, including the drafting of a new national mine action strategy; updating of national mine action standards and operating procedures; and training of PNDHD staff); capacity building of PNDHD staff (including in planning, conducting, and supervising mine action activities); training (in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), reporting, and quality management); and operational support for planned actions in the provinces of Dakhlet Nouadhibou and Tires Zemour (including technical survey and hazard marking; quality management); and risk education.⁴¹

Mauritania has committed to keeping States Parties informed of developments at treaty meetings and through its Article 7 reporting.⁴²

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Mauritania has reported that it "will remain committed to dealing with any residual contamination",⁴³ although no details have been provided on its plans to establish a long-term sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas following completion (i.e. residual contamination).

Previously PNDHD had reported that one of the main aims of Mauritania's work plan for 2017–20 was to establish a strategy for residual contamination.⁴⁴

- 1 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, pp. 1 and 3. On pages 2 and 3 of Mauritania's 2020 extension request it says the requested deadline is 31 January 2022 and on page 10 it says 1 January 2022. It is assumed that the latter is correct, as Mauritania is requesting a one-year extension and its existing Article 5 deadline is 1 January 2021.
- 2 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, pp. 1 and 3.
- 3 Ibid., p. 4; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 10.
- 4 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 3; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 3.
- 5 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 3.
- 6 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 3; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 11.
- 7 Statement of Mauritania, APMBBC 18th Meeting of States Parties, 29 November 2018; and Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2.
- 8 Analysis of Mauritania's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request submitted by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation to the APMBBC 14th Meeting of States Parties, 17 November 2015, p. 2.
- 9 Ibid
- 10 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 2 April 2015, p. 4. In the original French: "nous suspectons que le dispositif de sécurité le long de la frontière avec le Sahara occidental, composé de fortification et champs de mines interfère en territoire Mauritanien surtout qu'il n'existe aucune frontière naturelle".
- 11 Email from Aliouneould Menane, National Coordinator, PNDHD, 23 July 2018.
- 12 Article 7 Report (covering 2016), Form D; Statement of Mauritania, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 8 June 2017; and email from Aliouneould Menane, PNDHD, 29 March 2017.
- 13 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2 and Annex 1, pp. 11-13.
- 14 Ibid., p. 2.
- 15 Revised Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 6 September 2010, p. 3; and email from Melissa Andersson, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 17 September 2015.
- 16 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2.
- 17 Ibid., Annex 1, p. 14.
- 18 Decree No. 1960/MDAT/MDN establishing the PNDHD, 14 August 2007; and Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2.
- 19 Decree No. 001358/MDAT establishing the Steering Committee of the PNDHD, 3 September 2007; and Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2.
- 20 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 10.
- 21 Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form D.
- 22 Email from Aliouneould Menane, PNDHD, 29 March 2017; and interview, in Geneva, 5 September 2017.
- 23 APMBBC Article 7 Report (covering 2019), pp. 13-14.
- 24 Email from Aliouneould Menane, PNDHD, 23 July 2018.
- 25 Statement of Mauritania, 18th Meeting of States Parties, 29 November 2018; and Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2.
- 26 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, pp. 5 and 8.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Annex II.
- 29 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 13.
- 30 Email from Hayder AlShakeri, Programme Officer, GICHD, 23 July 2020.
- 31 Emails from Aliouneould Menane, PNDHD, 1 September 2016; and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 12 September 2016 and 13 March 2017.
- 32 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), pp. 2 and 3.
- 33 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 3.
- 34 Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Annex II.
- 35 APMBBC Article 7 Report (covering 2019).
- 36 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 3; and online presentation by Mauritania, APMBBC Intersessional Meetings, 2 July 2020, available at: bit.ly/3iBV1Dd.
- 37 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 2.
- 38 Ibid, p. 3. On pages 2 and 3 of the extension request it says it is requesting a deadline until 31 January 2022, and on page 10, 1 January 2022. It is assumed that the latter is correct, as Mauritania is requesting a one-year extension and its existing Article 5 deadline is 1 January 2021.
- 39 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, pp. 1 and 10; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), p. 9.
- 40 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 10.
- 41 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), pp. 13-14.
- 42 Third Article 5 deadline Extension Request, received June 2020, p. 10.
- 43 Ibid., p. 3.
- 44 Email from Aliouneould Menane, PNDHD, 23 July 2018.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2020
 EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
 MINE CONTAMINATION:

LIGHT, LESS THAN 0.2 KM²

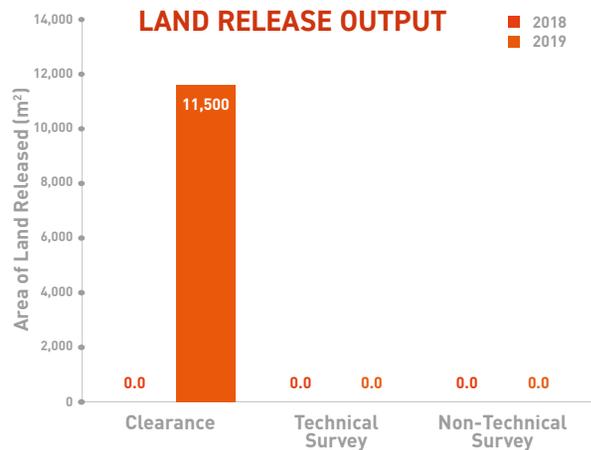
OF LEGACY CONTAMINATION, BUT EXTENT OF
 IMPROVISED MINE CONTAMINATION UNCLEAR

AP MINE
 CLEARANCE IN 2019

11,500 M²

AP MINES
 DESTROYED IN 2019

199



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Niger reported conducting its first mine clearance in three years and although very limited in extent it was funded nationally. In May 2020, Niger requested a four-year extension to its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline in order to address less than 200,000m² of anti-personnel mine contamination. Niger experienced a surge in attacks by non-state armed groups employing mines and other explosive devices of an improvised nature in 2018 which appears to have continued into 2019 and 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Niger should submit a revised and comprehensive extension request with details of past survey and clearance, an updated list of mined areas requiring clearance, and a detailed work plan for meeting its international legal obligations.
- Niger should submit annual Article 7 reports detailing the progress of mine action as the APMBC requires.
- Niger should develop and implement a fundraising strategy to ensure it fulfils commitments made in its earlier Article 5 deadline extension request.
- Niger should seek and facilitate engagement of international demining organisations.
- Niger should ensure its national mine action standards accord with international standards and that a quality management system is in place to safeguard the quality of demining operations.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	6	Niger has identified limited anti-personnel mine contamination in the Agadez region but it lacks clarity on the extent. It also now faces escalating attacks by non-state armed groups and new contamination from mines of an improvised nature.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	5	Limited mine action in the past five years was funded by Niger's limited resources and Niger has not yet been successful in securing the international funding it requires to fulfil its Article 5 obligations.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	2	Niger reported at the Fourth APMBC Review Conference in November 2019 that women made up eight of the forty deminers deployed in June 2019 in the resumption of clearance operations. However, no reference to gender or diversity is made in Niger's 2020 extension request.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	2	3	Inconsistent reporting on mine clearance points to weak information management. Niger has submitted only one Article 7 transparency report since 2012 (in 2018). Reporting is an obligation under the APMBC.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	3	3	Niger lacks a strategic plan for mine action or detailed work plans. A request to extend its Article 5 deadline by four years submitted in May 2020 left out key details including proposed timelines for clearance and available demining capacity.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	4	4	Niger has reported that it has national standards that are compliant with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) but it is not known if they have been formally adopted.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	4	2	Niger said it released a tiny amount of mined area in 2019 after two years in which no land was released but its 2020 Article 5 extension request lacks clarity about the extent of clearance since 2014 and what remains to be done to achieve completion.
Average Score	4.1	3.7	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Commission Nationale pour la Collecte et le Contrôle des Armes Illicites (CNCCA)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- CNCCA

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Niger reported in November 2019 that its remaining anti-personnel mine contamination amounted to 187,172m² in the vicinity of Madama, a military base in the north-eastern Agadez region of the country, but Niger's varying statements about contamination and clearance in recent years leave uncertainty about the precise extent of contamination remaining.¹ A request submitted by Niger six months later in May 2020 for an extension of its Article 5 deadline did not clarify the issue. It said the remaining contamination amounted to 177,760m² but supporting data is not consistent. It said the area was surrounded by barbed wire and monitored by sentries.²

Niger had previously reported in 2018 that it had two mined areas totalling 235,557m² near Madama, consisting of a confirmed hazardous area (CHA) of 39,304m² containing French M51 minimum-metal anti-personnel mines and a suspected hazardous area (SHA) of 196,253m² with mixed AP and anti-vehicle mines.³ Nigerien army engineers, conducting earlier clearance operations, had found the mines buried in sand at depths of up to one metre.⁴

Niger had previously identified five additional SHAs in the Agadez region (in Achouloulouma, Blaka, Enneri, Orida, and Zouzoulinga) but said non-technical and technical survey in 2014 had determined they were not contaminated by anti-personnel mines and that communities in the area had reported accidents only involving anti-vehicle mines.⁵ A PRB M3 anti-vehicle mine was also discovered in March 2019 near the central town of Intikane, also in the Agadez region.⁶ The areas are all located in a remote desert area, 450km from the rural community of Dirkou in Bilma department and reported to contain mines that date back to the French colonial era.⁷

NEW CONTAMINATION

Starting in the second half of 2018, Niger experienced a surge in attacks by non-state armed groups affiliated with Islamic State or al-Qaida, adding a new challenge in the form of mines of an improvised nature. Attacks were concentrated in the western Tillabery and Tahoua regions, employing a range of artisanal explosive devices, including anti-vehicle mines, victim-activated pressure plate devices that appear to meet the APMBC definition of anti-personnel mines; and command-detonated devices (which are not mines under international law).⁸

A mine or improvised explosive device (IED) detonation in January 2019 injured four Niger soldiers near Titahoune (Tillabery region)⁹ and an improvised device detonated under a convoy of vehicles in an ambush by insurgents in Tillabery in May 2019 during which 28 soldiers were killed.¹⁰ A 12-ton armoured US Army vehicle was disabled in June 2019 by an improvised mine on the outskirts of Ouallem town (Tillabery region). The device was activated by a pressure plate linked to an 81mm mortar. Its explosion detonated a main charge consisting of nearly a dozen 60mm mortar shells.¹¹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The national mine action programme is managed by the National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Weapons (Commission Nationale pour la Collecte et le Contrôle des Armes Illicites, CNCCAI), which reports directly to the President.

All demining has been carried out by the Nigerien army. In 2015, Niger said it had 60 deminers but lacked sufficient equipment for them to be able to work at the same time.¹² In its May 2020 extension request it noted the need for personal protective equipment, detectors, and transportation.¹³

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) conducted evaluation missions to Niger in May 2015 and December 2017 to assess the possibility of assisting Niger to meet its Article 5 deadline. Contacts continued in 2019, exploring the possibility of NPA setting up a programme to support CNCCAI clearance operations, but in the end the support did not proceed in 2019 or 2020.¹⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Niger's third Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in 2016, had made no reference to gender. Niger reported at the Fourth APMBC Review Conference, however, that women made up eight of the forty deminers deployed in June 2019 in the resumption of clearance operations.¹⁵ It did not address the issue in its fourth Article 5 deadline extension request in 2020.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Niger submitted an Article 7 report in 2018, the first report since 2012, covering the period 1 January 2013 through end April 2018, but has not done so since. It delivered statements to the Intersessional Meetings and the Meeting of States Parties in 2018 and the Fourth Review Conference in Oslo in 2019.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Niger does not have a strategic plan for mine action. Its third Article 5 deadline extension request in 2016 did not set out a work plan or benchmarks for survey or clearance as requested by the APMBC Committee on Article 5 Implementation.

Niger's submitted its fourth Article 5 deadline extension request in May 2020 calling for four additional years to complete clearance of 177,760m², but it does not set annual clearance targets or provide a detailed work plan for the extension period. The plan includes a graphic which indicates CNCCAI will deploy teams for clearance between 2020 and 2024¹⁶ but does not identify what operating capacity is available for survey and clearance. It projects the costs of completion at US\$1,143,750, of which US\$400,000 is to come from national sources.¹⁷

Niger's Article 7 Report for 2013–18 set out a rudimentary operational timeline providing for clearance of 196,253m² by 2020: 56,000m² in 2018, 100,253m² in 2019, and 40,000m² in 2020.¹⁸ It has not met any of these targets so far.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In its Third Article 5 Extension Request (2016), Niger reported that it had drafted national mine action standards (NMAS) in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and standard operating procedures.¹⁹ No information has been provided on whether Niger's NMAS have been finalised and adopted.

An NPA team's visit to Madama in December 2017 noted that manual clearance was the main tool of demining by Niger's army engineers but highlighted the operational challenges. The M-51 mines mostly found in the area contained no metal components and were largely undetectable by conventional detectors and sufficiently small as to make detection by GPR-based detectors unreliable. This means that full manual excavation may be the only effective methodology. The process is slow and the sandy environment, prone to subsidence and back-filling, makes it difficult to maintain consistent excavation depths. Mechanical excavation using sifting and screening equipment would dramatically improve the speed of technical survey and clearance but faced severe logistical challenges because of the long distances, absence of roads, limited provisions for maintenance and cost. Mine detection dogs have also been deemed unsuitable because of the extreme climate and the potential for deep-buried mines.²⁰

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

CLEARANCE IN 2019

It appears from data incorporated in Niger's 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request that 11,500m² of land was cleared between July and end 2019 with the destruction of 199 anti-personnel mines.²¹ CNCCAI reported to the Oslo Review Conference that it had deployed 40 deminers in mid-June 2019 to conduct mine clearance in Madama and that by the time of the conference in November it had cleared 9,080m², destroying 183 anti-personnel mines. It said the operation was continuing and that it was funded by Niger from national resources.²² In its Article 5 deadline extension request, it reported total clearance between July 2019 and March 2020 of 18,483m² with the destruction of 323 mines.²³

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the four-year extension request granted by States Parties in 2016), Niger is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2020. It is not on track to meet this deadline.

In May 2020, Niger requested an Article 5 deadline extension of four years until 31 December 2024. The amount of time looks more than sufficient for the modest amount of contamination remaining but Niger has demonstrated only very modest progress or effort to comply with the APMBC and the request does little to build confidence in prospects for completion. The request does not provide detailed annual targets for clearance despite repeated requests for such planning by the other States Parties and vaguely asserts clearance will be conducted between 2020 and 2024.²⁴ The request also does not address the emerging threat of mines of an improvised nature, and does not identify what preparation it is making for sustainable capacity to tackle contamination emplaced or found after completion.

The request cites a number of difficulties confronting mine action in Niger, including environmental factors, (extremes of heat and cold, sandstorms, the remoteness of affected areas), insecurity in border areas, and competing priorities for funding (including counter-terrorist activities and measures to check the proliferation of illegal weapons). It states, however, that the only issue hindering clearance is the lack of funding. It estimates the total cost of completion at US\$1,143,750 and says Niger will provide US\$400,000, appealing to international donors for the balance of US\$743,750. It also states that it cannot guarantee clearance without support from donors.²⁵

The extent of Niger's progress since the Maputo Review Conference is uncertain because the results it reported for 2014 to 2016 varied from 17,000m² and 750 mines to 39,304m² and 1,075 mines.²⁶ The Article 7 report Niger submitted in 2018, covering 2013 to April 2018, set annual targets for achieving completion by the end of 2020 but it came nowhere near achieving them. Niger did not conduct any clearance in 2018, attributing the inaction to a lack of financial resources,

the higher priority given to counterterrorism activities, and the "failure" of unspecified international organisations to respect their commitments.²⁷

Niger submitted a second request for an extension to its Article 5 deadline on 12 November 2015, less than two months before the expiry of its first extended deadline. States Parties observed this did not conform to procedure and left insufficient time for analysis and discussion. The decision also observed that the plan presented by Niger in the request was "workable but lacks ambition". States Parties agreed to give Niger a one-year extension and requested that it provide, in its revised submission, information on the areas already released disaggregated by the method of release and an updated work plan listing all areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines and annual clearance projections during the period covered by the request.²⁸ The third extension request Niger submitted in 2016 did not include such a work plan and a request from the Committee on Article 5 Implementation for additional information received no reply.²⁹

Niger's third extension request in 2020 said it needed more than US\$3.2 million in funding to fulfil its remaining Article 5 obligations, including \$1 million for the CNCCAI from the national budget over the five-year period, and \$2.2 million to be mobilised from external donors.³⁰ Niger has made repeated appeals for international assistance for mine action and claimed receiving no external support for its activities, save for assistance from France for medical evacuation in the case of demining accidents.³¹

Table 1: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (verified) (km ²)
2019	0.01
2018	0
2017	0
2016	0.01
2015	0.01
Total	0.03

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Niger did not report having a strategy in place for managing residual risk post completion.

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- 1 Statement by Niger to the Oslo Review Conference, 27 November 2019.
- 2 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 28 May 2020, pp. 5–6. The document says demining operations had cleared 18,483m² out of contamination of 196,304m², which would leave an area of 177,821m².
- 3 Article 7 Report (covering 2013 to April 2018), Annex I, p. 19.
- 4 NPA, "End of Mission Report: CTA-HMA Inputs", undated but 2018.
- 5 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 6–8.
- 6 "Explosive developments: The growing threat of IEDs in Western Niger", The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) Project, 19 June 2019, p. 3.
- 7 Executive Summary of Niger's Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 27 November 2015; and Statement of Niger, Third APMBC Review Conference, Maputo, 24 June 2014.
- 8 "Explosive Developments: The Growing Threat of IEDs in Western Niger", ACLED Project, 16 May 2019, at: bit.ly/32EZSvq.
- 9 "Niger: military convoy hit by IED attack in Tillaberi region Jan. 31", *GardaWorld*, 1 February 2019, at: bit.ly/32lb5Lw.
- 10 "Niger: Attaque meurtrière contre l'armée à la frontière malienne", *Jeune Afrique*, 16 May 2019, at: bit.ly/32EZSvq.
- 11 T. Gibbons-Neff, "Roadside blast in Niger that hit Americans shows growing threat", *New York Times*, 14 June 2019, at: nyti.ms/2M2mZKA.
- 12 Statement of Niger, Intersessional Meetings (Committee on Article 5 Implementation), Geneva, 25 June 2015.
- 13 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 28 May 2020, p. 14.
- 14 Emails from Jean-Denis Larsen, DRC Country Director, NPA, 19 July 2017, 3 October 2018, and 15 August 2019.
- 15 Statement by Niger to the Oslo Review Conference, 27 November 2019.
- 16 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 28 May 2020, p. 12.
- 17 *Ibid.*, pp. 12–14.
- 18 Article 7 Report (covering 2013 to end-April 2018), Annex 1, p. 23.
- 19 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8–9.
- 20 NPA, "End of Mission Report: CTA-HMA Inputs", undated but 2018.
- 21 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 28 May 2020, pp. 22–24.
- 22 Niger statement to the Oslo Review Conference, 27 November 2019.
- 23 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 28 May 2020, p. 8.
- 24 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 28 May 2020, pp. 11–12.
- 25 *Ibid.*, pp. 12–14.
- 26 Analysis of Niger's 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3; and Article 7 Report (covering 2013 to April 2018).
- 27 Statements of Niger, Intersessional Meetings (Committee on Article 5 Implementation), 7 June 2018; and 17th Meeting of States Parties, 27 November 2018.
- 28 "Decision on the request submitted by Niger for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention", APMBC 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 4 December 2015.
- 29 Analysis of Niger's 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 2.
- 30 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 11–13; and Executive Summary of Niger's 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.
- 31 Statements of Niger, Intersessional Meetings (Committee on Article 5 Implementation), Geneva, 19–20 May 2016; and 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015; 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13; and Executive Summary of Niger's 2015 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2012
NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE NEEDED

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

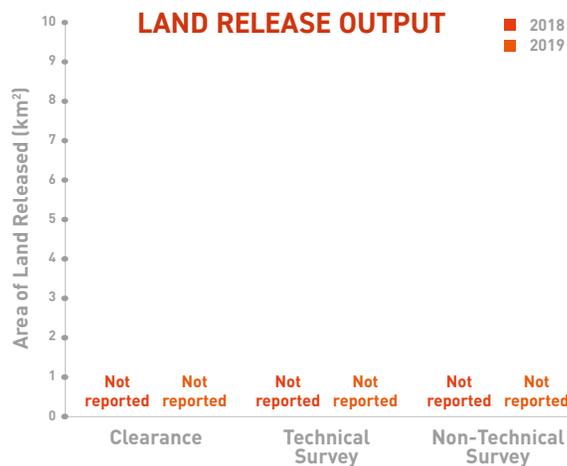
EXTENT UNKNOWN

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

**NOT
REPORTED**



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Nigeria informed States Parties in May 2019 that non-technical survey and clearance of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) would start "as soon as security conditions permit". Continuing deterioration in security obstructed fulfilment of that objective but Nigeria declared its intention to submit an Article 7 report and an application for a new Article 5 deadline. As at 1 October 2020, it had done neither.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Nigeria should expedite preparation and submission of a request for a new Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline.
- Nigeria should urgently implement its stated intention of developing a national strategy harnessing the resources of security forces and humanitarian organisations to clear anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature.
- Nigeria should establish a national mine action authority to set policy and coordinate implementation of a national mine action strategy.
- Nigeria should encourage and facilitate the provision of assistance and expertise from humanitarian demining organisations and continue to provide risk education to the civilian population.
- Nigeria should submit an Article 7 report to inform States Parties to the APMBC of the discovery of any contamination from anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature, and report on the location of all mined areas.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Army, police

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Demining Group (DDG)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Nigeria experiences heavy casualties from widespread use of IEDs, including improvised mines, by Boko Haram and other jihadist groups in the north eastern states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe. The extent of contamination is not known.

Deteriorating security has prevented systematic survey of contamination and there is no record kept of hazardous areas. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) recorded 140 incidents involving explosive devices placed on roads in Nigeria in 2019, of which 67 detonated. UNMAS determined that at least 103 of these devices were victim activated, including by pressure plates. The few pressure-plate devices that were inspected were capable of being detonated by the weight of a person, meaning that they are covered by the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).¹

The findings were consistent with the results of a scoping mission by UNMAS to assess explosive threats in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states in 2017. It noted widespread use of pressure-plate devices along the main supply routes which were configured to detonate from the weight of a person and function as very large anti-personnel mines.² Borno state was the most severely impacted. Civilians reported the presence of victim-activated devices in 76% of Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Borno; 59% of LGAs in Yobe; and 52% of LGAs in Adamawa.³

Improvised devices, whether body-borne, vehicle-borne, command-detonated, or victim-activated, continue to pose the main explosive threat. UNMAS determined there was no evidence of the use of industrially manufactured anti-personnel mines.⁴ Boko Haram and other armed groups emplace improvised mines and other devices on an ad hoc basis particularly targeting key roads such as the Maiduguri-Konduga-Bama axis and the Bama-Banki or Bama-Pulka-Gwoza roads as well as some villages and water points.⁵ An explosive ordnance incident map has been compiled by national and international organisations outlines the area of conflict but insecurity has prevented any comprehensive non-technical survey.

The United Nations said 230 people were killed and more than 300 injured by improvised devices in north-east Nigeria in 2019.⁶

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Nigeria does not have a formal mine action programme. The Nigerian army and police conduct explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) operations coordinated by the Theatre Commander to respond to operational priorities. The army's clearance of explosive remnants of war (ERW) is primarily focused on facilitating military operations and clearing roads and areas to facilitate access for troops to carry out attacks on Boko Haram and keep military supply routes open.⁷ The army and the police also respond frequently to civilians' request for ERW clearance when they report presence of explosive ordnance and some road clearance is conducted to facilitate civilian traffic.⁸ The police have seconded units to the military to conduct clearance in newly-secured areas and deployed EOD teams to Maiduguri and a number of other towns.⁹

Nigeria stated at the Oslo Conference in November 2019 that it had formed an inter-ministerial committee to develop a mine action strategy and prepare a work plan for survey and clearance in the north-east. The committee includes the ministries of Defence and Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management as well as the North-East Development Commission, the National Emergency Management Agency and the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs.¹⁰

The humanitarian response programme for the north-east has a Mine Action Sub-sector co-chaired by the Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement and UNMAS. At the request of the UN humanitarian coordinator, in July 2018 UNMAS deployed a team to Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state, to provide planning, coordination and technical advice notably to support plans for return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and for the delivery of risk education, survey, and clearance.¹¹ UNMAS expected to recruit additional staff in 2020 to support new projects.¹²

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Nigeria, lacking a mine action programme, has not taken up gender in the context of mine action.

The UN humanitarian response programme for 2019–21 unveiled in December 2018 said women, girls, boys, and men living in, or potentially returning to, areas suspected or known to be contaminated with mines or other explosive devices would be involved in all stages of mine action programming. It called for "age and gender appropriate risk education activities to minimize loss of life and injuries as a result of explosive remnants of war", targeting 200,000 girls, 178,000 boys, 51,000 women, and 45,000 men.¹³

International organisations are said to be gender sensitive. UNMAS's seven-person team in Nigeria comprises five women and two men.¹⁴ Danish Demining Group (DDG) has a woman specialist leading its explosive ordnance risk education teams which has four women staff, and it has three female officers employed on non-technical survey and community liaison who also consult women and children in the community.¹⁵ Mines Advisory Group (MAG) employed a woman as operations manager in Maiduguri overseeing operations in the north-east of the country and its community liaison teams comprised one man and one woman. They also included one Hausa speaker and one Kanuri speaker and, where possible, one Muslim and one Christian to try to reach all parts of the community in the north-east.¹⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Nigeria does not have a mine action information management system and does not keep any database recording hazardous areas or explosive incidents.

MAG has maintained a database of different incidents related to mines and other explosive ordnance for several years, as well as collecting information on casualties.¹⁷ UNMAS said it also started to collect data on explosive incidents in 2018 and had developed a methodology to assess which explosive ordnance fall under the APMBC based on available information and field visits. Information was gathered mainly from open sources, including the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), as well as security information provided by the UN, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the Multinational Joint Task Force. Information was also provided by the Nigerian army and police EOD units, but not on a systematic basis.¹⁸

Nigeria last submitted an Article 7 report in 2012. It informed the Oslo Review Conference that it intended to provide an Article 7 report in 2020 but as at 1 October had not done so.¹⁹

UNMAS worked on standardising reporting and information management in consultation with MAG and DDG.²⁰ DDG and MAG share information with UNMAS on a monthly basis using agreed reporting forms.²¹ MAG reported that some non-technical survey outcomes were submitted to the Mine Action sub-Working Group.²²

PLANNING AND TASKING

Nigeria does not have an institutional framework for mine action, a strategic plan, or annual work plans for the humanitarian organisations responding to emergency needs in the north-east.

The UN humanitarian response programme for 2020 determined that 1.5 million people were in need of mine action support²³ and the multi-year strategy for 2019–21²⁴ provided for mine action activities focusing on:

- Risk education on the dangers posed by explosive threats, with the aim of reducing the risk to a level where people can live safely. Priority locations were identified and divided between mine action organisations.
- Non-technical surveys to collect and analyse data on the presence, type, and level of contamination, in order to support land release and the prioritisation of any subsequent clearance; and
- Clearance of contaminated areas.

In the absence of a national authority, DDG developed an intervention plan based on information such as reported explosive ordnance incidents and casualties and security updates.²⁵ MAG determined its activities prioritising communities most at risk and conducting some surveys at the request of stakeholders. MAG coordinated its activities and operational areas with the Mine Action sub-Working Group.²⁶

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Nigeria has no national mine action standards. UNMAS was working on preparation of mine action standards as of 2020.²⁷ In the meantime, international organisations reported following their own technical standards and standing operating procedures.²⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

All clearance is conducted by the Nigerian army and police with support from paramilitary groups. UNMAS developed a project to be implemented in 2020 to provide police EOD training, including victim-activated devices.²⁹

DDG, with five international and twenty-five national staff, deployed two teams in Borno state and one team in Adamawa, conducting non-technical surveys that are based on community liaison assessments as well as explosive ordnance risk education and EOD training for police bomb squad teams. Non-technical survey teams worked in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states. In addition to its mine action work it runs an armed violence reduction programme.³⁰

MAG has worked in Nigeria since 2016, initially in arms management and destruction. In 2017, it opened an office in Maiduguri and started providing risk education to the internally displaced, refugees, and host communities affected by the conflict. In 2019, MAG worked with five international and thirty national staff conducting non-technical survey and contamination baseline assessments as well as delivering risk education in camps for the internally displaced and training in explosive ordnance awareness to aid workers, government personnel, teachers, and other service providers.³¹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

SURVEY IN 2019

MAG community liaison teams, funded through UNMAS, carried out 20 local non-technical surveys and six explosive ordnance assessments, mainly in secured urban areas in Borno state focusing on areas designated for the creation or expansion of IDP camps.³² DDG's survey teams identified three confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) in Adamawa state's Betso community but mostly recorded spot tasks.³³

CLEARANCE IN 2019

Nigeria has no record of results of clearance by security forces.

Priorities include clearing areas to support resettlement of IDPs and keep open communications. To counter the regular mining of roads, security forces are checking and clearing some roads on a daily basis as well as spot clearance of devices reported by humanitarian agencies and communities.³⁴

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Nigeria's original Article 5 deadline, Nigeria was required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2012. At the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties in November 2011, Nigeria declared it had cleared all known anti-personnel mines from its territory.³⁵

Under the Convention's agreed framework, in the event mined areas are discovered after the expiry of a State Party's Article 5 clearance deadline, it should immediately inform all other States Parties of this discovery and undertake to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines as soon as possible.

Nigeria has acknowledged it has contamination by victim-activated mines of an improvised nature that meet the APMBC's definition of anti-personnel mines and informed the Oslo Review Conference in November 2019 that it would prepare an Article 5 extension request with a view to completing its treaty obligations by 2025.³⁶ The Ministry of Defence informed a meeting in July 2020 it would first submit a general request to be followed by a detailed request that it would submit not later than 31 March 2021.³⁷ Nigeria had yet to submit its Article 5 extension request as at 1 October 2020.

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|--|---|
| <p>1 Emails from Lionel Pechera, Programme Coordinator, UNMAS, Nigeria, 11 March and 20 July 2020.</p> <p>2 UNMAS, "Mission Report: UNMAS Explosive Threat Scoping Mission to Nigeria 3 to 14 April 2017", p. 3.</p> <p>3 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 25 June 2019.</p> <p>4 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 11 March 2020.</p> <p>5 See, e.g., "Six killed in Nigeria by land mine planted by suspected jihadists", Agence France-Presse, 27 September 2019.</p> <p>6 "Landmines, improvised devices pose deadly risks for displaced in Sahel and Lake Chad", Press release, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 28 July 2020.</p> <p>7 DDG, "Mine Action Assessment: Northeastern Nigeria (Adamawa and Borno States) 1-15 November 2015".</p> <p>8 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 20 July 2020.</p> <p>9 UNMAS, "Mission Report: UNMAS Explosive Threat Scoping Mission to Nigeria 3 to 14 April 2017", p. 5.</p> <p>10 Statement of Nigeria to the Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 28 November 2019.</p> <p>11 Emails from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 25 June and 17 July 2019.</p> <p>12 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 11 March 2020.</p> <p>13 UN, "Humanitarian Response Strategy January 2019 - December 2021", December 2018, pp. 43, 48.</p> <p>14 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 20 July 2020.</p> <p>15 Email from Christopher Evans Agutu, Armed Violence Reduction Programme Manager, DDG, 27 July 2020.</p> <p>16 Email from Pierluigi Candier, Programme Manager, MAG, 8 May 2020.</p> <p>17 Emails from Nina Seecharan, MAG, 9 July 2019; and Llewelyn Jones, Director of Programmes, MAG, 7 September 2020.</p> <p>18 Emails from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 25 June and 17 July 2019, and 20 July 2020.</p> <p>19 Statement of Nigeria, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 28 November 2019.</p> | <p>20 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 11 March 2020.</p> <p>21 Emails from Christopher Evans Agutu, DDG, 27 July 2020; and Llewelyn Jones, MAG, 7 September 2020.</p> <p>22 Email from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 8 May 2020.</p> <p>23 Emails from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 20 July 2020.</p> <p>24 UN, "Humanitarian Response Strategy January 2019-December 2021", December 2018, pp. 43, 48.</p> <p>25 Email from Christopher Evans Agutu, DDG, 27 July 2020.</p> <p>26 Email from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 8 May 2020.</p> <p>27 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 20 July 2020.</p> <p>28 Emails from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 8 May 2020; and Christopher Evans Agutu, DDG, 27 July 2020.</p> <p>29 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 11 March 2020.</p> <p>30 Email from Christopher Evans Agutu, DDG, 27 July 2020.</p> <p>31 Email from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 8 May 2020.</p> <p>32 Emails from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 8 May 2020 and Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 11 March 2020.</p> <p>33 Email from Christopher Evans Agutu, DDG, 27 July 2020.</p> <p>34 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 11 March 2020; A. Haruna, "Military reopens Maiduguri-Bama-Banki road held by Boko Haram for years", Premium Times, 24 March 2018, at: bit.ly/2GhEZgq; A. Haruna, "How Bama IDPs will return home - Gov. Shettima", Premium Times, 30 March 2018, at: bit.ly/30IBLKD.</p> <p>35 Statement of Nigeria, APMBC 11th Meeting of States Parties, Phnom Penh, 29 November 2011.</p> <p>36 Statement of Nigeria, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 28 November 2019.</p> <p>37 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS 20 July 2020.</p> |
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ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 FEBRUARY 2025
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:
LIGHT

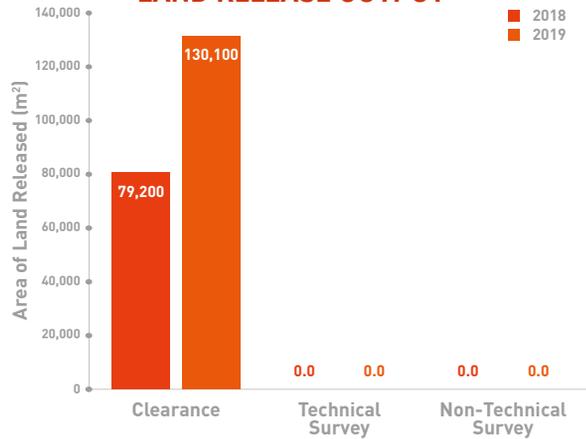
AP MINE
CLEARANCE
IN 2019

130,100 m²

AP MINES
DESTROYED
IN 2019

0

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Oman is making continued progress in conducting “re-clearance” of certain suspected mined areas and plans to complete release of these areas ahead of its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline in February 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Oman should establish a mine action centre to oversee its national programme as soon as possible.
- Oman should ensure the release of all mined areas as soon as possible but not later than its Article 5 deadline in 2025.
- Oman should ensure it conducts land release operations according to international standards, applying non-technical and technical survey to confirm contamination prior to clearance, whenever possible.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	7	Oman does not have any confirmed mined areas, but does have suspected contamination resulting from mined use during the 1960s and 1970s. Oman reported that it has cleared most of the suspected mined areas in accordance with available resources, but that it is now "re-clearing" certain areas to make sure they are free from anti-personnel mine contamination.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	7	The Army is the only institution involved in mine action. In 2018, Oman informed States Parties to the APMBBC that it was considering setting up a mine action centre, but no subsequent updates have been provided with respect to this.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	2	2	Oman's statements on mine action make no reference to the issue of gender.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	5	Oman submits annual Article 7 transparency reports detailing its progress in re-clearance efforts.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	6	In its Article 7 transparency report submitted in 2019, Oman included a work plan to release all remaining suspected mined areas before its 2025 Article 5 deadline.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	3	3	In 2019, as in previous years, Oman conducted clearance/re-clearance of mined areas, during which no anti-personnel mines were discovered. It is not known if Oman conducts evidence-based non-technical survey or technical survey prior to clearance, to better target its efforts.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	5	Oman cleared/re-cleared 130,100m ² of suspected mined area in 2020; a slight increase on the previous year. As at the end of 2019, Oman had completed 38% of the total area identified for re-clearance and was on track to complete re-clearance by its February 2025 Article 5 deadline.
Average Score	5.3	5.0	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or mine action centre

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Royal Army of Oman

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Oman is suspected to be contaminated by mines, though the precise location and extent of any residual threat is not known. In its initial Article 7 report, submitted in 2015, Oman declared that there were no areas in the Sultanate confirmed to be mined, but reported “many” suspected mined areas in the south, particularly in the Dhofar region.¹ In a statement to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings in Geneva in June 2018, and in its Article 7 reports submitted in 2019 and 2020, Oman repeated there were no confirmed mined areas and no record of any mine casualties for more than 20 years, but referenced the previously mentioned suspected mines areas requiring “re-search”/re-clearance.²

According to its 2015 report, during the mid 1960s to mid 1970s, the presence of rebel movements in Dhofar led to “vast” areas being affected by anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines. There was small-scale use of mines by militants without maps or records of where contamination was laid. Friendly forces reportedly cleared their own contaminated area directly after the end of actions in 1976 and the Armed Sultan's Engineering Unit Forces initiated clearance of the areas suspected to have been mined by the militants.³

However, Oman has reported that it is impossible to be sure that the areas have been fully cleared, and therefore re-clearance of certain areas is required to ensure no anti-personnel mines remain.⁴ This is for three reasons: the size of the region (about 99,000km²); the lack of maps or marking; and the terrain (which includes mountains and valleys), with many mined areas located on steep slopes. In addition, the rain over the years may have scattered the mines.⁵

In 2001, it had been reported that the Royal Army of Oman had mapped seven zones of suspected mined areas based on historical records of battlefield areas, unit positions, and mine incident reports.⁶

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Oman has not had a functioning mine action programme. Clearance is being performed by its army engineers.⁷

Oman stated in June 2018 that it began implementing a national programme in 2017 and was planning to set up a national mine action centre and would then appeal for supply of equipment but it did not specify when this would occur.⁸

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Details are not available on the extent to which gender is considered and reflected in Oman's national mine action efforts.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

After becoming a State Party to the APMBC in 2015, Oman has submitted annual Article 7 reports covering progress in the previous calendar year.

PLANNING AND TASKING

In its Article 7 report submitted in August 2019, Oman provided a work plan for the release of all remaining suspected mined area before its Article 5 deadline in 2025.⁹ In 2020, Oman reported that it had completed 38% of total planned re-clearance and expected to complete clearance by its February 2025 deadline.¹⁰

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Standards applied by the army are not known. Oman reported that mined areas were earlier cleared “in accordance with the resources available”.¹¹

In 2019, as in the previous two years, no anti-personnel mines were discovered during re-clearance. Oman said the absence of anti-personnel mines “confirms the areas are cleared”.¹² It is not known to what, if any, extent Oman has explored the possibility of conducting evidenced-based survey to confirm anti-personnel mine contamination, prior to conducting full clearance.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Oman’s army engineers are responsible for mine/explosive remnants of war (ERW) clearance.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Between February and December 2019, Oman cleared 11 suspected mined areas totalling 130,100m² in the Magseel region, during which no anti-personnel mines were discovered. During clearance operations in July 2019, however, a number of unexploded 81mm mortar shells were found and destroyed.¹³ Oman also reported that it had “re-inspected” suspected mined areas in Dhafar and verified that these areas are free from anti-personnel land mines.¹⁴

Clearance output in 2019 was a significant increase compared to the 79,200m² of mined area cleared between July and December 2018.¹⁵

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Oman is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 February 2025.

In its Article 7 report submitted in 2018, Oman presented a plan to complete clearance of remaining suspected mined areas by its Article 5 deadline.¹⁶ As at the start of 2020, Oman reported that it had completed 38% of the total planned re-clearance and expected to complete clearance by its February 2025 deadline.¹⁷

Oman has cited the challenges it faces in locating and clearing mines in large and remote areas of desert.¹⁸

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

It is not known whether or not the Oman has made provision for a sustainable long-term national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas discovered following completion (i.e. residual contamination).

1 Initial Article 7 Report, 2015, pp. 4–5.

2 Oman statement to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 7–8 June 2018; and Article 7 Reports (covering 2018 and 2019, respectively).

3 Initial Article 7 Report, submitted in 2015.

4 Article 7 Reports submitted in 2015, in 2019 (covering 2018), and 2020 (covering 2019).

5 Initial Article 7 Report, submitted in 2015, pp. 4–5.

6 “Humanitarian Demining”, *Journal of Mine Action*, 2001, p. 49.

7 Article 7 Report (covering 2018).

8 Statement of Oman to the Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 7–8 June 2018.

9 Article 7 Report (covering 2018).

10 Article 7 Report (covering 2019).

11 Article 7 Report (covering 2018).

12 Article 7 Report (covering 2019).

13 Ibid.; and Preliminary observations of the Committee on Article 5 implementation, Intersessional Meetings, 30 June–2 July 2020.

14 Preliminary observations of the Committee on Article 5 implementation, Intersessional Meetings, 30 June–2 July 2020.

15 Article 7 Report (covering 2018).

16 Ibid.

17 Article 7 Report (covering 2019).

18 Statement of Oman, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2028
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

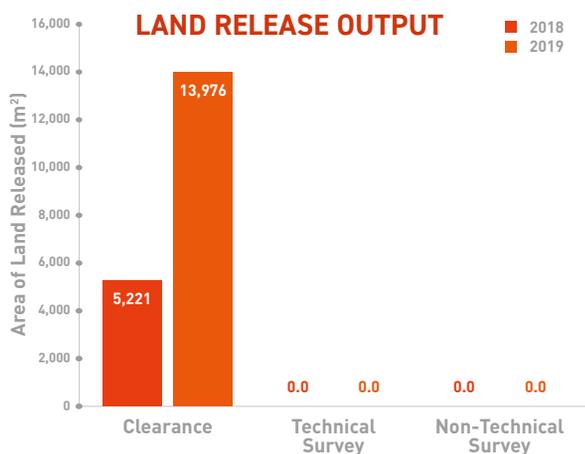
**MEDIUM, PROBABLY
LESS THAN 5 KM²**
(MINE ACTION
REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

13,976 M²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

106



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

All mined areas are located in territory under Israeli control. To date, Israel has not authorised demining operations to be conducted by or on behalf of the Palestinian Mine Action Centre (PMAC), but progress is being made in clearance of mine contamination in the West Bank by The HALO Trust. Clearance of Arraba minefield, in the governorate of Jenin, was completed by HALO in October 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- PMAC should report accurately and consistently on the extent of mined area and annual clearance.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Higher Committee for Mine Action
- Palestine Mine Action Centre (PMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

In its initial Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 7 transparency report, submitted in November 2018, Palestine reported 69 areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines on the border with Jordan, covering a total area of 18.51km². All of the mined areas were said to be under Israeli control.¹ Palestine also reported that it is not in a position to know whether there are further mined areas in East Jerusalem or in other areas of Palestine under Israeli control, including in the region of Israeli settlements or closed military zones.²

A HALO Trust survey of the West Bank in 2012 identified 90 minefields, 13 of which were laid by the Jordanian military in 1948–67, while the remaining 77 were laid by the Israeli military along the Jordan River after the 1967 war. All minefields, including those laid by the Jordanian military, are under Israeli military control.³ Clearance operations must therefore be coordinated with the Israeli authorities, in addition to PMAC. In addition, in 2019 HALO Trust reported being made aware of three other anti-personnel mined areas in the Jordan Valley, namely at Shademot Mehola (65,000m²) and Sokot (228,000m²), containing mixed anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mine contamination; and at Taysir (5,500m²), which contains only anti-vehicle mines. Sokot is an Israeli-laid minefield while the other two minefields were laid by Jordanian forces.⁴ As at April 2020, these three minefields had yet to be formally surveyed by HALO, but they have a potential humanitarian impact.⁵

As at end of 2019, there was nearly 0.28km² of confirmed mined area (excluding the Jordan Valley) across three minefields in Palestine and two minefields in no-man's-land between the West Bank and Israel (see Table 1).⁶ All five minefields had been laid by the Jordanian army.

Table 1: Mined area (excluding the Jordan Valley) (at end 2019)⁷

Governorate	Minefield Task	Contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)
Jenin	Qabatiya	AV and AP mines	1	8,212
	Yabad	AV and AP mines	1	40,032
Tul Kareem	Nur a-Shams	AV and AP mines	1	37,810
Ramallah	No Man's Land Yalo	AV and AP mines	1	104,226
	No Man's Land - Canada Park	AV and AP mines	1	85,708
Totals			5	275,988

CHA = Confirmed hazardous area AV = Anti-vehicle AP = Anti-personnel

This is a reduction of one minefield, compared to mine contamination at the end of 2018, as clearance of Arraba minefield in Jenin governorate was completed by HALO Trust in October 2019.⁸

Mine action is subject to the 1995 Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, commonly known as the Oslo II accord, under which the West Bank is divided into three areas: Area A is under full Palestinian civil and security control; Area B is under full Palestinian civil control and joint Israeli-Palestinian security control; and Area C refers to areas where Israel has full civil and security control.⁹

Most mined areas are located in Area C of the West Bank, along the border with Jordan. Area C covers approximately 60% of the West Bank.¹⁰

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

PMAC was established in accordance with Palestinian Minister of Interior decision on 25 March 2012,¹¹ which appointed a director and created a Higher Committee for Mine Action as an interministerial body, with 27 members representing the ministries of education, foreign affairs, health, intelligence, interior, justice, and military liaison, as well as the police and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. The Higher Committee for Mine Action, which serves as the national mine action authority, is tasked with developing mine action legislation and allocating resources for the sector.¹²

PMAC, which is located in the Ministry of Interior in Ramallah, is mandated to coordinate all aspects of mine action in the West Bank. It receives technical advice from the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS).¹³ The committee has established a number of sub-committees to deal with technical issues, risk education, legal affairs, foreign affairs, and health and safety.¹⁴

In November 2016, Palestine announced that it was seeking to adopt and enact a mine action law. Palestine was hopeful of completing the legal procedures within a year and then presenting the draft law to the legislative council for endorsement, followed by signature by the President.¹⁵ As at June 2020, however, the process of developing and adopting the legislation was still ongoing.¹⁶

PMAC, which has 10 employees,¹⁷ is staffed with personnel from the Palestinian National Security Forces, Civil Police, and Civil Defence. In 2013, 36 PMAC personnel were trained by UNMAS for demining but were not subsequently authorised by Israel to conduct clearance.¹⁸ The Civil Police have an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) unit with 42 personnel in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, Qalqilya, Ramallah, and Tulkarm, who conduct rapid response to locate and remove items of unexploded ordnance (UXO). The EOD unit is only permitted to work in Area A of the West Bank.¹⁹

PMAC does not have its own budget, and the Palestinian authority only provides funding for the salaries of PMAC employees and the costs of the PMAC office.²⁰ Israel does not grant Palestine authorisation to conduct mine clearance operations.²¹

The Israeli National Mine Action Authority (INMAA), provided funding for the last two months of HALO's quality assurance (QA) costs at the Arraba minefield and for the full cost of QA at the Baptism Site Project in 2018 and 2019. In addition, since November 2019, the Israeli Ministry of Defence (MoD) has covered HALO's clearance costs at the Baptism Site Project.²² PMAC does not provide direct funding for HALO Trust's clearance operations.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

PMAC has said it has a gender policy and implementation plan and that it disaggregates data by sex and age.²³ There is reported to be equal access to employment for qualified women and men at PMAC, and two of PMAC's ten employees (20%) are women, both holding managerial/supervisory positions.²⁴

The HALO Trust has a global policy on gender and diversity. HALO Trust's operations team works and lives within the Palestinian communities and is all male. During 2019, The HALO Trust deployed a female finance officer. For managerial positions within HALO's West Bank office team, however, there is said to be equal access to employment for qualified women and men.²⁵

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

PMAC uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, Level 1.²⁶

The HALO Trust follows the INMAA's national standards and provides daily and weekly reports as well as completion reports for every task. The information is shared with PMAC weekly, as well as sharing completion reports and GIS information for every completed task.²⁷ As a result, all three entities are in possession of HALO Trust survey and clearance data relating to demining operations in the West Bank.

Palestine submitted an initial Article 7 report in November 2018, as required by the APMBC.²⁸ However, Palestine's Article 7 report covering calendar year 2018 (submitted in 2019), did not contain any further details, including the amount of mined area cleared in 2018²⁹ and as at 1 August 2020, Palestine had yet to submit its Article 7 report covering 2019.

PLANNING AND TASKING

PMAC has a Strategic Plan for 2017–20, in which primary objectives are the clearance of the Nur a-Shams, Qabatiya, and Yabad minefields.³⁰ According to PMAC, there was an annual work plan in place for 2020.³¹

HALO Trust's survey and clearance schedule in the West Bank is set in agreement with PMAC, INMAA, and its international donors.³²

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The HALO Trust's standing operating procedures (SOPs), which are based on its international standards and which also comply with national standards, are approved by the INMAA. Once a year, The HALO Trust submits its SOPs, including any necessary amendments, to INMAA for approval.³³

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

To date, Israel has not authorised demining operations to be conducted by or on behalf of PMAC. In September 2013, however, the INMAA gave formal authorisation for The HALO Trust to clear two minefields in the West Bank deemed high priority by PMAC. Following INMAA authorisation, HALO Trust began mine clearance in the West Bank in April 2014,³⁴ and continues to conduct clearance operations in the West Bank.

The HALO Trust works under the auspices of both INMAA and PMAC. Its manual clearance team in the West Bank is composed of deminers from Georgia with capacity varying between 15 and 22 deminers according to the task/work cycle. In addition, during 2019, HALO Trust deployed up to three armoured CASE721 wheeled medium loaders, two armoured tracked excavators, one industrial rock crusher, and two industrial screeners. The machines were operated by a Palestinian team.³⁵

The HALO Trust's work in the West Bank complies with the Israeli Standard Institute for Standards, in particular ISO 9001, 14001, and 18001. The HALO Trust carries out its own internal quality control (QC), which is conducted by senior programme staff, and which complies with the ISO standards and HALO Trust's own SOPs.³⁶ In addition, as required by INMAA, 4CI Security, an external INMAA-certified QA/QC company, is contracted to monitor HALO Trust's clearance in accordance with Israeli National Mine Action Standards. QA at the Baptism Site Project and two months of QA at Arraba minefield were funded by the INMAA. The remaining QA costs in Jenin governorate were funded through private donations.³⁷

The HALO Trust conducts both manual and mechanical clearance in the West Bank. It also uses a drone for survey and mapping purposes, and maps generated are shared with all parties involved for planning and follow up.³⁸

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

The HALO Trust released 13,976m² through clearance in 2019 and did not release any land through survey.³⁹

Under Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II, Israel reported that INMAA had overseen clearance of approximately 577,000m² in 2019, destroying 1,200 mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). In addition, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)'s Engineering Corps was reported to have cleared 106,000m², destroying 911 mines and ERW.⁴⁰ However, there was no disaggregation on what proportion of this land release was of mined area (as opposed to battle area) or whether it also includes land released in Palestinian territory in the West Bank.

SURVEY IN 2019

No land was reduced through technical survey in 2019 or cancelled through non-technical survey.⁴¹ HALO Trust performs survey as part of its clearance operations of the Jordanian-laid minefields in Area C of the West Bank. It is part of pre-clearance task preparation and is of CHAs already recorded in PMAC's database and on maps.⁴²

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, The HALO Trust cleared a total of 13,976m² across Arraba and Yabad minefields in Jenin governorate, during which a total of 106 anti-personnel mines, 81 anti-vehicle mines, 1 other item of UXO, and 23 "danger remnants" (i.e. mine parts such as fuzes) were destroyed. Clearance of Arraba minefield was completed in October 2019.⁴³

Table 2: Mine clearance in 2019⁴⁴

Operator	Governorate	Minefield Task Name	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
HALO Trust	Jenin	Arraba	11,179	94	81	1
HALO Trust	Jenin	Yabad	2,797	12	0	0
Total			13,976	106	81	1

This is a funding-related increase compared to 2018, when HALO Trust cleared 5,221m².⁴⁵

In 2019, HALO's clearance operations in Jenin governorate continued to be influenced by availability of funding for the external QA. Clearance in Jenin District was suspended January to April 2019 in the absence of QA funding. Operations were then resumed between 5 May and 18 December 2019 in Arraba and Yabad minefields where the clearance output in each task was as forecast.⁴⁶

The HALO Trust also commenced clearance of the West Bank minefield at Qaser al-Yahud (the Baptism Site Project), in the Jordan Valley, in March 2018,⁴⁷ with both funding from international donors and Israel.⁴⁸ Since November 2019, HALO Trust clearance of the Baptism Site Project has been entirely funded by the Israeli MoD.⁴⁹ The project aimed to remove mines and explosive ordnance in the area of the Baptism Site, which covers a total estimated area of 870,000m².⁵⁰ Approximately 90,000m² was thought to potentially contain anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature.⁵¹ IDF minefield records provided to The HALO Trust separate the land for clearance outside of the church compounds into eleven areas, all of which contain a potential UXO threat. Six of the eleven areas were known to contain significant numbers of M15 anti-vehicle mines in multiple lines and more than 2,600 anti-vehicle mines in total. The land and buildings inside the seven church compounds are suspected to contain mines and booby-traps, but no official records exist regarding this contamination.⁵²

Clearance at the Baptism Site continued through 2019 and HALO Trust completed clearance of the seven churchyards and their compound buildings at the Baptism Site by mid-July 2019.⁵³

In November 2019, Palestine reported that 136 dunums (acres) in the Baptism Site and the Church's land and building had been cleared, and the second section on 500 dunums (acres) of mined area adjacent to the church land had been started.⁵⁴

Clearance at the Baptism Site continued as planned until 31 December 2019, along the valley floor, the battle area clearance (BAC) areas, and anti-vehicle mine lines.⁵⁵

PROGRESS IN 2020

The HALO Trust completed clearance at the Baptism Site on 23 April 2020. During January to April 2020, HALO completed BAC, located/destroyed the final 663 anti-vehicle mines, and cleared 12,200m² of anti-personnel minefield located on the southern side of the site main entrance and destroyed 502 anti-personnel mines. The Israeli MoD provided the funding HALO's clearance operations at the Baptism Site from November 2019 to April 2020.⁵⁶

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR PALESTINE: 1 JUNE 2018



ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2028

NOT ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE. COMPLETION IS CONTINGENT ON POLITICAL FACTORS AND DEMINING PROGRESS MADE BY ISRAEL AND THE HALO TRUST, AS PALESTINE DOES NOT HAVE CONTROL OF MINED AREAS UNDER ITS JURISDICTION.

LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): LOW

Clearance in the West Bank is constrained by available funding⁵⁷ and is impacted by political factors, including the lack of authorisation granted by Israel for Palestine to conduct mine clearance operations.⁵⁸

It is, however, a positive development that The HALO Trust was permitted to begin mine clearance operations in April 2014, and, as at the end of 2019, HALO had completed clearance of six minefields in Area C of the West Bank.⁵⁹ As at the end of 2019, three Jordanian-laid minefields in the governorates of Jenin and Tul Kareem, which fall within HALO Trust's donor agreement, remained to be cleared. Funds permitting, HALO plans to complete clearance of Yabad minefield in 2020, followed by Nur a-Shams minefield during winter 2020/21, and then clearance of Qabatiya minefield.⁶⁰

The COVID-19 pandemic did not affect HALO's operations at the Baptism Site Project, but since 24 April 2020 operations had been suspended due to the lack of funding for QA. As at June 2020, HALO was trying to secure QA funding for the remaining minefields in Jenin and Tul Kareem Districts.⁶¹

After completion of the three priority Jordanian-laid minefields, HALO Trust plans to look into clearance of certain mined areas in the Jordan Valley, a third of which are Israeli-laid.⁶²

In February 2019, INMAA hoped that clearance of mined areas in the West Bank would be finished in two years. According to INMAA, the Yalo and Canada Park minefield will both be cleared, but according to humanitarian prioritisation, noting that minefields are fenced and marked, and claiming that they have little humanitarian impact.⁶³

Furthermore, INMAA began survey of the Jordan Valley minefields in the West Bank in 2017, using Israeli national budget and operating with Israeli companies. INMAA sees significant potential for cancellation and reduction of land in the Jordan Valley, and is using various technologies and scientific tools to assess the likelihood of mine drift. INMAA planned to invest around ILS 900,000 (approximately US\$250,000) on this project in 2017-19.⁶⁴

Table 3: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2019	13,976
2018	5,221
2017	41,857
2016	34,057
2015	63,411
Total	158,522

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- 1 Palestine Initial Article 7 Report, dated 26 November 2018, Form D and Annex 2.
- 2 Ibid., Form D.
- 3 Emails from Tom Meredith, Desk Officer, HALO Trust, 24 June and 23 October 2015; and Sonia Pezier, Junior Programme Officer, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), 14 April 2015.
- 4 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 21 September 2019 and 20 April 2020.
- 5 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.; and email from Wala Jarrar, PMAC, 21 June 2020. The two minefields in no-man's land are located west of the separation barrier in an Israeli controlled area.
- 8 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020.
- 9 Email from Celine Francois, Programme Officer, UNMAS Jerusalem, 5 July 2012.
- 10 Ibid.; and "UNMAS 2013 Annual Report".
- 11 Minister of Interior Decision No. 69, 25 March 2012.
- 12 Emails from Celine Francois, UNMAS Jerusalem, 19 July 2012; and Imad Mohareb, Planning Department, PMAC, 31 March 2013.
- 13 Emails from Celine Francois, UNMAS Jerusalem, 5 and 19 July 2012; and UN, "2012 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects", New York, 2013.
- 14 Email from the Planning Department, PMAC, 9 May 2016.
- 15 Statement of Palestine, 15th Meeting of States Parties, Santiago, 29 November 2016.
- 16 Statement of Palestine, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25 November 2019; and email from Wala Jarrar, PMAC, 21 June 2020.
- 17 Email from Wala Jarrar, PMAC, 24 May 2020.
- 18 Initial Article 7 Report, Form D, 26 November 2018.
- 19 Email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 26 June 2018.
- 20 Interview with Brig. Osama Abu Hananeh, PMAC, Geneva, 7 February 2019; and email from Wala Jarrar, PMAC, 24 May 2020.
- 21 Initial Article 7 report, Form D, 26 November 2018; and interview with Brig. Osama Abu Hananeh, PMAC, Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 22 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April and 18 June 2020.
- 23 Email from Wala Jarrar, PMAC, 24 May 2020.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020.
- 26 Email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 30 August 2018.
- 27 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 3 Sept 2018 and 18 June 2020.
- 28 Initial Article 7 Report, Form D, 26 November 2018.
- 29 Article 7 Report submitted in 2019 (covering 2018).
- 30 PMAC, "Strategic Plan 2017-2020", undated.
- 31 Email from Wala Jarrar, PMAC, 24 May 2020.
- 32 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 18 June 2020.
- 33 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018.
- 34 Email from Tom Meredith, HALO Trust, 11 May 2015.
- 35 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April and 14 June 2020.
- 36 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018.
- 37 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020.
- 38 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019.
- 39 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April and 14 June 2020.
- 40 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.
- 41 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020; and Wala Jarrar, PMAC, 24 May 2020.
- 42 Email from staff member in the Planning Department, PMAC, 9 May 2016; and email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 43 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April and 18 June 2020.
- 44 Ibid. However, PMAC reported clearance of 14,719m² for the Arraba minefield, with the destruction of 99 anti-personnel mines and 84 anti-vehicle mines along with destruction of 12 anti-personnel mines at Yabad minefield. Email from Wala Jarrar, PMAC, 24 May 2020.
- 45 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019 and 18 June 2020.
- 46 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020.
- 47 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018; and Michael Heiman, formerly of INMAA, 26 May 2018; CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2018), Form B.
- 48 Interview with Marcel Aviv, INMAA, Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 49 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April and 18 June 2020.
- 50 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018.
- 51 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly of INMAA, 26 May 2018.
- 52 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 14 May 2018; and telephone interview, 23 August 2018.
- 53 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020; and CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2018), Form B.
- 54 Statement of Palestine, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25 November 2019.
- 55 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020.
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 21 August 2019.
- 58 Initial Article 7 Report, Form D, 26 November 2018; and interview with Brigadier Osama Abu Hananeh, PMAC, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 59 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 20 April 2020.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Email from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 18 June 2020.
- 62 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, HALO Trust, 22 April 2017, 14 May 2018 and 18 June 2020; and telephone interview, 3 August 2017.
- 63 Interview with Marcel Aviv, INMAA, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 64 Interview with Michael Heiman, INMAA, in Geneva, 15 February 2018; and emails, 23 July and 10 August 2017; and, after leaving INMAA, 26 May 2018.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2024
ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

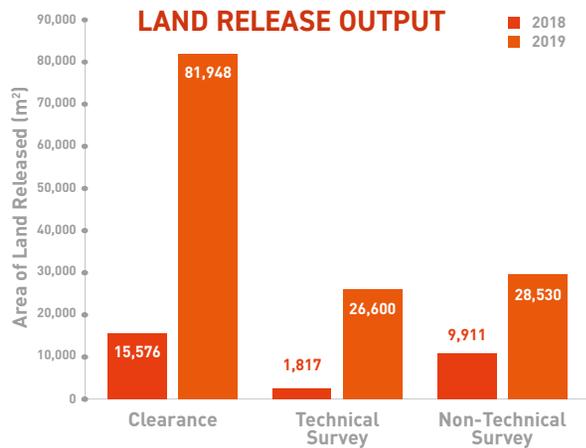
LIGHT, 0.1 KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

81,948 M²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

1,113



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Peru reported a massive increase in land release in 2019 compared to 2018 with its highest clearance output of the past five years. Its estimate of outstanding mine contamination continues to be unreliable with contradictory figures that cannot be reconciled by the amount of land released.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Peru should survey its outstanding mined areas to develop a more accurate baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination and report the resultant data.
- Peru should develop and implement new policies for land release to ensure that targeted clearance is being conducted as part of a comprehensive land release methodology.
- Peru should include in its annual Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 7 transparency reports details of progress in implementing its “Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024”. This should include an updated plan to completion with clear annual targets for land release.
- Peru should develop and implement criteria for the prioritisation of survey and clearance tasks.
- Peru should develop a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	4	No progress was made in 2019 towards establishing an accurate estimate of anti-personnel mine contamination. Reported figures cannot be reconciled with the amount of land released in 2019 and continue to be inconsistent across reports and reporting periods.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	6	Peru has the requisite legislation and the necessary management structure in place to oversee demining operations. Peru funds all its own operations but there was a decrease in funding in 2019.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	2	Peru does not have a gender and diversity policy and implementation for mine action. While women and children participate in mine risk education activities it is not known if this consultation extends to survey. CONTRAMINAS reported that in 2019, 20% of operational staff were female and 50% of managerial and supervisory positions were held by women.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	4	Anti-personnel mine contamination, survey, and clearance figures are inconsistent and inaccurate within reports and across reporting periods. In 2019, Peru reported that it had improved information management through the introduction of new software.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	5	Peru exceeded its land release target for 2019 in its national plan for demining 2018–2024. It provided an updated plan in its Article 7 report, but the plan lacks detail and is based on numbers of mined areas rather than the extent of contamination.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	6	In 2019, Peru introduced mine detection dogs (MDDs) to conduct technical survey and has stated that it plans to use MDDs to identify contamination and conduct clearance. There was no change in demining capacity in 2019.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	3	Peru went from releasing 27,303m ² of contaminated land in 2018 to 137,078m ² , of which more than half was from clearance. If it can maintain this output, then Peru should easily be able to meet its Article 5 completion deadline. It is, though, unclear whether it is sustainable.
Average Score	5.6	4.3	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Peruvian Mine Action Centre (CONTRAMINAS)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Peruvian Army's Directorate General for Humanitarian Demining (DIGEDEHUME)
- Anti-Personnel Mine Action Centre (CONTRAMINAS) Security Division (DIVSECOM)
- Joint Ecuador-Peru Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit (Not operational in 2019)

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2019, Peru appears to have estimated anti-personnel mine contamination at 369,212m² across 108 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) within four “sectors” (see Table 1).¹ Peru has not identified any confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). Its reporting of outstanding mine contamination is also inconsistent within and between reports. Estimates in its latest Article 7 report, covering 2019, vary² and also differ from the one given in its statement to the Article 5 Committee in November 2019, when Peru reported 109 SHAs remaining over 400,000m², with 5,500 anti-personnel mines said to be left to clear and destroy.³

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by sector (at end 2019)⁴

Sector	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Santiago	42	70,690
Tiwinza	11	26,850
Cenepa	37	90,707
Achuime	18	180,965
Totals	108	369,212

The size and extent of the 108 mined areas varies widely, with one area only 5m² in size while the largest, by far, is estimated to extend over 160,000m².⁵ In fact, most of this large area should be released by survey, without the need for recourse to full clearance. The true amount of contaminated land is probably no more than 100,000m² as Peru does not use polygons to delineate hazardous areas, despite having detailed mine maps of almost all the affected areas.

In its 2016 Article 5 extension request and “Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024” Peru stated that it would carry out survey activities to determine the size and location of the mined areas using minefield records.⁶ Although some survey was conducted in 2019, as at the end of the year all of Peru’s outstanding contamination continued to be recorded in SHAs.

Mine contamination in Peru results from a 1995 border conflict with Ecuador. The mined section of the border was predominantly in the Condor mountain range that was at the centre of the dispute.

NEW CONTAMINATION

In 2019, following technical survey, two additional areas of previously unrecorded legacy anti-personnel mine contamination were located in the Tiwinza sector (Montufar Nuevo and CG-DC-5_Nuevo) of 400m² each. In the Cenepa sector, a mined area estimated at 68,000m² (PV La Media), which was previously thought to be in Ecuadorian territory, was found to be located in Peruvian territory and was therefore added to Peru’s national mine action database.⁷

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The national mine action programme is managed by the Peruvian Mine Action Centre (Centro Peruano de Acción contra las Minas Antipersonal, CONTRAMINAS). CONTRAMINAS is responsible for setting strategy and priorities and for overall coordination of mine action activities. It consists of an Interministerial Executive Council, chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a Technical Secretariat, which oversees the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Directorate of Security and Defence.⁸

CONTRAMINAS was created in December 2002 after the issuance of a “Supreme Decree”, and an additional “Supreme Decree” issued in July 2005 provides additional regulation.⁹ Directive 001 governs demining operations at the Peruvian Army’s Directorate General for Humanitarian Demining (DIGEDEHUME) while Directive 006, issued by the Head of the Joint Command of the Armed Forces in 2001, regulates compliance under the APMBC.¹⁰

In its revised second Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in August 2016, Peru estimated that US\$38.6 million would be needed to finish the job, all of which was due to be funded by the Peruvian government.¹¹ This estimate was also included in its Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024. Since 2010, Peru has reported contributing about \$1.4 million annually for anti-personnel mine survey and clearance which is less than the annual amount Peru believes is needed to complete clearance by 2024. Based on the figures it has supplied, almost half of this total cost could be saved by completing clearance by 2021.

In its 2016 extension request Peru pledged to increase the annual budget to meet its requested deadline and in 2018 the annual budget was increased to \$2.36 million although it had been costed at \$3.88 million.¹² In 2019, Peru contributed \$1.32 million to demining operations.¹³ In addition, Peru has sought and received support from international entities.¹⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

CONTRAMINAS does not have a gender and diversity policy but it does abide by gender equality legislation established in a 2019 decree.¹⁵ It is not known if gender and diversity are mainstreamed through the national mine action standards (NMAS) but gender or diversity in relation to Article 5 do not feature in Peru's 2016 Article 5 deadline extension request, in its Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining, or in its latest Article 7 report.

Women and children are included in mine risk education activities but it is not known to what extent they are consulted during survey and community liaison. CONTRAMINAS reported that it consults the National Service for Protected Natural Areas (SERNANP) about the needs of ethnic and minority groups when planning demining activities. Victim data is disaggregated by sex and age but it is not known if other relevant mine action data is disaggregated. In 2019, 20% of operational roles were staffed by women and 50% of management and supervisory positions.¹⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

CONTRAMINAS uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.¹⁷ In 2019, Peru linked IMSMA with ArcGIS software to improve its capabilities to map anti-personnel mine contamination.¹⁸

Peru submits its Article 7 reports on a timely basis and reports on its progress in Article 5 implementation at intersessional meetings and meetings of States Parties. However, the quality of data in these reports is poor with frequent inconsistencies and inaccuracies both within reports and across reporting periods. The Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties, in its decision on Peru's 2016 extension request, noted the importance of Peru providing updated information on an annual basis within its Article 7 reports and said that Peru should report on progress in accordance with the Guide to Reporting.¹⁹

PLANNING AND TASKING

Table 2: Planned mine clearance in 2018–24 (Updated Plan)²⁰

Year	Sector	Mined areas	Area (m ²)	AP mines
2018	Tiwinza	16	119,415	2,697
2019	Cenepa	13	92,850	627
2020	Achuime	20	9,458	746
2021	Cenepa	16	12,301	653
2022	Cenepa–Santiago	18	180,965	392
2023	Santiago	16	28,225	838
2024	Santiago	28	48,065	2,136
Totals		127	491,279	8,089

The Updated National Plan for Demining for 2018–24 projected that some 0.49km² spread across 127 SHAs will be released by 31 December 2024. Peru expects to clear 8,089 mines from these areas (see Table 2).²¹ If Peru had met its annual land release targets to end 2019 it would have only 279,014m² of anti-personnel mine contamination to clear from 2020 to 2024.

In 2019, Peru planned to clear 13 mined areas totalling 92,850m² from the Cenepa sector according to its Updated Plan or 20 mined areas from Tiwinza and Cenepa of unspecified area according to its Article 7 report covering 2018.²² In fact, Peru far exceeded the amount and released 137,078m² but across 11 mined areas in the Tiwinza and Cenepa sectors.

In its Article 7 report covering 2019, Peru included a plan for release of 108 mined areas from 2020 to 2024 (see Table 3).

Peru's criteria for prioritising survey and clearance operations are unclear. In its decision on Peru's 2016 extension request, the Article 5 Committee called on Peru to prioritise operations based on the socio-economic impact of

mined areas.²³ One of the activities listed for CONTRAMINAS' policy work was to set priorities for clearance, in coordination with DIGEDEHUME and DIVSECOM.²⁴ Peru reported that it prioritises clearance by sector and in consideration of the work that has already been carried out in the sector.²⁵

Table 3: Planned mine clearance in 2020–24 (Article 7)²⁶

Year	Sector	Mined areas
2020	Tiwinza	11
	Cenepa	4
2021	Cenepa	20
2022	Cenepa	9
	Achuime	18
2023	Santiago	21
	Cenepa	4
2024	Santiago	21
Total		108

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Peru has 16 national mine action standards (NMAS) which form part of the Humanitarian Demining Procedures Manual, and which are based on the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).²⁷ According to CONTRAMINAS, the NMAS and standard operating procedures (SOPs) are reviewed annually. In 2019, updates were made to the technical survey standard on the use of mine detection dogs (MDDs) during technical survey.²⁸

One of CONTRAMINAS four objectives in Peru's 2016 extension request was to develop new policies for land release, with the aim of finalising these policies within six months of the plan's approval. The same objective was included in its Updated National Plan for Demining for 2018–24.²⁹ According to CONTRAMINAS, new land release policies are formulated annually as mine clearance progresses and these are then reflected in the operation orders.³⁰ As noted by the Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties, Peru should conduct evidence-based survey to define its SHAs and also seek to identify CHA.³¹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

DIGEDEHUME, which is responsible for demining on the border with Ecuador, has two teams each comprising 60 personnel.³² In 2019, DIGEDEHUME, carried out eight "work days" of 20 days each, from April to September, with 60 personnel deployed per work day.³³ CONTRAMINAS reported that in 2019 they had six clearance teams totalling forty-two deminers, and six non-technical survey and six technical survey teams totalling 32 personnel.³⁴ CONTRAMINAS' Security Division (DIVSECOM), which is responsible for supporting DIGEDEHUME with demining operations, has 40 police officers trained in demining.³⁵

In its 2016 extension request, Peru committed to strengthen the capacity of CONTRAMINAS' Humanitarian Demining School, with the aim of increasing its capacity by one-fifth in the second semester of 2017. This was deferred to the second semester of 2018 in Peru's Updated National Plan for Demining for 2018–24.³⁶ There was no change in capacity from 2018 to 2019 but Peru expected to increase the number of non-technical survey personnel in 2020 and focus on further training, through the Humanitarian Demining School, of the existing demining companies in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.³⁷

The joint Ecuador-Peru Binational Humanitarian Demining Unit has been deployed to areas that were at the centre of the conflict between the two nations, but it did not carry out any demining operations in 2019. According to CONTRAMINAS, this is because the Unit's objective was to clear the Tiwinza square kilometre which was completed in 2018.³⁸ In November 2019, according to the "Tumbes Declaration", the presidents of Ecuador and Peru committed to continue their binational cooperation and pledged to allocate the necessary resources to continue demining operations in both countries, but no further details were provided.³⁹

In its revised second Article 5 deadline extension request, Peru announced it would be using both machines and MDDs for demining.⁴⁰ In its updated multi-year plan submitted in May 2018, one of Peru's strategic objectives for 2018–24 included the development, design, and implementation of new humanitarian demining techniques, such as with machines or dogs.⁴¹ In 2019, the United States donated four MDDs to Peru with two dogs used to conduct technical survey during the year. According to CONTRAMINAS, the plan is to also use dogs to identify mined areas and for use during clearance.⁴² As at June 2020, discussions have begun between CONTRAMINAS and the Peruvian Army's Directorate of Research and Development on the possibility of employing drones with hyperthermal cameras that conduct aerial analysis of the decomposition of explosives.⁴³

DEMINER SAFETY

In May 2019, a helicopter transporting personnel during demining operations crashed killing two deminers and injuring a police officer who was also on board.⁴⁴ After the crash the Accident Investigation Board of Army Aviation went to the scene to determine the cause of the accident.⁴⁵

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 137,078m² of mined area was released in 2019, of which 81,948m² was cleared, 26,600m² was reduced through technical survey, and 28,530m² was cancelled through non-technical survey. Peru reported that a total of 1,113 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.

Included in the land release figures is the 800m² which was discovered in 2019 and cleared with a total of 22 anti-personnel mines found and destroyed.⁴⁶

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 55,130m² was released by survey of which 28,530m² was cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 4) and 26,600m² was reduced through technical survey (see Table 5).⁴⁷ This is nearly three times the land released by survey in 2018, when a total of 11,728m² was released in the Tiwinza sector (9,911m² cancelled and 1,817m² reduced).⁴⁸

Table 4: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁴⁹

Sector	Area cancelled (m ²)
Tiwinza	28,530
Total	28,530

Table 5: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁵⁰

Sector	Area reduced (m ²)
Tiwinza	26,600
Total	26,600

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 81,948m² was cleared within the Tiwinza and Cenepa "sectors" (see Table 6), more than five times the 15,576m² cleared in 2018 when only 140 mines were found and destroyed.⁵¹ All clearance was conducted manually by the DIGEDEHUME demining teams.⁵² According to CONTRAMINAS, this increase was due to the location and topography of the mined areas that were cleared in 2019 which were easier to access and clear and made clearance more efficient.⁵³

Peru reported that a total of 1,113 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed during clearance in 2019.⁵⁴ The ratio of clearance by square metre to mine find has improved from 111m² per mine in 2018 to 74m² per mine in 2019.

Table 6: Mine clearance in 2019⁵⁵

Sector	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Tiwinza	4	64,345	270	5
Cenepa	4	17,603	843	2
Totals	8	81,948	1,113	7

AP = Anti-personnel

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 7: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2019	81,948
2018	15,576
2017	*9,246
2016	**18,317
2015	***76,336
Total	201,423

Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the 7-year, 9-month extension granted by States Parties in 2016), Peru is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2024. If Peru's estimate of anti-personnel mine contamination at end of 2019 was accurate (at 369,212m²) then Peru would need to release an average of 92,303m² per year to meet this deadline. Peru's land release output jumped from 27,303m² in 2018 to 137,078m² in 2019, far exceeding the amount it would need to release annually to meet its deadline.

* Covers March 2017 to March 2018

** Covers March 2016 to March 2017

*** Covers March 2015 to March 2016

In its decision on Peru's 2016 extension request, the Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties noted that as Peru was seeking to develop enhanced processes of land release "Peru may find itself in a situation wherein it can proceed with implementation faster than that suggested by the amount of time requested".⁵⁶ Peru outlined three scenarios for the completion of clearance by the 2024 deadline in its Updated National Plan for Demining for 2018–24. This was said to be contingent on an increase in budget, in personnel, and in international support.⁵⁷

Peru reported the same demining capacity from 2018 to 2019, despite a budget decrease. Peru also reported receiving international assistance in 2019 from China, Germany, and the United States who all donated demining equipment including detectors and MDDs.⁵⁸ Italy reported in its statement to the Committee for the Strengthening of Cooperation and Assistance that it had provided support to Peru in a project of technical assistance for demining activities.⁵⁹

Peru should easily be able to complete clearance well before its Article 5 deadline if it uses the full range of land release techniques and efficient, targeted clearance. While there has been a massive increase in clearance and survey output reported in 2019, it is unclear whether it will be sustained going forward.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

CONTRAMINAS reported that after Article 5 completion it, in coordination with the National Centre for Humanitarian Demining (CENDESMI) in Ecuador, will be responsible for managing residual contamination.⁶⁰

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| <p>1 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>2 In Form C of its Article 7 report, Peru estimated contamination at December 2019 as 454,144m² across 119 areas but in Form F it estimated remaining contamination following land release in 2019 as 369,212m² across 108 areas.</p> <p>3 Statement of Peru, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Oslo, 27 November 2019.</p> <p>4 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>5 Ibid., Form I.</p> <p>6 Revised 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, July 2016, pp. 20–21; and Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, May 2018, p. 15.</p> <p>7 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C; and email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, Secretario Técnico Alterno, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>8 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, May 2018, p. 3.</p> <p>9 Supreme Decree No. 113-2002-RE; and Supreme Decree No. 051-2005-RE.</p> <p>10 Directive No. 001/2009/DIGEDEHUME-SINGE; and Directive No. 006.</p> <p>11 Revised 2016 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, July 2016, p. 18.</p> <p>12 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, May 2018, p. 11.</p> <p>13 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020. (Soles 4.5 million at exchange rate of US\$1 = 3.40 PEN).</p> <p>14 Statement of Peru, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Oslo, 27 November 2019.</p> <p>15 Supreme Decree No. 008-2019-MIMP.</p> <p>16 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>17 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, May 2018, p. 8.</p> <p>18 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>19 Decisions on the request submitted by Peru for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, 1 December 2016, para. g.</p> <p>20 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, May 2018, p. 11.</p> <p>21 Ibid.</p> <p>22 Ibid., and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F.</p> <p>23 Decisions on the request submitted by Peru for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, 1 December 2016, para. 15.</p> <p>24 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, p. 15.</p> <p>25 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>26 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>27 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 16 June 2020.</p> <p>28 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>29 Ibid., p. 36; and Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, p. 14.</p> | <p>30 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 16 June 2020.</p> <p>31 Decisions on the request submitted by Peru for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, 1 December 2016, para. d.</p> <p>32 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, pp. 10 and 12.</p> <p>33 Statement of Peru, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.</p> <p>34 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>35 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, pp. 10 and 12.</p> <p>36 Ibid., p. 16.</p> <p>37 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>38 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 16 June 2020.</p> <p>39 Statement of Peru, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.</p> <p>40 Revised Second Article 5 deadline Extension Request, July 2016, pp. 5–6.</p> <p>41 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, pp. 15–16.</p> <p>42 Emails from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020 and 16 June 2020.</p> <p>43 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>44 Ibid., Form J.</p> <p>45 Telesur, "Peru: De-mining Helicopter Crashes Near Ecuador Border, Kills 2", 18 May 2019, at: bit.ly/2XxEJzv.</p> <p>46 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>47 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F.</p> <p>48 Ibid.</p> <p>49 Ibid.</p> <p>50 Ibid.</p> <p>51 Ibid.</p> <p>52 Ibid.</p> <p>53 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 16 June 2020.</p> <p>54 Ibid.</p> <p>55 Ibid; and email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, Secretario Técnico Alterno, CONTRAMINAS, 26 May 2020.</p> <p>56 Decisions on the request submitted by Peru for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, 1 December 2016, para. c.</p> <p>57 Updated National Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2024, p. 13.</p> <p>58 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 16 June 2020.</p> <p>59 Statement of Italy, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 28 November 2019.</p> <p>60 Email from Mario Espinoza Llanos, CONTRAMINAS, 16 June 2020.</p> |
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ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2021
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 1 MARCH 2026



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Humanity and Inclusion (HI, formerly Handicap International), the only international mine action operator in Senegal since 2014, resumed operations in 2019 after an interruption of more than a year due to lack of funding. The action of Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) insurgents in May 2019 briefly detaining members of an HI survey team led to another suspension of activities. For the second successive year, Senegal did not record any mine clearance. In June 2020, Senegal requested a five-year extension to its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Senegal should complete non-technical survey as soon as possible to establish a comprehensive baseline estimate of its remaining mine contamination.
- Senegal should ensure that suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) are recorded on the basis of demonstrable evidence and with specific size estimates and the information made public.
- Senegal should submit its annual Article 7 transparency report each year by the 30 April deadline.
- The Government of Senegal should demonstrate commitment to its APMBC obligations by making national funding and resources available for demining operations.
- Senegal should prioritise technical survey and clearance in readily accessible areas and where the presence of mines is reliably attested.
- The Senegalese National Mine Action Centre (Centre National d'Action Antimines, CNAMS) should continue to improve transparency and to facilitate dialogue on land release between all relevant stakeholders. An in-country platform bringing together the authorities, donors, and key stakeholders could be one mechanism to help strengthen national coordination.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	5	Senegal remains unclear about the extent of its mine contamination 21 years after adhering to the APMBC. While the extent of confirmed mined area is small, minimal progress has been made in the past five years to assess contamination in more than 120 areas.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	3	3	Senegal relies on donor funding to cover the costs of mine clearance operations and its apparent failure to demine mined areas around military installations calls into question its compliance with the APMBC and even the prohibition on use of landmines.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	5	CNAMS reports employing women in senior positions and appointing staff on the basis of qualifications and without regard for gender. HI, the only international operator, also employs women in field operations as well as administrative posts.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	4	CNAMS maintains an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database but has cited shortages of funds as an obstacle to upgrading it. The quality of data in IMSMA is also unclear. Despite the limited extent of operations in 2019, results reported by CNAMS differed from those of HI, the only operator.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	4	3	The work plan CNAMS presented in 2018 aiming to complete clearance of known hazards by Senegal's Article 5 deadline was never implemented and never amended since to meet changing realities. Senegal submitted an Article 5 deadline extension request in 2020 with timelines for survey and clearance but faced major challenges from insecurity and shrinking international financial support.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	4	4	CNAMS introduced national mine action standards in 2009 but has not revised or updated them since 2013.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	3	3	Despite HI's resumption of demining activities in 2019 Senegal did not clear a single square metre or mine in 2019 and reported release of only a little over 11,000m ² through technical survey, ensuring the need to apply for another extension to its Article 5 deadline.
Average Score	3.8	3.9	Overall Programme Performance: VERY POOR

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Commission for the Implementation of the Ottawa Convention
- Senegalese National Mine Action Centre (CNAMS)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Humanity and Inclusion (HI)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Senegal does not have a precise estimate of its mine contamination more than 20 years after becoming a State Party to the APMBC. It reports the presence of mines in four of the country's 45 departments, all of them in the Casamance region, an area of low-level insurgency since the 1980s. Senegal's Article 5 extension request submitted in June 2020 estimated the area of confirmed and suspected mine contamination at 1,593,487m² but the basis for this estimate was unclear.¹ It included 37 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) affecting 491,086m². This was the same number of areas identified a year earlier, with 16 in Goudomp, 10 in Bignona, nine in Oussouye and two in Ziguinchor.² The request also included 118 areas in southern departments that have not yet been surveyed, 101 of them in Bignona department, four areas in Oussouye and 13 in Ziguinchor. It also reported another nine areas whose size is unknown, eight of them in Bignona and one in Goudomp.³ Adding to uncertainty about the extent of contamination, areas such as North Sindian in Bignona department have long been suspected to be mined but insecurity has prevented survey.⁴

Mine contamination in Senegal is the result of more than 40 years of fighting between the armed forces and a non-state armed group, the MFDC. Sporadic fighting with some factions of the MFDC has continued despite a ceasefire in place since 2004. According to Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), there is overwhelming evidence that the laying of landmines by rebel forces was sporadic, while the Senegalese Armed Forces placed hundreds, if not thousands, of mines around military outposts in Casamance.⁵

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The National Commission for the Implementation of the Ottawa Convention, created in 2005, serves as the national mine action authority for Senegal charged with developing a mine action strategy, economic rehabilitation of mine-affected areas and overseeing the work of a national mine action centre. The commission is chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and includes representatives of the President and government ministries. Senegal has said the commission's effectiveness had suffered from high turnover of ministerial representatives resulting in delays in decision-making, and from the absence of rules on decision-making.⁶

Demining operations in Casamance are coordinated by CNAMS, which was set up by decree in 2006. Regional mine action coordination committees have been established in Kolda, Sédhiou, and Ziguinchor departments. CNAMS is responsible for promoting the national mine action programme, mobilising resources, coordinating survey and conducting demining, designing and implementing a victim assistance programme, accrediting demining organisations, and monitoring and evaluating activities.⁷

In June 2018, CNAMS informed States Parties to the APMBC that it needed around €6.5 million to complete clearance, a figure it revised down in October of the same year to close to €5.5 million. It said that the government had earmarked more than €1.8 million for mine action in 2019,⁸ but this was not forthcoming in 2019 and CNAMS said the COVID-19 crisis would make it difficult to obtain government funds in 2020. The government provides approximately US\$500,000 (€457,000) a year to cover salaries in CNAMS, but operations in 2019 depended on donor support. The only external funding available in 2019 was a US State Department grant of US\$450,000 to HI.⁹

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

CNAMS asserts there is no gender discrimination in Senegal's mine action programme and staff are recruited on the basis of competence. CNAMS said its staff of 17 included 6 women of whom 2 were heads of division and 2 were heads of offices. It reported that HI employed four women among its field teams, including three EOD technicians qualified at EOD Levels 1, 2, and 3 respectively, and one paramedic.¹⁰

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

CNAMS operates an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, which was reportedly upgraded in 2015¹¹ but reporting has proved erratic. CNAMS said measures to improve the database were not possible in 2019 due to funding shortages while improvements planned for 2020 had been suspended because of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹²

As at 1 August 2020, Senegal had yet to submit its latest Article 7 report covering 2019.

PLANNING AND TASKING

CNAMS prepared a work plan covering the period from December 2018 to January 2021, which set timelines for clearing Senegal's 37 CHAs and 9 SHAs before it reached its March 2021 Article 5 deadline, as well as for non-technical survey of the 144 areas still to be surveyed.¹³ However, no clearance was conducted in 2018 or 2019.

CNAMS carried over plans for non-technical survey of 144 areas and clearance of CHAs into 2020 but said implementation would depend on the level of available funding and that it would not be able to complete mine clearance by March 2021.¹⁴

The Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in June 2020 included a work plan that called for non-technical survey of all 118 identified SHAs by the end of 2021, proposing survey of 40 in 2020 and 78 in 2021. The work plan did not foresee any clearance in 2020 but aimed to complete clearance of 37 CHAs by the end of 2023, tackling 12 CHAs covering 113,975m² in 2021, 16 CHAs affecting 299,871m² in 2022 and the remaining 9 CHAs covering 77,240m² in 2023. In 2024, Senegal planned to survey nine SHAs and in 2024–25 to clear CHAs identified from the 2020–21 non-technical survey of 118 areas.¹⁵

CNAMS said the work plan was based on the assumption of deploying two demining operators conducting manual and mechanical clearance.¹⁶ It projected total costs for the mine action programme at US\$12.19 million, including US\$7.37 for demining, of which Senegal would fund US\$3.33 million and international donors the remaining US\$8.85 million.¹⁷ At the same time, CNAMS projected the costs of clearing the 37 CHAs planned for 2021–23 at US\$2.45 million and said additional costs would be detailed after completion of survey.¹⁸

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Senegal's national mine action standards were developed in 2009 and revised in 2013 but have not been updated since.¹⁹ According to CNAMS, the 2013 revision included standards for accreditation, technical investigation, minimum mine clearance depth, and the use of machines and mine detection dogs in demining.²⁰

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

CNAMS has a total of fourteen operations staff, including one six-strong manual clearance team, a non-technical survey team of five, and one mechanical team with three people. CNAMS results do not indicate they were active in 2019.²¹

HI has remained the only international demining operator in Senegal since 2014. It suspended operations in October 2017 because of lack of funding.²² With new funding from the United States, operations resumed in 2019 when HI had a total staff of 20: 5 deminers, 3 mechanical operators, and 12 support staff. In 2020, however, HI hired only 10 staff. It reported that US funding would end in 2020, raising uncertainty if this operation would continue.²³

HI deployed a soil preparation and mechanical mine clearance machine, the Digger D-3, before its 2017 suspension of operations.²⁴ HI employed a mechanical team in 2019 but it was not clear if the machine was operational as HI reported not conducting any clearance during the year.²⁵

DEMINER SAFETY

In mid-May 2019, demining operations, which had recently restarted thanks to US funding, were again suspended after members of an MFDC faction abducted a demining team working between Bafata and Bindaba. This occurred despite an agreement having been obtained to operate in that zone, according to CNAMS. As noted above, the deminers were all released the same day.²⁶ The team were released after handing over their equipment.²⁷

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

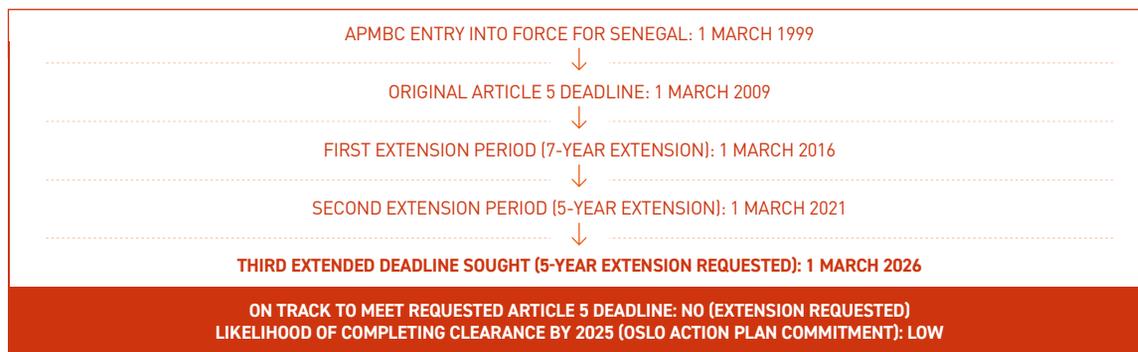
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Land release in Senegal came largely to a standstill in 2018 and 2019 as a result of funding shortages and insecurity. No clearance was conducted in 2019. Despite the very limited range of activity, discrepancies between results reported by CNAMS and HI, the sole operator, obscured the precise extent of what was achieved.

CNAMS reported that HI cancelled two tasks of unknown size through non-technical survey in Saré Lao in 2019 and reduced 11,288m² through technical survey in Doudomp.²⁸ HI said it cancelled 5,500m² in Kolda and reduced an area of 22,138m² in Sédiou.²⁹

HI operated with US funding of US\$450,000 starting in February 2019 but operations halted after the kidnapping of five deminers in May 2019. The CNAMS said the balance of US funds was carried over for non-technical survey in February 2020 but operations were again suspended because of restrictions introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁰

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the five-year extension granted by States Parties in 2015), Senegal is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2021.

Senegal submitted its third extension request on 15 June 2020 asking for five more years until 1 March 2026 but left uncertainty about the likelihood of achieving completion even in this period. CNAMS signalled the likelihood it would need an extension starting with a statement to APMBC States Parties in June 2018.³¹ In October 2018, it drew attention to obstacles to progress including lack of access to certain targeted areas, the withdrawal of traditional mine action partners, and deteriorating demining equipment.³²

Other key concerns include:

- Continuing lack of clarity on remaining contamination. The basis for assessing remaining contamination at 1,593,487m² was unclear given that CHAs accounted for less than one-third of that area, 118 SHAs remain to be surveyed, and a further nine areas whose size is unknown are regarded as suspect. Moreover, concerns have also been raised about its continued failure to clear contaminated areas around military bases which verges on use of anti-personnel mines, a violation of Article 1 of the APMBC. NPA has previously criticised CNAMS for obstructing dialogue between operators and the armed forces in particular, which could provide the specific locations of mined areas.³³ CNAMS claimed in August 2017 that it had already demined around all the military bases, with the help of the army where that was necessary.³⁴ HI has reported that its teams cleared 22,162m² in Boutoute-Djibanar in connection with a former army base in 2015–16, destroying “around” 19 anti-personnel mines.³⁵ However, it is not certain that all other bases have been demined.
- Insecurity. Senegal's long-running insurgency by MFDC rebels continues to deny access to areas targeted for survey and clearance. The Extension Request acknowledges “very precarious security conditions” and that access depends on agreements with the MFDC which can take a long time to negotiate and are not stable.³⁶ Senegal expected that the evolution of peace talks with the MFDC would ensure better security and access but the brief abduction of an HI team and ensuing suspension of operations in 2019 underscored the potential for serious delays in implementing the plans outlined in the Extension Request.
- Senegal is looking to international donors to provide three-quarters of the Extension Request's projected US\$12.19 million costs. National funding, according to the request, would be limited to salaries and administrative costs.³⁷ However, as Senegal prepared to apply for an Article 5 deadline extension the financial outlook for mine action deteriorated as a result of a decision by the United States to end its funding of HI in 2020.³⁸

Table 1: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2019	0
2018	0
2017*	65,400
2016	147,650
2015	0
Total	213,050

*Includes technical survey and clearance

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- 1 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 15 June 2020, p. 53.
 - 2 Email from Ibrahima Seck, Head of Operations and Information Management, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 3 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 15 June 2020, p. 54; email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 4 Email from Faly Keita, Coordinator, Casamance Site, HI, 8 August 2018.
 - 5 CNAMS, "Updated Work plan for Senegal's Article 5 Extension 2016–21", April 2017; and CNAMS, "Updated Work plan for Senegal's Article 5 Extension 2016–2021", 13 October 2017, p. 21.
 - 6 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 15 June 2020, pp. 9, 75.
 - 7 Presentation by CNAMS, "National Stakeholder Dialogue: Towards a Mine-Free Senegal" workshop, Dakar, 29–30 October 2018.
 - 8 Ibid.
 - 9 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 10 Ibid.
 - 11 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 1 September 2016.
 - 12 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 13 Ibid; and Presentation by CNAMS, "National Stakeholder Dialogue: Towards a Mine-Free Senegal" workshop, Dakar, 29–30 October 2018.
 - 14 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 15 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 15 June 2020, pp. 93–98.
 - 16 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 15 June 2020, p. 53.
 - 17 Ibid, p. 60.
 - 18 Ibid., p. 97.
 - 19 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 20 Presentation by CNAMS, "National Stakeholder Dialogue: Towards a Mine-Free Senegal" workshop, Dakar, 29–30 October 2018.
 - 21 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 22 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 26 September 2016.
 - 23 Email from Seydou Gaye, Armed Violence Reduction Specialist, HI, 3 June 2020.
 - 24 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 20 September 2019.
 - 25 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
 - 26 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 20 September 2019.
 - 27 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
 - 28 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 29 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.
 - 30 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 21 May 2020.
 - 31 Statement of Senegal, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 8 June 2018.
 - 32 Presentation by CNAMS, "National Stakeholder Dialogue: Towards a Mine-Free Senegal" workshop, Dakar, 29–30 October 2018.
 - 33 A. Grovestins and A. Oberstadt, "Why landmines keep on killing in Senegal", *IRIN*, 3 August 2015, at: bit.ly/2THyclz.
 - 34 Email from Ibrahima Seck, CNAMS, 18 August 2017.
 - 35 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 19 April 2017.
 - 36 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 15 June 2020, p. 60.
 - 37 Ibid.
 - 38 Email from Seydou Gaye, HI, 3 June 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2023
JUST ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

LIGHT, 1.1 KM²

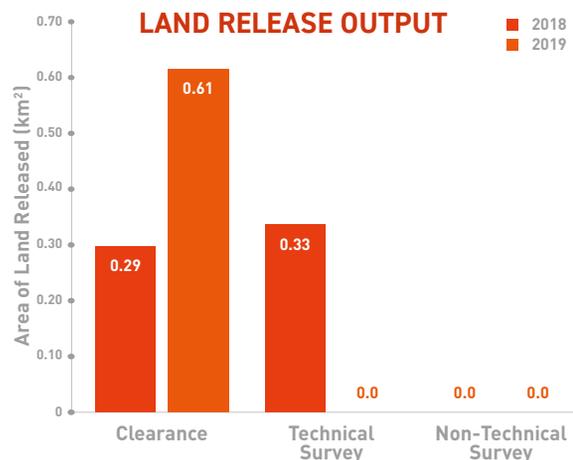
(GOVERNMENT ESTIMATE, EXCLUDING PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN CONTAMINATED AREA DISCOVERED)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0.61 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

22



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **HIGH**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2019, Serbia continued its progress in Article 5 implementation, clearing a total of 0.61km², applying funds secured from two new international donors, Japan and the Republic of Korea. In late 2019, however, previously unrecorded mined area was identified as a result of fires. The Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) planned to survey the area and add the new mined area to the database in 2020, which is expected to increase the remaining mined area to be addressed by Serbia's Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) clearance deadline of 1 March 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Serbia should consider using its armed forces for mine clearance or inviting demining non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to help meet its treaty obligations by fulfilling its Article 5 obligations by 2023.
- SMAC should conduct non-technical and technical survey, rather than full clearance, in instances where survey represents the most efficient means to release part or all of areas suspected or confirmed to contain anti-personnel mines.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	5	Serbia has a relatively good understanding of its baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination, although it records all mined areas as suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), not confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). Serbia should conduct survey for physical evidence of mines and confirm or discredit reported contamination, before conducting full clearance. New, previously unrecorded mined area was revealed in late 2019, during fires.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	7	Serbia has strong national ownership of its mine action programme, which is nationally funded. It increased the amount of national funding towards survey and clearance in 2019 and is actively attracting new donors to help it meet its completion plan. Furthermore, in 2019, a Training Centre was established within SMAC.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	3	SMAC does not have a gender policy in place and does not disaggregate relevant mine action data by sex and age. However, it does ensure women and children, as well as ethnic or minority groups, are consulted during survey and community liaison activities and that there is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in survey and clearance.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	7	Serbia submits accurate and comprehensive annual Article 7 reports on Article 5 progress, which are consistent between reporting periods, and provides regular updates on progress at APMBC meetings. SMAC is exploring the possibility of installing the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA).
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	7	SMAC has a plan in place for completion of Article 5 implementation with planned annual land release output through to its treaty deadline, subject to the availability of sufficient funding. Serbia also produces revised annual work plans based on actual progress.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	6	While SMAC continues to express a preference for full clearance of SHAs and only conducted clearance tasks in 2019, it does remain willing to conduct technical survey where it deems it appropriate.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	7	Serbia released roughly the same amount of mined area in 2019 as in the previous year, but unlike in 2018, land was entirely released through clearance. Serbia has set a 2023 target date for completion of Article 5, but meeting it is largely contingent on securing sufficient funding.
Average Score	6.1	6.0	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior (acts as the national mine action authority)
- Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- PMC Inženjering and Nucleus Team

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- NGOs:
 - In Demining, Pale, BiH, Belgrade branch
 - Stop Mines, Pale, BiH, Belgrade branch

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at end of 2019, six areas in Bujanovac municipality, covering nearly 1.13km², were suspected to contain anti-personnel mines (see Table 1).¹ This is a decrease from the 1.73km² of mined area as at 1 April 2019,² the result of clearance. However, it excludes the previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination that was revealed as a result of fires in Bujanovac municipality in 2019.³

On 2–3 October 2019, in response to a request from local authorities, SMAC visited the villages of Đorđevac, Končulj, Lučane, Ravno Bučje, and Veliki Trnovac where fires had recently occurred and members of the local community had reported hearing explosions in several places, indicating the presence of mines. Representatives of SMAC and Emergency Management Staff of the municipality of Bujanovac visited the sites and interviewed local residents, local authority representatives, and firefighters, as well as police and the military. Mine incident questionnaires were completed in accordance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), and suspected mined areas were marked with signs in both Serbian and Albanian, as the population in this area is multi-ethnic.⁴ The newly discovered contamination is not included in Table 1 above. SMAC plans to conduct survey to determine the size of the newly discovered contamination, once dedicated funding has been secured,⁵ the size of the area is expected to be relatively small based on rough estimates.⁶

Table 1: Anti-personnel mine contamination by village (at end 2019)⁷

Municipality	Village	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Bujanovac	Ravno Bučje	1	390,300
	Končulj	4	707,010
	Dobrosin	1	28,000
Totals		6	1,125,310

Bujanovac is the only municipality in Serbia still affected by mines. According to SMAC, the contamination is from mines of an unknown origin and type which have not been replaced to follow a pattern, and for which no minefield records exist.⁸ According to the national authorities, previous surveys found insufficient evidence for mined areas to be classified as confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), so they remain as suspected hazardous areas (SHAs).⁹ However, the fact that contamination is suspected makes it all the more important that SMAC conducts technical survey to confirm the presence of anti-personnel mines, before conducting full clearance. According to SMAC, the baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination has been established through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men, including, where relevant, from minority groups.¹⁰

Historically, mine contamination in Serbia can be divided into two phases. The first exists as a legacy of the armed conflicts associated with the break-up of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. The second concerned use of mines in 2000–01 in the municipalities of Bujanovac and Preševo by a non-state armed group, the Liberation Army of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medvedja (OVPBM). The contamination remaining in Serbia is a result of this later phase.¹¹ Contamination also exists within Kosovo (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Kosovo for further information).¹²

Serbia is also contaminated with cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), which are either the result of the 1999 bombing, remain from previous conflicts, or are the result of explosions or fire at military depots¹³ (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Serbia for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

According to a Government Decree on Protection against Unexploded Ordnance, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior, acts as the national mine action authority (NMAA).¹⁴ The NMAA is responsible for developing standard operating procedures (SOPs); accrediting demining operators; and supervising the work of SMAC.¹⁵

SMAC was established on 7 March 2002, with a 2004 law making it responsible for coordinating demining; collecting and managing mine action information (including casualty data); and surveying SHAs. It also has a mandate to plan demining projects, conduct quality control (QC) and monitor operations, ensure implementation of international standards, and conduct risk education.¹⁶ As from 1 January 2014, according to a Government Decree on Protection against Unexploded Ordnance, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior, is responsible for accrediting demining operators. Previously, SMAC was responsible for doing so.¹⁷

A new director of SMAC was appointed by the Serbian government in July 2019.¹⁸ There are seven people employed at SMAC; five SMAC employees, plus an Assistant Director for Legal Affairs and Operational Support and an Assistant Director for Economic Affairs, International Cooperation and European Integration.¹⁹

SMAC is fully funded by Serbia, including for survey activities, development of project tasks for demining and clearance of contaminated areas, follow-up on implementation of project tasks, and quality assurance (QA) and QC of demining. Around €160,000 per year is allocated to the work of SMAC from the national state budget.²⁰ In addition, the unexploded ordnance (UXO) disposal work of the Sector for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Interior is also state funded.²¹ Furthermore, in 2019, Serbia also contributed national funding towards the establishment of an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) training centre.²²

Since 2015, Serbia has also been allocating national funds for survey and clearance, with roughly €100,000 allocated per year.²³ In 2018, the Serbian Government allocated double the amount of national funds previously dedicated to demining operations to €200,000 (which were matched with US and Korean funding and tendered through ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF)). Serbia continues to seek additional international funding.²⁴ At the request of the national authorities, national funding was increased to €350,000 for 2019 demining operations²⁵. The same amount had been allocated by the Serbian government for demining operations in 2020,²⁶ but was subsequently reduced by 20% due to the COVID-19 crisis and efforts by the Serbian government to tackle it. Serbia will try to match national funds with donor funds through the ITF.²⁷

In June 2018, during the APMBBC intersessional meetings, Serbia and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance convened an "Individualised Approach Platform" meeting, to hold a frank discussion with relevant stakeholders on the current status of Serbia's national programme, the needs and challenges in completing its Article 5 obligations.²⁸ SMAC reports having a resource mobilisation strategy for Article 5 implementation.²⁹

SMAC also provides expertise in risk education and in training in survey and clearance, pursuant to Article 30 of the Law on Ministries, and in late 2019, the Serbian government approved funds for the establishment of a Training Centre within SMAC. In cooperation with representatives of the Ministry of Education – Institute for the Advancement of Education, SMAC has developed a training programme for educators (instructors) for mine and ERW education, which will be officially verified. Together with experts from the Ministry of Interior, SMAC plans to provide different training modules, including on ERW recognition, international mine action standards, and medical aspects.³⁰

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

SMAC does not have a gender policy in place and does not disaggregate relevant mine action data by sex and age. However, it does ensure women and children are consulted during survey and community liaison activities, and SMAC cooperates closely with the local authorities and other relevant stakeholders in this regard. SMAC also ensures ethnic or minority groups are consulted, which is important, as remaining mined areas are located in the municipality of Bujanovac, which is an area with a multi-ethnic population. SMAC cooperates with Bujanovac municipality officials, including the mayor and deputy mayor, who are from different ethnic groups, and other employees in charge of community liaison activities.³¹

With regards to the new mined area identified as a result of fires in 2019, SMAC plans to conduct a mine risk education (MRE) project and will ensure the MRE team comprises both Serbian and Albanian staff.³²

There is claimed to be equal access to employment for qualified women and men in survey and clearance operations, but country/operator-wide, only 15% of those employed in survey and clearance teams in Serbia are women.³³

At SMAC, 70% of employees are women, of which 65% of managerial/supervisory level positions are held by women.³⁴

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

SMAC uses its own information management system. Following on from initial discussions several years ago, in early 2020, SMAC informally discussed the possibility of the installation of IMSMA with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and planned to intensify discussions in the forthcoming period.³⁵

PLANNING AND TASKING

In its 2018 Article 5 deadline extension request, Serbia included a costed plan for the completion of demining, with clear milestones, for 2018–23.³⁶ In its Article 7 report submitted in 2020 (covering 2019), Serbia set out an updated plan: to release 298,700m² in 2020; 269,280m² in 2021; 390,300m² in 2022; and the remaining 167,030m² in 2023.³⁷ Serbia met its updated work plan target for 2019. However, this excludes the previously unrecorded mined area discovered in 2019, the size of which have not yet been determined.³⁸

Serbia intends to use non-technical survey, technical survey, manual clearance, mechanical demining (where applicable), and mine detection dogs (MDDs, where applicable), to complete clearance in Serbia before its 2023 Article 5 deadline.³⁹ Progress is, however, contingent on funding and Serbia has stated that if it cannot secure international support for demining, its work plan will be directly affected.⁴⁰

The Government of Serbia adopts SMAC's annual work plan.⁴¹ The 2020 work plan adopted by the Serbian government includes plans to address both anti-personnel mine contamination and CMR.⁴²

Serbia prioritises the demining of areas which directly affect the local population, such as those close to settlements where local people have abandoned their houses and stopped cultivating land due to fear of landmines.⁴³ SMAC also noted that donors themselves sometimes also influence the choice of the areas which will be demined first, depending on availability and amount of their funds.⁴⁴

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

According to SMAC, survey and clearance operations in Serbia are conducted in accordance with IMAS.⁴⁵

National mine action standards (NMAS) were said to be in the final phase of development as at September 2015.⁴⁶ In April 2017, SMAC reported that, along with the relevant national authorities, it was in the process of establishing a commission to develop national standards and SOPs to define methods and techniques for demining in Serbia.⁴⁷ However, this process has been hindered due to lack of capacity,⁴⁸ and as at April 2020, the development of the NMAS was still only "in progress".⁴⁹

Under new directorship in late 2015, SMAC reassessed its land release methodology to prioritise full clearance over technical survey of hazardous areas.⁵⁰ This does not correspond to international best practice and is an inefficient use of scarce clearance assets. In February 2016, the then new director of SMAC reported to Mine Action Review that while SMAC supports the use of high quality non-technical survey to identify suspected mined areas, it will fully clear these areas, rather than using technical survey to more accurately identify the boundaries of contamination.⁵¹

As at April 2020, SMAC's position on its preferred land release methodology remained the same under the current Director, but there is a continued willingness to conduct technical survey in a form "adjusted to the context of Serbia", in response to the stated preference of international donors for technical survey above clearance, where appropriate.⁵²

SMAC's primary reluctance to using technical survey as a next step to further delineate confirmed mined area is its lack of confidence that such survey can effectively identify groups of unrecorded mines, not planted in specific patterns.⁵³ According to SMAC, incidents involving people or animals have occurred in most of these suspected areas or else mines have been accidentally detected.⁵⁴ While only clearance was conducted in 2019, the reduction of mined area through technical survey in 2017 and 2018, however, does demonstrate SMAC's greater willingness to adopt more efficient land release practices.

SMAC has reported that the results of the initial survey data are analysed and then further non-technical survey is conducted to assess conditions in the field, and to gather statements by the local population, hunters, foresters, representatives of Civil Protection, and the police, among others. Data on mine incidents is another significant indicator.⁵⁵ Also, in the context of Serbia, there is reportedly limited potential to obtain additional information on the location of mined areas from those who laid the mines during the conflict.⁵⁶

Technical survey is employed "to additionally collect information by technical methods on a suspected area and in case when the data collected by a non-technical survey are not sufficient for suspected areas to be declared hazardous or safe".⁵⁷ Clearance is reported to be conducted in accordance with the IMAS and to a depth of 20cm.⁵⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

SMAC does not itself carry out clearance or employ deminers but does conduct survey of areas suspected to contain mines, CMR, or other ERW. Clearance is conducted by commercial companies and NGOs, which are selected through public tender procedures executed by the ITF, supported by international funding.⁵⁹

The Ministry of Interior issues accreditation to mine action operators that is valid for one year. In 2019, 23 companies/organisations were accredited for demining,⁶⁰ but only two NGOs and two commercial organisations (working together), conducted clearance of mined areas (see Table 2).

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁶¹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**
Stop Mines	2	20	4 dogs and 2 handlers	0
In Demining	3	30	1 dog and 1 handler	0
PMC Inženjering and Nucleus Team	1	10	0	0
Totals	6	60	5 dogs and 3 handlers	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

Table 2 represents a doubling of clearance capacity compared to the previous year, but unlike in 2018, no survey personnel were deployed in 2019, as all the tasks conducted were solely for clearance.

The Serbian Armed Forces maintain a capability to survey, detect, clear, and destroy landmines. This capability includes many types of detection equipment, mechanical clearance assets, disposal expertise, and specialist search and clearance teams.⁶² An EOD department within the Sector for Emergency Management, in the Ministry of Interior, responds to call-outs for individual items of ERW, and is also responsible for demolition of items found by SMAC survey teams.⁶³

Technical survey and clearance in Serbia are primarily conducted manually. MDDs were used in technical survey and clearance operations in 2018 to release land,⁶⁴ but according to the authorities most of the mines are in mountainous areas with challenging terrain and thick vegetation and are not appropriate for the use of MDDs or machinery.⁶⁵ The fact that these areas have not been accessed since the end of the conflict (2001), owing to the suspected presence of mines, means that the land is unmanaged, making it even less accessible.⁶⁶

SMAC uses data obtained by unmanned aerial vehicles to develop and monitor clearance and technical survey projects.⁶⁷

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of more than 0.6km² of mined area was released through clearance in 2019, during which a total of 22 anti-personnel mines were destroyed. No mined area was reduced through technical survey or cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019.⁶⁸

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, no mined area was reduced through technical survey.⁶⁹ This compares to the 329,820m² reduced through technical survey in 2018.⁷⁰ No mined area was cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019⁷¹ or in 2018.

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 606,210m² of mined area was cleared, destroying 22 anti-personnel mines along with 15 items of UXO. The mine clearance, which was carried out in the villages of Končulj and Turija in Bujanovac municipality, was conducted by two NGOs from Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Stop Mines and In Demining) and two commercial companies (see Table 3).⁷² This is a significant increase in clearance output compared to 2018, when 293,200m² was released clearance.⁷³ However, nearly two thirds of the mine clearance conducted in 2019 found no anti-personnel mines, reiterating once again the importance of conducting technical survey prior to full clearance.

Table 3: Mine clearance in 2019⁷⁴

Municipality	Village	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Bujanovac	Končulj	Stop Mines	198,600	20	0
	Končulj	PMC Inženjering and Nucleus Team	18,410	2	0
	Turija	In Demining	389,200	0	15
Totals			606,210	22	15

SMAC did not have available data on the number of mines destroyed by the EOD department within the Sector for Emergency Management during spot tasks in 2019.⁷⁵

Of the three clearance projects, one was funded by the 2019 Serbian State Budget for demining operations and matched through the ITF with the United States and Republic of Korea donations. One project was funded by Japan through the ITF. The final project was mine clearance of the part of power line route in Bujanovac municipality, funded by Joint Stock Company "Elektromreža Srbije" - Transmission System Maintenance Division, Belgrade.⁷⁶

While a total of 15 items of UXO were discovered at a clearance task at Turija village, no mines were found.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the second extension (for four years) granted by States Parties in 2018), Serbia is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2023. Serbia is just on track to meet this deadline, if it can secure and sustain required funding. However, the discovery of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination, revealed as a result of fires in 2019, adds to Serbia's existing Article 5 commitment. SMAC identified this as a potential obstacle to meeting its clearance deadline, along with lack of adequate financial resources and the unpredictability of securing financial resources.⁷⁷

In addition, Serbia reported that the remaining mine contamination is of unrecorded mined areas/groups of mines, with mines having been replaced with no particular pattern, which has complicated survey and clearance efforts.⁷⁸ SMAC also has to simultaneously address areas contaminated with CMR and other unexploded ordnance, which also have a socio-economic impact.⁷⁹

Furthermore, Serbia's claim to continued jurisdiction over Kosovo entails legal responsibility for remaining mined areas under Article 5 of the APMBC.⁸⁰ However, Serbia did not include such areas in either its first or second extension request estimates of remaining contamination or plans for the extension periods.

In the last five years Serbia has cleared a total of over 1.3km² of mined area (see Table 4).

Serbia has fallen well behind the clearance plan it set out in its 2013 Article 5 deadline, and also fell behind on land release output in its subsequently adjusted work plans in 2015, 2016, and 2017, largely due to back of funding.⁸¹

In a positive development, on top of existing US funding, Serbia also secured funding from a new donor, the Republic of Korea, in 2018, and has further secured funding from another new donor, Japan, in 2019.⁸² This enabled Serbia to meet the updated clearance target for 2019, envisaged in its Article 7 report submitted in 2018.⁸³

In its 2018 Article 5 extension request, Serbia estimated that it required €2.5 million to complete release of all remaining mined areas, of which €900,000 was planned to come from national budget and around €1.6 million from the ITF and other sources of international funding.⁸⁴

SMAC has pledged to continue to raise awareness of its need for further funding and will seek funding from state authorities, public enterprises, and local authorities.⁸⁵

Table 4: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	0.61
2018	0.29
2017	*0
2016	0
2015	0.41
Total	1.31

*0.28km² was reduced through technical survey, during which three anti-personnel mines were destroyed.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

SMAC envisages that it will most likely need both national and international capacity to deal with any residual contamination, discovered following completion.⁸⁶ Serbia is already dealing with residual ERW contamination and investing significant funds for ERW clearance, which is expected to be ongoing.⁸⁷

1 Email from Slađana Košutić, Senior Advisor for Planning, International Cooperation and European Integrations, SMAC, 23 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.
 2 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
 3 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
 4 Statement of Serbia on Clearance, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.

5 Ibid.; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
 6 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 18 June 2020.
 7 Ibid.; APMBC Article 7 Report in 2020 (covering 2019), Section 4 and Annex II; and Statement of Serbia on Clearance, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
 8 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7; Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
 9 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.

- 10 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 11 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5; and Article 7 Report (covering 2014), Form C.
- 12 See also in this regard UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).
- 13 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.
- 14 Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 70/13.
- 15 Emails from Darvin Lisica, (then) Regional Programme Manager, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 6 May and 12 June 2016.
- 16 "Law of Alterations and Supplementations of the Law of Ministries", Official Gazette, 84/04, August 2004; interview with Petar Mihajlović and Slađana Košutić, SMAC, Belgrade, 26 April 2010; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 17.
- 17 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 17.
- 18 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 21 SMAC, "Mine situation", accessed 8 May 2019, at: bit.ly/1Nom1V7.
- 22 Interview with Bojan Glamočlija, Director, SMAC, in Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 23 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017; interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.
- 24 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9; Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
- 25 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4; and Statement on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 26 Interview with Bojan Glamočlija, SMAC, in Geneva, 14 February 2020; and Statement on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 27 Ibid.; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 18 June 2020.
- 28 APMB Individualised Approach Meeting, intersessional meetings, Geneva, 7 June 2018; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 28 June 2018.
- 29 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8, 9, 31, and 32.
- 37 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.
- 38 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 39 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 28; 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 28 June 2018; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.
- 40 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020; and Statement on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 41 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 16; email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019; and interview with Bojan Glamočlija, SMAC, in Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 42 Interview with Bojan Glamočlija, SMAC, in Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 43 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
- 44 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 45 SMAC, "Mine Situation, November 2019", accessed 18 February 2020, at: bit.ly/1Nom1V7; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.
- 46 Interview with Branislav Jovanović, SMAC, in Dubrovnik, 10 September 2015.
- 47 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 48 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 49 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 50 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 30.; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 53 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 28 June 2018.
- 54 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C; and Statement on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 55 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form.
- 56 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 57 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 18.
- 60 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form J.
- 63 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and Second APMB Article 5 deadline Extension Request (2018), p. 18.
- 64 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
- 65 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 25 and 30; 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 28 June 2018; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.
- 66 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.
- 67 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
- 68 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
- 71 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
- 74 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4 and Annex III.
- 75 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 76 Statement on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 77 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 78 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4; and Statement on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 79 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020; and Statement on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 80 See also in this regard UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).
- 81 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 26; Preliminary observations of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–20 May 2016; and "Republic of Serbia Updated Detailed Work Plan for the Remaining Period Covered by the Extension", submitted to the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), 3 March 2016; email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017; and Article 7 Report (covering 2016), Form D.
- 82 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
- 83 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form C.
- 84 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 9 and 34.
- 85 Ibid., p. 34; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 28 June 2018.
- 86 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
- 87 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 18 June 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 OCTOBER 2022
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

MEDIUM, 7KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

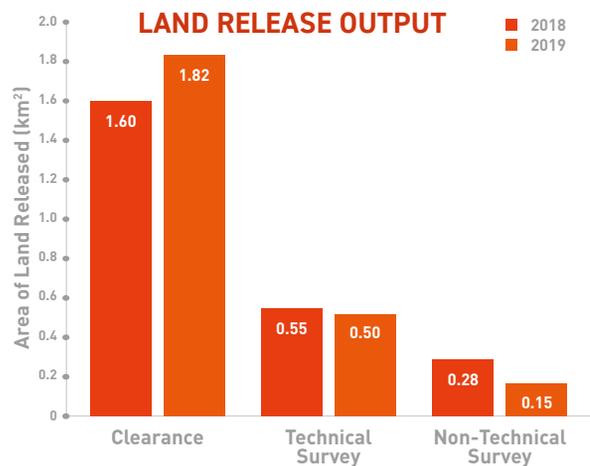
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

1.82KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

274

(INCLUDING 26 DESTROYED
DURING SPOT TASKS)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Somalia is not on track to meet its Article 5 deadline and in 2021 intends to submit an extension request in 2021 for a further five years. Progress in land release in Somalia continues to be slow, particularly if survey and clearance in Somaliland are excluded. The estimate of total contamination decreased by more than 90% in 2019 compared to the previous year. According to SEMA, this new estimate of contamination is because "closed" hazardous areas were removed from the database but they are not confident that this new estimate accurately represents actual contamination, believing that the extent is far greater.

Government mine action processes continue to be delayed, with the Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA) still to be formally recognised, and both the National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 and revised National Technical Standards and Guidelines were also still awaiting approval as of writing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Somalia should establish a national baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination as soon as security conditions allow.
- Somalia should commit resources for mine action operations.
- SEMA's status within the Federal Government of Somalia should be officially recognised and national resources budgeted annually for its operating costs.
- Continued efforts should be undertaken to support SEMA to manage the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. Regular updates from the database should be shared with all implementing partners.
- Somalia should elaborate a new National Mine Action Strategic Plan and associated work plan in line with the forthcoming 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, updating the National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 (that had still to be formally endorsed by the Federal Government as of writing).
- Somalia should develop a mine action resource mobilisation strategy and initiate dialogue with development partners on long-term support.

- SEMA should take greater ownership of tasking and prioritisation with the necessary budget and strategy in place to support this.
- SEMA should strengthen quality management processes and ensure that operators are following the same standard.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	4	There is no baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination in Somalia although SEMA is intending to submit a plan for nationwide survey in 2021. However, this is heavily dependent on securing both funding and access to all potentially affected areas, which is currently very difficult due to ongoing conflict and insecurity. The significantly reduced estimate of contamination as at end of 2019 is claimed by the authorities to be inaccurate and an underestimate.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	4	A new director of SEMA was appointed in 2019 and SEMA continued to receive capacity development support. However, there is a lack of national ownership as the Federal Government of Somalia has still not formally recognised SEMA as a government institution or funded its operations.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	5	Somalia's National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 includes provisions on gender and diversity. SEMA has been positive towards action on gender and diversity, particularly within survey and community liaison teams. However, there are challenges to achieving gender mainstreaming within Somalia as a patriarchal society. Clan affiliation is also an important consideration when considering diversity.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	5	SEMA has assumed full ownership and responsibility for the national mine action database, resulting in reported improvements in information management. However, there are still considerable data inconsistencies in year-to-year reporting and between SEMA and operators. In September 2020, Somalia submitted its Article 7 report covering 2019.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	6	Somalia's National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 was still awaiting final approval as at June 2020. SEMA met with operators in 2019, to discuss setting indicators for planning and prioritisation. Operators reported that while improvements had been made in tasking by SEMA the process would benefit from it taking greater ownership.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	5	A process to revise Somalia's National Technical Standards and Guidelines was due to be completed in 2019 but was still awaiting approval as of writing. The current standards are not deemed to meet the requirements for Somalia. There was a general decrease in demining capacity in 2019 from 2018. In February 2019, the first mine detection dog (MDD) team became operational in Somalia.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	4	4	Somalia is not on track to meet its Article 5 deadline and intends to submit an extension request in 2021 for a further five years. Land release outputs remained limited in 2019, primarily due to ongoing armed conflict, new security threats, and a lack of resources and operational capacity. The vast majority of the demining in 2019 was in Somaliland; only eight anti-personnel mines were found during formal clearance operations in the rest of Somalia.
Average Score	4.6	4.6	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA)
- Mine Action Department in the Somaliland Ministry of Defence (formerly, Somaliland Mine Action Centre)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Federal Member States (FMS) NGO consortium
- National NGOs

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Ukroboronservice

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at the end of 2019, the Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA) reported 125 suspected and confirmed mined areas across Somalia covering an estimated total area of 16.2km² (see Table 1).¹ Operators reported that confirmed hazardous areas (CHA) containing landmines are mainly concentrated along Somalia's border with Ethiopia. Data gathered through historical surveys indicate that most recorded minefields were contaminated with anti-vehicle mines or had very minimal information about the type of contamination.² Anti-personnel mine contamination in Somalia is believed to be low.³

Table 1: Mine contamination (at end 2019)⁴

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
AP mines	29	6,098,846	1	0
AP/AV mines	91	9,999,390	4	121,744
Totals	120	16,098,236	5	121,744

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

Contamination from mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) exists across Somalia's three major regions: south-central Somalia, including the capital Mogadishu; Puntland; and Somaliland, a self-proclaimed, though unrecognised state in the north-west. Mines along the border with Ethiopia, mainly in legacy minefields, also continued to affect civilians in south-central Somalia.⁵ It was estimated, at the end of 2019, 29 CHAs contained anti-personnel mines covering a total area of 6.1km² along with one suspected hazardous area (SHA) of an unknown size in Puntland, see Table 2.⁶ This is a massive reduction from the more than 72.2km² of anti-personnel mine contamination across 72 SHAs/CHAs as at April 2019, which cannot be explained by land release.⁷ According to SEMA, this new estimate of contamination is because "closed" hazardous areas were removed from the database but they believe that the true extent of contamination is far greater. SEMA intends to synchronise the national database with that of operators in order to improve the quality of the database and, as at August 2020, had begun to meet with operators to begin this process.⁸

Table 2: Anti-personnel mine contamination (at end 2019)⁹

State	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total CHA/SHA	Total area (m ²)
Galmudug	18	3,482,660	0	0	18	3,482,660
Hirshabelle	3	381,922	0	0	3	381,922
Puntland	1	0	1	0	2	0
South-West	7	2,234,264	0	0	7	2,234,264
Totals	29	6,098,846	1	0	30	6,098,846

While no comprehensive estimates yet exist of mine contamination in Somalia, surveys completed in 2008 in Bakol, Bay, and Hiraan regions revealed that, of a total of 718 communities, around one in ten was contaminated by mines and/or ERW.¹⁰ Other contaminated areas lie along the border with Ethiopia, in Galguduud and Gedo regions, as well as in Hiraan. Non-technical survey initiated in 2015 identified more than 6km² of mined area.¹¹ However, a baseline of mine contamination is still lacking in Somalia, primarily due to a lack of resources to deploy sufficient survey teams and lack of access to areas due to security concerns and al-Shabaab control.¹²

SEMA is planning to submit an Article 5 deadline extension request in 2021 which will include a plan for nationwide survey to establish a baseline of contamination provided that it can secure the necessary funding.¹³ Lack of safe access is also a major obstacle to the completion of survey. Fighting between clans and the presence of Al-Shabaab restricts mobility and places operators' and security personnel at risk.¹⁴

In Somaliland, The HALO Trust reported that as at July 2020, a total of 20 mixed anti-personnel and anti-vehicle minefields remained to be cleared with a total size of just under 5.8km², most of which are barrier minefields or military base perimeter minefields.¹⁵

In 2019, The HALO Trust continued to deploy survey teams across Somaliland in order to build a more accurate assessment of the remaining contamination. While the general extent of contamination has been established by comprehensive survey that HALO has undertaken over the last 20 years in Somaliland, a combination of low-density minelaying and lack of first-hand survey information means that new contaminated areas are still being found. In 2019, five minefields totalling 163,049m² was discovered and added to the database, all of which was legacy anti-personnel mine contamination.¹⁶

In the Puntland state administration, mine contamination was assessed during Phase 2 of a Landmine Impact Survey (LIS), implemented by the Survey Action Centre (SAC) and the Puntland Mine Action Centre (PMAC) in the regions of Bari, Nugaal, and the northern part of Mudug.¹⁷ Non-technical survey activities continued in Puntland and Galmudug as part of a joint NPA and SEMA project.¹⁸

As a result of the Ethiopian-Somali wars in 1964 and 1977–78 (also known as the Ogaden war), and more than 20 years of internal conflict, Somalia is significantly contaminated with mines and ERW. According to the United Nations (UN), anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines were laid as recently as 2012 in the disputed regions of Sool and Sanaag.¹⁹ According to SEMA, Somalia has seen an increase in the use of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and mines of an improvised nature in recent years. The extent of the threat is not well known, and SEMA will begin recording this information in 2020.²⁰

EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND CLUSTER MUNITION REMNANTS

Somalia also has a significant amount of contamination from ERW, including what is thought to be very limited contamination from cluster munition remnants (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Somalia for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Mine action management in Somalia is the responsibility of SEMA with a separate regional office in Somaliland, the Mine Action Department within the Somaliland Ministry of Defence (formerly, the Mine Clearance Information and Coordination Authority (MCICA), and before that the Somaliland Mine Action Centre, SMAC) in Somaliland.²¹

SEMA maintains a presence across Somalia through its five Federal Member States (FMS): the Puntland State Office, Galmudug State Office, Hirshabelle State Office, South West State Office, and Jubaland State Office.²² Under each of the five states is an independent consortium of national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) implementing mine action activities.

SEMA was established in 2013 as the mine action centre for Somalia, replacing the Somalia National Mine Action Authority (SNMAA) created two years earlier.²³ SEMA's aim was to assume full responsibility for all explosive hazard coordination, regulation, and management by December 2015.²⁴ However, SEMA's legislative framework was not approved by the Federal Parliament in 2016 as expected, and progress was further stalled by elections in February 2017 that resulted in a period of government paralysis.²⁵ Due to this lack of parliamentary approval, SEMA has not received funding from the Federal Government of Somalia since the expiry of its grant in 2015.²⁶ Salaries at SEMA have been covered by NPA from 2015 onwards and NPA has committed to do so until SEMA is granted parliamentary approval, pending available funding in 2021–22.²⁷ The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) supported SEMA state offices with operational incentives from January to March 2020.²⁸ As at August 2020, a UNDP project to support SEMA with capacity development, project implementation, and salaries was under discussion.²⁹

In May 2020, SEMA informed Mine Action Review that while all the required documentation was in place, including from the Attorney General, SEMA's legislative framework had still not been approved by parliament. SEMA reported that due to the financial crisis in Somalia, the Federal Government of Somalia was not able to provide financial support to SEMA during 2019. However, the government has stated that it intends to provide funding to SEMA in the future, although it is unclear when this will happen.³⁰

A new director of SEMA was appointed towards the end of 2019, the third in as many years, although outside of this position staff turnover within SEMA is relatively low. NPA expressed concern about the lack of commitment from the Federal Government of Somalia to mine action and the impact that it may have on fundraising efforts by operators if no serious efforts are being made by the Somali government towards official approval or financial support of SEMA.³¹

In July 2018, the SEMA central office at the Ministry of Internal Security in Mogadishu was attacked and significantly damaged, some of its staff injured, and much of SEMA's office materials, including computers and documents, were destroyed.³² UNMAS provided support to SEMA in the reconstruction of a solid-walled office and, as at March 2020, reported that this was completed and occupied by SEMA personnel. UNMAS has also provided office furniture and IT equipment for SEMA's central and regional offices and supports SEMA's participation at the UN Meeting of Mine Action National Directors (NDM-UN).³³

In 2019, as part of the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID)-funded consortium project with The HALO Trust, who provide technical training and support with quality assurance (QA) to SEMA, NPA continued its capacity development work with SEMA. In 2019, key activities included supporting information management and operational planning, providing QA and quality control (QC) training, support in donor liaison and treaty meetings, support for quarterly coordination meetings and workshops, and providing training in financial, administrative and logistical procedures. In addition to SEMA capacity development support, NPA also trained the non-technical survey, explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and community liaison capacity of the local SEMA implementing partners in Puntland and Galmudug.³⁴

NPA and the HALO Trust reported that increased support from SEMA would be valuable to facilitate the importation of equipment and for tax exemptions, in an effort to further improve the enabling environment around mine action activities.³⁵

SEMA began conducting quarterly meetings with all mine action implementing partners in 2018, with a focus on monitoring of operations. Operators considered this a major step forward towards improving the cooperation, consultation, and coordination between SEMA and the clearance operators within Somalia.³⁶

PUNTLAND

The SEMA Puntland State Office, formerly known as PMAC, was established in Garowe with UN Development Programme (UNDP) support in 1999. Since then, on behalf of the regional government, the Puntland State Office has coordinated mine action with local and international partners, throughout 2019 the implementing partners were NPA and the Puntland Risk Solution Consortium.³⁷ It runs the only police explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team in Puntland, which is responsible for collecting and destroying explosive ordnance.³⁸

SOMALILAND

As part of a larger process of government reform in early 2018, the SMAC, which was responsible for coordinating and managing demining in Somaliland since 1997, was restructured and renamed the MCICA, and underwent a change of line ministry from the Office of the Vice President to the Ministry of Defence.³⁹ It was renamed the Mine Action Department in January 2019.⁴⁰ The HALO Trust reported that within Somaliland it is involved in key decision-making processes by the national authorities; and that there is an enabling environment for mine action as international staff can easily obtain visas, memorandums of understanding can be drawn up with line ministries, and there are favourable tax regulations in place (as for international NGOs in other sectors). The HALO Trust established a committee for “Explosives Hazards Management” within the government to collectively discuss progress, challenges and support for Article 5 implementation in Somaliland.⁴¹

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Somalia’s National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 recognises gender and diversity as cross-cutting issues for the national mine action programme, in line with Somalia’s National Development Plan objectives to “implement gender equality in education and mainstream gender in all of its programmes with a focus on adolescent girls”. The National Mine Action Strategic Plan stipulates that the mine action programme must reflect gender objectives and ensure the specific needs of women, girls, boys, and men are taken into account, including through delivery of gender-equality programming and adoption of a gender-sensitive approach by consortia and implementing partners. The Plan also recognises the importance of conducting context analyses in areas of mine action operations to clarify important gender and diversity issues, such as clan affiliation, movement patterns of local populations, and barriers to participation for different gender and age groups.⁴² SEMA reported that gender and diversity have also been integrated into the national mine action standards.⁴³

In May 2019, SEMA informed Mine Action Review that it does not have an internal gender or diversity policy or implementation plan. It acknowledged that this was “unfortunate”, and pledged that it would strive for gender balance in the future, by ensuring equal employment opportunities for qualified men and women.⁴⁴

SEMA also reported that within the federal state national mine action NGO consortia, there was a large focus on gender in survey and community liaison teams to ensure the inclusive participation of all affected groups, including women and children.⁴⁵ Operators are working towards gender-balanced survey and clearance teams. This is a challenge in Somalia as a traditionally patriarchal society where women are not usually encouraged to engage in physical work or to take up leadership roles.⁴⁶ SEMA confirmed that data collection was disaggregated by sex and age, and gender taken into account in the prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance activities,⁴⁷ although it is unclear how it gender is being taken into account.

All operators confirmed that clan affiliation was also an important consideration when recruiting and deploying operational staff. It is important that the hiring process includes people from across the different clan and ethnic groups to ensure diversity and that there is sensitivity to this when teams are deployed.⁴⁸ Employing more women typically enables operators to access all strata of Somali society to gain information and take into account the views of all relevant groups.⁴⁹ In Somaliland, 35% of the population are nomadic pastoralists, with many transiting between Somaliland and Ethiopia. HALO in Somaliland ensures that it employs survey staff from both a rural and urban background, and from various regions in Somaliland, to ensure that there is a strong understanding of all sections of Somaliland society.⁵⁰

In 2019, NPA’s non-technical survey/community liaison/explosive ordnance risk education teams were said to be gender balanced as was senior management. However, no women were working in the clearance teams, apart from medics.⁵¹ In total, 25% of HALO Trust’s workforce were women in 2019 and 18% of its operational personnel were women. In Somalia, 40% of women employed by the HALO Trust are in operational roles, while in Somaliland it is 47%. Women also occupy several managerial roles in both Somalia and Somaliland. In 2019, eight of the twenty new deminers hired by HALO were women.⁵² UNMAS have been hiring local people on short-term contracts to assist clearance teams which has enabled a larger number of women to be hired and has brought the average overall female participation in mine action up to 25%. Women also constituted 27% of leadership (managerial/supervisory) positions in the UNMAS Somalia programme.⁵³

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

In 2017, ownership of the national IMSMA database was fully transferred from UNMAS to SEMA, with support and capacity-building from NPA.⁵⁴ NPA reported that IMSMA operators within SEMA were carrying out data verification and entry.⁵⁵ In 2019, with support from NPA, SEMA staff received training on IMSMA and Geographic Information Systems (GIS); SEMA updated the data collection forms and ensured they were in line with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS); SEMA continued IMSMA data standardisation and clean-up activities; SEMA updated Somalia's country structure in IMSMA; and developed a national standard on information management.⁵⁶ NPA reported that in 2019, reporting between operators and SEMA improved.⁵⁷ According to UNMAS, however, SEMA's database is neither up to date nor accurate.⁵⁸ There were large discrepancies between the land release data for 2019 reported to Mine Action Review by SEMA and by operators. As at August 2020, SEMA was continuing to meet with operators to discuss synchronising operator data with the national database.⁵⁹

The Mine Action Department, the mine action authority in Somaliland, manages a separate IMSMA database. The HALO Trust stated that its data undergoes monthly quality assurance being reported to MCICA, which uploads it onto the central database. In Somaliland, HALO creates its own data collection forms, which it says ensure accurate collection of data by its survey teams.⁶⁰

In July 2018, SEMA submitted its first APMBC Article 7 transparency report for several years covering calendar year 2017, reflecting improvements in its information management and reporting capacity and greater transparency and efforts to engage with the APMBC community. However, subsequent reporting has been of poor quality, lacking basic details on the size of and progress to address remaining contamination, and with considerable inconsistencies in year-to-year reporting. In September 2020, Somalia submitted its Article 7 report covering 2019, however, there were some data discrepancies between national authority and operator data.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Somalia's National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020, developed with input from SEMA, UNMAS, international operators, national NGO consortia, and international institutions in late 2017.⁶¹ As at May 2020, with the strategic plan about to expire, it was still awaiting final approval by the Somali Minister of Internal Security.⁶²

The plan focuses on setting “achievable” goals over the three-year period. The strategy's five goals, identified by SEMA, are as follows:

- To enhance SEMA's ability to lead and enable effective and efficient mine action
- To develop the Somali mine action consortia into a wholly national mine action capacity
- To engage with stakeholders in order to understand, and better respond to, their mine action needs
- To achieve a mine-impact-free Somalia
- To comply with treaties binding Somalia on mines and other explosive threats.

In February 2018, an updated second “phase” of the five-year “Badbaado Plan for Multi-Year Explosive Hazard Management for 2018–2022”, first developed in 2015 by SEMA, UNMAS, and the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), was officially launched in Geneva. It claimed to be a plan to “make Somalia mine free by 2022”, but it is not realistic, without detail as to the amount of contamination remaining or targets for completion.⁶³ According to UNMAS, the Badbaado plan lacked consultation with other stakeholders and will be usurped by Somalia's strategic plan once it has been approved.⁶⁴

SEMA was developing a mine action work plan for 2020, in cooperation with the SEMA state offices, and operators, but it is not yet finished. NPA is planning to support SEMA with an implementation plan for 2021.⁶⁵

In Somaliland, The HALO Trust reported that the strategic mine action plan was yet to be in place in 2019, though they continue capacity development with the mine action department. According to The HALO Trust there is a lack of political will to conclude a strategic plan or handle residual risk.⁶⁶

SEMA, with technical and capacity development support from NPA, held a meeting in 2019 to set indicators for the planning and prioritisation of mine action activities which will be used as a guide for future planning and prioritisation.⁶⁷ In Somaliland, anti-personnel mined areas are prioritised by HALO according to a criteria of humanitarian need, e.g. number of accidents, patterns of land use, and socio-economic data.⁶⁸

The HALO Trust reported an improvement in tasking in Somalia since the new Director of SEMA was appointed with the Authority becoming much more responsive to requests.⁶⁹ This remains an area needing further strengthening, however. UNMAS, through its implementing partner Ukroboronservice, continued to carry out mine action activities in support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)'s security priorities in 2019; these activities were not tasked by SEMA, although UNMAS report that since March 2020 they have been receiving tasking orders from SEMA.⁷⁰ In Somaliland, The HALO Trust manage its own tasking and prioritisation.⁷¹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

There is no national mine action legislation in Somalia. UNMAS developed National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs) for Somalia in 2012–13.⁷² However, according to The HALO Trust, since their introduction there have not been updated and do not accurately reflect the clearance standards required for Somalia. They allow for methodologies such as detector-assisted prodding, which should be critically reviewed as it has resulted in missed mines in Somalia.⁷³ SEMA conducted a review of the NTSGs in 2019 with technical support from NPA and in compliance with IMAS. There were no revisions or updates made to the NTSGs in 2019. As at May 2020, the NTSGs were awaiting approval from the Ministry of Internal Security.⁷⁴

The HALO Trust reported that SEMA still lacked capacity and technical training to perform QA checks in 2018, and that consequently it carried out internal QA.⁷⁵ In 2019, NPA provided QA and QC training to SEMA staff but according to HALO there is a lack of clarity around QA processes and not all operators are following the same standards.⁷⁶

In Somaliland, The HALO Trust confirmed that the Mine Action Department continued to conduct a limited number of formal QA reviews in 2019, with support from HALO.⁷⁷

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2019, two international NGOs conducted clearance operations in Somalia and Somaliland, The HALO Trust and NPA, along with UNMAS-contracted commercial clearance company, Ukroboronservice.⁷⁸

Table 3: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁷⁹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	Comments
Ukroboronservice (UNMAS)	4 MTTs 6 MDTs	61	0	0	Increase from 2 MTTs and 4 MDTs in 2018
HALO Somalia	4	38	0	0	HALO Somalia only conducted BAC in 2019
HALO Somaliland	34	259	0	2	Decrease from 2018
NPA	1	6	2 dogs, 2 handlers	0	MDD team deployed in February
Totals	49	364	2/2	2	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.
BAC = Battle area clearance MTT= Mobile multi-tasking team MDT= Manual demining team.

UNMAS, through its implementing partner Ukroboronservice, deployed four mobile multi-tasking teams (MTTs) and six manual demining teams (MDTs) which are trained to carry out non-technical survey, manual demining, and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD). In addition, 16 community liaison officers conduct non-technical survey. Operational capacity increased from 2018 to 2019 with the aim of improving efficiency, speed of clearance progress, and increasing geographical coverage, as well as reducing response time in the event of call-outs. In 2020, if funding from the European Union (EU) is approved, capacity may increase.⁸⁰

In 2019, there was a decrease in anti-personnel mine survey or clearance personnel deployed by The HALO Trust in Somalia as only battle area clearance (BAC) was conducted. In addition, HALO deployed eight non-technical survey teams totalling 20 personnel in Somalia, and two teams totalling eight personnel in Somaliland. The HALO Trust expected to recruit an additional eight non-technical survey and clearance/technical survey teams in 2020. No changes in capacity were expected in Somaliland in 2020. In 2019, the HALO Trust conducted tests on the application of thermite torches in Somalia and hosted a preliminary trial of Nuclear Quadrupole Resonance (NQR) technology for explosive detection in Somaliland.⁸¹

NPA continued mine clearance throughout the year within the disputed area between Somaliland and Puntland, with two manual mine clearance teams and one survey/risk education team. It is the only international operator accepted to work in the disputed area by the different local clans.⁸² However, NPA terminated its operations in the disputed area at the end of November 2019 and closed its office at the end of January 2020.⁸³ It was determined that the remaining areas of contamination within this disputed area were all of low socio-economic impact and therefore suitable for clearance by the residual Somaliland national capacity which is currently being developed.⁸⁴ In 2020, NPA was working in Galmudug and Puntland conducting survey and clearance and capacity building, entering into partnerships with each of the local NGO consortia.⁸⁵ In February 2019, NPA deployed the first mine detection dog (MDD) team in Somalia. In addition to its clearance capacity NPA also has three non-technical survey teams totalling six personnel and two technical survey teams totalling twelve personnel. There was 50% reduction in non-technical survey and technical survey capacity during the first half of 2020, with capacity then increasing back to 2019 levels by the middle of the year.⁸⁶

DEMINER SAFETY

In 2019, one HALO Somaliland staff member sustained a minor injury in an accident during clearance. The accident involved the unintended initiation of a Pakistani P4 Mk1 anti-personnel mine. The accident was investigated internally by The HALO Trust.⁸⁷

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Nearly 2.47km² of anti-personnel mined area was released in total across Somalia and Somaliland in 2019: just over 1.82km² through mine clearance and close to 0.50km² reduced through technical survey, and 0.15km² by cancellation through non-technical survey. A total of 248 anti-personnel mines and 132 anti-vehicle mines were destroyed as a result. Of this, 0.23km² was cleared in Puntland by NPA but only two anti-vehicle mines were found and no anti-personnel mines. A further 26 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in spot tasks.

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 0.65km² was released through survey: 0.15km² was cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 4) and close to 0.50km² was reduced through technical survey (see Table 5). Only 0.005km² was cancelled through non-technical survey in Somalia; the rest of the mined area released through non-technical survey, 0.15km², was in Somaliland. This was also the case with technical survey with 0.49km² reduced in Somaliland and 0.01km² reduced in Puntland.⁸⁸ This a reduction from 2018 figures when nearly 0.28km² was cancelled through non-technical survey and a further 0.55km² was reduced through technical survey.⁸⁹

Table 4: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁹⁰

Province	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Gedo	Ukroboronservice (UNMAS)	5,000
Toghdeer (Somaliland)	HALO Trust	107,064
Maroodi Jeex (Somaliland)	HALO Trust	38,853
Total		150,917

Table 5: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁹¹

Province	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Toghdeer (Somaliland)	HALO Trust	325,176
Somaliland	NPA	160,013
Puntland	NPA	10,109
Total		495,298

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 1.82km² of anti-personnel mined area was cleared with the destruction of 248 anti-personnel mines and 132 anti-vehicle mines (see Table 6). Of the total clearance, 0.23km² was cleared in Puntland by NPA but only two anti-vehicle mines were found and no anti-personnel mines. The vast majority, 1.47km², was cleared in Somaliland.⁹² This is an increase from overall clearance of just under 1.6km² in 2018, again the majority of which occurred in Somaliland at just under 1.49km².⁹³

Table 6: Mine clearance in 2019⁹⁴

Province	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Gedo	Ukroboronservice (UNMAS)	120,000	6	2
Hiran	Ukroboronservice (UNMAS)	0	0	3
Bakol	Ukroboronservice (UNMAS)	0	0	1
Awdal (Somaliland)	HALO Trust	136,811	33	0
Maroodi Jeex (Somaliland)	HALO Trust	217,846	35	0
Toghdeer (Somaliland)	HALO Trust	923,434	170	8
Somaliland	NPA	191,638	2	1
Puntland	NPA	231,611	0	2
Galmudug	NPA	0	2	115
Totals		1,821,340	248	132

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

In addition, two anti-personnel mines were destroyed during EOD spot tasks by UNMAS and The HALO Trust in Somalia in 2019.⁹⁵ In Somaliland, the HALO Trust destroyed 24 anti-personnel mines during EOD spot tasks.⁹⁶

The UNMAS-contracted operator, Ukroboronservice, cleared 19 mined areas in 2019 that proved to contain no anti-personnel mines.⁹⁷ NPA cleared 29 mined areas which contained anti-vehicle mines not anti-personnel mines.⁹⁸ NPA cleared nearly 0.2km² in Somaliland with just two anti-personnel mines found and destroyed. The reason for the low number of mines recovered was the majority of mines in the contaminated had been already been harvested by the local population prior to clearance.⁹⁹ The HALO Trust only conducted land release in Somaliland and one area was cleared in 2019 which proved to contain no anti-personnel mines.¹⁰⁰

Ukroboronservice cleared more mined area for UNMAS in 2019 compared to 2018 but not anti-personnel mined area.¹⁰¹ Worsening insecurity meant that the HALO Trust was unable to conduct mine clearance and switched to BAC in 2019. In Somaliland, there was no significant change in output from 2018 to 2019. For NPA, both technical survey and clearance outputs rose due to the workforce becoming more experienced and efficient.¹⁰²

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR SOMALIA: 1 OCTOBER 2012
↓
ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 OCTOBER 2022
ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: NO LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): LOW

Table 7: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	1.82
2018	1.60
2017	0.89
2016	1.14
2015	1.64
Total	7.09

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Somalia is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 October 2022. It is not on track to meet this deadline. In 2021, Somalia plans to submit a request to extend its Article 5 deadline by five years.¹⁰³ In this request Somalia intends to include plans for a nationwide survey of baseline anti-personnel mine contamination. However, this is dependent both on Somalia securing the requisite funding and also access.¹⁰⁴ The security situation remains a major obstacle to survey and clearance operations in Somalia.¹⁰⁵ A further impediment is that SEMA is still to be officially recognised by the Federal Government of Somalia as the national mine action centre.¹⁰⁶

Overall land release rose in 2019 compared to the previous year, and included increased clearance output. However, the vast majority of land release took place in Somaliland and only ten anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed in 2019 in the rest of Somalia, two of which occurred during spot EOD tasks, over an area of 0.35km².

As reported by the HALO Trust, there are two main types of security threat that operators face: clan wars and al-Shabaab. Conflicts between clans can put survey and clearance personnel at risk as the operators' staff can be killed for revenge by rival clan members. The group restricts the mobility of goods and people throughout the region which impacts operational efficiency and increases the cost of transporting personnel and equipment as road access is not possible so everything must be airlifted. The impact of COVID-19 has increased this threat as all flights have been grounded which makes this more difficult and riskier.¹⁰⁷

In Somaliland, the security situation remained relatively stable throughout 2019. The eastern areas of Sanaag and Sool continue to see occasional outbreaks of violence as a result of clan clashes and disagreements between the Somaliland and Puntland administrations but no clearance operations were planned in those eastern areas.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

According to NPA, Somalia's new national mine action strategy will include provisions for addressing previously unknown areas with capacity in place to conduct survey and clearance as necessary.¹⁰⁸ Somalia is planning to introduce state level consortiums of local NGOs who will be tasked with dealing with residual contamination.¹⁰⁹

- 1 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, National Director General, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 2 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, Head of Programme Management Office, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; and Claus Nielsen, Country Director, NPA, 23 July 2020.
- 3 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; and from Lawrie Clapton, Country Director, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 4 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 5 UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015-2019", undated, pp. 6 and 12.
- 6 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 7 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form J.
- 8 Interview with Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 19 August 2020.
- 9 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020. Somalia submitted its Article 7 report (covering 2019) in September 2020 and there were some minor differences in the contamination figures (no. of CHAs is 18 and total area of CHAs was 6,098,836m²; no. of SHAs is 11 and total area of SHAs was 10.4m²), but the overall estimate of contamination and total number of CHAs/SHAs were the same.
- 10 UNMAS, "Annual Report 2011", New York, August 2012, p. 68.
- 11 Email from Tom Griffiths, Regional Director North Africa, HALO Trust, 25 May 2016.
- 12 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 May 2019; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 13 Statement by Somalia on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; and email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 14 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; and from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 15 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 10 July 2020.
- 16 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 17 Email from Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, Director, SEMA, 14 October 2016; and SAC, "Landmine Impact Survey, Phase 2: Bari, Nugaal and Northern Mudug Regions", 2005, p. 5. Phase 1 and Phase 3 of the LIS covered regions of Somaliland in 2003 and 2007, respectively.
- 18 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 19 UNMAS, "Annual Report 2012", New York, 2013, p. 21. Sovereignty over these territories is claimed by both the self-declared independent Republic of Somaliland and Puntland.

- 20 Emails from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020; and from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 21 Email from Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 October 2016; and interview with Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 19 August 2020.
- 22 Email from Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 October 2016.
- 23 Interview with Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, in Geneva, 9 April 2014; and email from Kjell Ivar Breili, UNMAS, 12 July 2015.
- 24 Response to questionnaire by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.
- 25 Emails from Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016; and Hilde Jørgensen, NPA, 3 May 2017.
- 26 Emails from Terje Eldøen, Programme Manager, NPA, 22 October 2016; and Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 October 2016.
- 27 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 23 July 2020.
- 28 Email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 3 August 2020.
- 29 Interview with Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 19 August 2020.
- 30 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 31 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 32 Email from Chris Pym, HALO Trust, 9 May 2019.
- 33 Email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020.
- 34 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020; and from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Emails from Chris Pym, HALO Trust, 9 May 2019; and Claus Nielsen, NPA, 13 April 2019.
- 37 UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015–2019", p. 9; and email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 23 July 2020.
- 38 Response to questionnaire by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.
- 39 Email from Chris Pym, HALO Trust, 9 May 2019.
- 40 Email from Chris Pym, HALO Trust, 2 June 2019.
- 41 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 42 SEMA, "Somalia National Strategic Plan, 2019", pp. 21–22.
- 43 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 44 Email from Abdulkadir Ibrahim Mohamed Hoshow, SEMA, 9 May 2019.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 47 Email from Abdulkadir Ibrahim Mohamed Hoshow, SEMA, 9 May 2019.
- 48 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 49 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 52 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 53 Email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020.
- 54 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 22 March 2018.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 57 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 58 Interview with Qurat-al-Ain, Head of UNMAS Somalia Programme, UNMAS, in Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 59 Interview with Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 19 August 2020.
- 60 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 61 Emails from Abdulkadir Ibrahim Mohamed Hoshow, SEMA, 9 May 2019; and Claus Nielsen, NPA, 13 April 2019.
- 62 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 63 SEMA, "Badbaado Phase II: Meeting the Obligations of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty 2018–2022.
- 64 Interview with Qurat-al-Ain, UNMAS, Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 65 Skype interview with Claus Nielsen, NPA, 10 February 2020.
- 66 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 10 July 2020.
- 67 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 68 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Skype interview with Claus Nielsen, NPA, 10 February 2020; and email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 3 August 2020.
- 71 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 72 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 5 June 2016; and response to questionnaire by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.
- 73 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 74 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 75 Email from Chris Pym, HALO Trust, 9 May 2019.
- 76 Emails from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 77 Email from Chris Loughran, on behalf of Jane Strangways, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 3 September 2020.
- 78 DDG and MAG continued to operate in Somalia and Somaliland in 2019, but did not carry out demining.
- 79 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 80 Email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020.
- 81 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 82 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 13 April 2019.
- 83 Skype interview with Claus Nielsen, NPA, 10 February 2020.
- 84 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 13 July 2020.
- 85 Skype interview with Claus Nielsen, NPA, 10 February 2020.
- 86 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 87 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 88 Emails from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 89 Emails from Chris Pym, HALO Trust, 9 May 2019; and Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 May 2019.
- 90 Emails from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020; Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020; and Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020. SEMA did not report any non-technical survey output for the HALO Trust, UNMAS did not report any non-technical survey output.
- 91 Emails from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020; and Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020; SEMA did not report any technical survey output.
- 92 Emails from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020; Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020; Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; and Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 93 Emails from Chris Pym, HALO Trust, 9 May 2019; and Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 May 2019.
- 94 Emails from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020; Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020; Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; and Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020. [There was 231,611m² of anti-vehicle mined area cleared in Puntland but no anti-personnel mines were found. UNMAS reported that they did not conduct any clearance of anti-personnel mines in 2019 but did release 2.6km² of anti-vehicle mined area with two AV mines found and destroyed; SEMA did not report any clearance from HALO Trust and NPA.]
- 95 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 96 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 97 Email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020.
- 98 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 99 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 13 July 2020.
- 100 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 101 Email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020.
- 102 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 103 Statement by Somalia on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; and email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 104 Statement by Somalia on Article 5 implementation, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; and email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 105 Email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 106 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.
- 107 Email from Lawrie Clapton, HALO Trust, 14 June 2020.
- 108 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020.
- 109 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.

SOUTH SUDAN



CLEARING THE MINES 2020

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 9 JULY 2021
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 9 JULY 2026

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

MEDIUM, 5 km²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

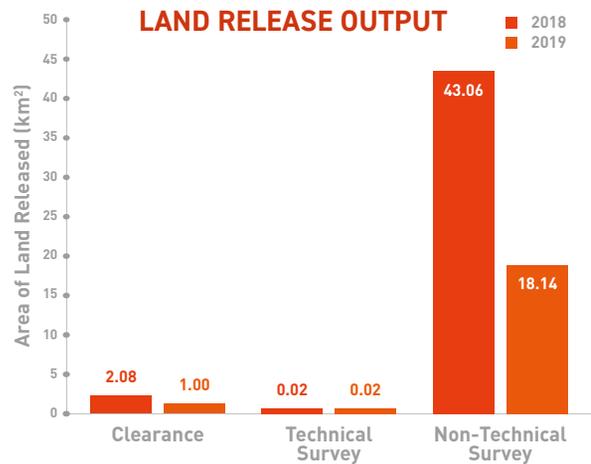
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

1 km²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

437

(INCLUDING 32 DESTROYED
DURING SPOT TASKS)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

South Sudan has determined it will not meet its July 2021 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 clearance deadline and has requested an additional extension for a period of five years. South Sudan has its most accurate estimate of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination to date following revision of the database and large-scale re-survey, which combined to reduce the estimate by 85% over two years. However, clearance of anti-personnel mined area halved in 2019 compared to 2018 and the challenges around the security situation, while improved, still remain. South Sudan intends to clear all types of contamination within the period of the extension requested, an undoubtedly optimistic target and one that is dependent on peace being sustained.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- South Sudan should increase its financial support for mine action operations as well as to the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA).
- South Sudan should elaborate the steps that it is taking to mainstream gender across its mine action programme and what plans it is putting in place to ensure that diverse needs are taken into account during the period of the extension request.
- South Sudan should report periodically during the extension request period on its progress in establishing a sustainable and long-term national capacity (for both demining and information management) to deal with residual contamination.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	8	7	South Sudan continues to improve its understanding of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination through re-survey and database review. Estimated at the end of 2019 at just over 12km ² , this is down from nearly 80km ² in 2017. Further re-survey is planned to confirm the true size of the last remaining inflated suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) although access is dependent on the security situation.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	4	The National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) continued to face serious financial and technical limitations preventing it from managing mine action operations effectively in 2019, with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) assuming that function. Capacity development of the NMAA was ongoing in 2019 and 2020. In 2019, South Sudan received sufficient funding for mine action, but this may decrease if there are changes to the mandate of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) as the largest donor.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	South Sudan's second national mine action strategy for 2018–22 includes a section on gender, as does South Sudan's National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs). These include a focus on ensuring gender-balanced survey teams and gender- and age-sensitive data collection and community outreach.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	7	The comprehensive review of all data in South Sudan's Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database which began in 2018, along with re-survey of recorded suspected and confirmed hazardous areas, has resulted in significant gains in the understanding of mine contamination. South Sudan submitted its revised extension request in August 2020, which includes comprehensive objectives for land release and data disaggregated by type of contamination and method of land release.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	6	South Sudan has a National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2022, which underwent a mid-term review in January 2020. South Sudan intends to address all types of contamination by 2026 and intends to adopt a pragmatic approach to prioritisation focusing on efficient deployment of resources.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	7	According to UNMAS, the NTSGs for mine action in South Sudan are subject to constant review by UNMAS and the NMAA. South Sudan has provided a detailed breakdown of required capacity to 2026. It intends to deploy the full toolbox of demining resources but in order to meet its land release projections will need to reconfigure its demining teams.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	7	South Sudan's land release output slowed in 2019 as its estimate of anti-personnel mine contamination becomes more accurate and less mined area was cancelled through non-technical survey. South Sudan will not meet its current Article 5 deadline of July 2021 and has submitted a five-year extension request. It plans to address all types of contamination within this timeframe making for an ambitious extension request, particularly when the ongoing challenges around access and insecurity are taken into account.
Average Score	6.8	6.5	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Mine Action Authority (NMAA)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Church Aid (DCA)
- Danish Demining Group (DDG)
- G4S Ordnance Management (G4S)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- The Development Initiative (TDI)

OTHER ACTORS

- UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at the end of 2019, South Sudan had a combined total of 126 areas confirmed and suspected to contain anti-personnel mines covering a total area of almost 12.2km² (see Table 1). South Sudan now has a far better understanding of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination following targeted re-survey and a comprehensive database review of all contamination data. It has released significant areas of land since re-survey began, including cancelling nearly 69km² in 2018–19.

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by state (at end 2019)¹

State	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHA/CHA	Total area (m ²)
Central Equatoria	37	1,312,066	35	471,250	72	1,783,316
Eastern Equatoria	14	539,909	10	104,432	24	644,341
Jonglei	6	597,036	8	3,596,842	14	4,193,878
North Bahr El Ghazal	1	26,100	1	21,719	2	47,819
Upper Nile	3	93,761	1	4,683,615	4	4,777,376
Warrap	0	0	1	40,000	1	40,000
West Bahr El Ghazal	1	201,738	0	0	1	201,738
Western Equatoria	1	95,450	7	410,810	8	506,260
Totals	63	2,866,060	63	9,328,668	126	12,194,728

CHAs = Confirmed hazardous areas SHAs = Suspected hazardous areas

According to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), South Sudan, at end 2019, also had 59 suspected and confirmed anti-vehicle mined areas, covering nearly 4.7km² (see Table 2).²

Table 2: Mined area (at end 2019)³

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Anti-personnel mines	63	2,866,060	63	9,328,668
Anti-vehicle mines	35	2,617,389	24	2,074,738
Totals	98	5,483,449	87	11,403,406

In 2017, UNMAS initiated a review of the national Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database which led to the conclusion that much of the anti-personnel mine contamination may have been over-reported in size. UNMAS consequently initiated a process of targeted re-survey aimed at better defining the estimated size of SHAs.

While significant progress has been made to date to define the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination remaining, its full extent is not known. Further survey is still needed to more accurately determine the actual extent of anti-personnel contamination in the SHAs, which still make up roughly three-quarters of the overall size of anti-personnel mine contamination in the database.⁴ However, insecurity greatly limits access to many areas of the country and displacement of the population means villagers are not there to consult during non-technical survey, severely impeding efforts to confirm or address contamination, particularly in the Greater Upper Nile region. A total of 37 tasks have been prioritised for re-survey, which total a suspected area covering 8.60km². The largest of these was a single SHA in the Upper Nile State, which was originally estimated at 4.68km² and which was almost equal to the entire contamination in the state of Central Equatoria. This SHA was cancelled through non-technical survey in

February 2020.⁵ South Sudan expects a reduction in the actual clearance requirement once re-survey is complete to 5km² for minefields and 10km² for cluster munition remnants (CMR)/battle area clearance (BAC).⁶

At the same time, new areas of anti-personnel mine contamination continued to be added to the database. A total of 0.46km² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination was added in 2019 across 12 hazardous areas.⁷

South Sudan is contaminated by anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, as well as explosive remnants of war (ERW), including CMR. The weapons were used during nearly 50 years of Sudanese civil war in 1955–72 and 1983–2005. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005 led to the independence of South Sudan in July 2011. Following two years of independence and relative peace in South Sudan, heavy fighting erupted in the capital, Juba, in December 2013, initiating new armed conflict across the country. This expanded in July 2016, leading to widespread displacement, distress, and destitution. With the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) in September 2018, the security situation across the country has improved, and there is now access to many areas that security issues previously rendered inaccessible.⁸

NEW CONTAMINATION

Dating back to 2015, there were allegations of use of anti-personnel mines by South Sudanese government forces in an area around Nassir, Upper Nile state.⁹ In June 2018, South Sudan informed States Parties to the APMBC that a four-person investigation team travelled to Nassir in November 2017 to investigate the March 2015 allegation. The investigation team found no evidence of landmines having been laid in the vicinity of Nassir, on or around the alleged date in 2015.¹⁰

While previously undiscovered areas of legacy anti-personnel mine contamination continued to be found in 2019, and despite allegations of new use in the course of the conflict that erupted in 2013, Mine Action Review is not aware of confirmed new use of anti-personnel mines. In July 2020, UNMAS stated that no new use of anti-personnel mines, including of an improvised nature, was recorded in 2019.¹¹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The South Sudan Demining Authority (SSDA) – since renamed the NMAA – was established by presidential decree in 2006 to act as the national agency for planning, coordination, and monitoring of mine action in South Sudan.¹² There is no national mine action legislation in South Sudan.¹³

In 2011, UN Security Council Resolution 1996 tasked UNMAS with supporting South Sudan in demining and strengthening the capacity of the NMAA. UNMAS (with the NMAA) has been overseeing mine action across the country through its main office in Juba, and sub-offices in Bentiu, Bor, Malakal, and Wau. Together, UNMAS and NMAA accredit, task, monitor and evaluate mine action organisations; conduct route verification and clearance; provide escorts for convoys on high-threat routes to enable the delivery of humanitarian assistance; and, conduct data collection and the mapping of new hazardous areas.¹⁴

While it is planned that the NMAA will eventually assume full responsibility for all mine action activities, according to UNMAS the NMAA continued to face serious financial and technical limitations preventing it from managing mine action operations effectively in 2019. It requires substantial resources and capacity building assistance if it is to operate effectively.¹⁵

UNMAS, mine action operators, and South Sudanese government departments are providing capacity development to NMAA and other national mine action organisations in a project that runs from January 2019 to December 2020. The objectives are to develop the managerial and operational capacity in key functional and technical areas to enable national authorities to assume long-term coordination and policy-making roles in mine action; and to strengthen the capacity of the NMAA to plan and monitor all aspects of mine action, in support of South Sudan's obligations under the APMBC. It is planned that NMAA staff will attend training in administration and management, land release, quality management, and gender equality and mainstreaming. In addition, a resource mobilisation strategy will be developed and an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) response capacity for the management of residual contamination.¹⁶

UNMAS and Danish Demining Group (DDG) are the co-coordinators of the mine action sub-cluster. The sub-cluster coordinates with the national- and state-level Inter-Cluster Working Groups. This enables information to be shared on landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO), for UN agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to inform mine action actors about their own priority locations for clearance and for information on landmines and UXO to be integrated into the annual Humanitarian Needs Overview and the Humanitarian Response Plan.¹⁷

In 2019, the Government of South Sudan funded the costs of NMAA staff salaries and its sub-offices across the country, Malakal, Wau, and Yei. As at March 2020, the Malakal and Yei offices were suspended due to the security situation.¹⁸ It did not, however, provide any funding for survey or clearance. The government's total support was reported as US\$75,000 for the year.¹⁹

In South Sudan's revised 2020 extension request, it is estimated to cost US\$148 million to complete clearance by July 2026, which now takes into account all the capacity that South Sudan has planned to deploy.²⁰ In 2019, South Sudan received over US\$41 million for mine action which exceeds the costs if current levels of support are maintained. It is worth noting, however, that much of the funding received by UNMAS, which on average has contributed around 75% of all sector funding, is used to support the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). This has played an important role in the overall mine action effort, as more than 30,000km of road have been verified as being free of mines to support the mandate of UNMISS, under Security Council Resolution 2459 (2019). However, it does impact prioritisation as mine action teams are deployed in the interest of UNMISS rather than to those areas that are most contaminated by mines and UXO. Going forward as the role of UNMISS changes it may further reduce the resources channelled to the implementation of the mine clearance effort.²¹

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

South Sudan's second national mine action strategy for 2018–22 includes a section on gender, focusing on how different gender and age groups are affected by mines and ERW and have specific and varying needs and priorities. Guidelines on mainstreaming gender considerations in mine action planning and operations in South Sudan are also incorporated in the strategy, including on the collection of data disaggregated by sex and age.²² UNMAS reported that the programme was also implementing the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action, monitored by a gender focal point.²³

South Sudan's National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs) contain provisions requiring all community liaison teams to tailor activities on the basis of the gendered needs of beneficiaries, and to address the specific risks faced by women and girls.²⁴ All teams are reportedly gender balanced in composition and trained to be inclusive, for example by ensuring outreach through non-technical survey and risk education is done separately for different age and gender groups, and taking local cultural practices into consideration.²⁵ At the same time, UNMAS reported that task prioritisation was predominantly dependent on security and that resources were concentrated on tasks within limited geographical areas rather than on the basis of gender needs.²⁶ Ethnic identity is taken into account within survey and clearance teams to ensure safe access and acceptance by the respective local communities.²⁷

In 2019–20, UNMAS was planning to provide workshops for the NMAA and mine action partners on gender equality, gender-based violence (GBV), and gender mainstreaming programming in mine action with the aim of GBV prevention practices being mainstreamed in mine action and there being equal opportunity in decision making regardless of gender.²⁸ As at July 2020, these had not yet happened.²⁹

UNMAS has stated that there is equal access in employment opportunities for qualified men and women in survey and clearance teams across the organisations operating in South Sudan.³⁰ However, redressing the gender balance is a long-term challenge and is dependent on whether new vacancies arise. In 2019, however, only 7% of staff in operational roles were women and women accounted for 5% of managerial or supervisory positions among international staff positions, while no women were occupying managerial positions among the national staff.³¹

All of the community liaison teams within Mines Advisory Group (MAG) are mixed gender and MAG reports that it consults with all affected community members, including women and children. MAG also holds women-only focus groups to ensure that women's voices are heard. MAG also aims to recruit team members from the more than 60 ethnic groups within South Sudan and tries to ensure that at least one team member speaks the local language of the planned area of deployment. As at October 2019, approximately 25% of all operational roles within MAG were held by women. This follows a concerted effort by MAG to increase the number of women in operational roles. There is one international staff member who holds a senior managerial position within MAG who is female but none of the female national staff members holds a managerial position, although there are national staff at a supervisory level.³²

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

A comprehensive review of all data in South Sudan's IMSMA database began in 2018, along with re-survey of recorded SHAs and CHAs thought to be exaggerated or erroneously recorded. Through the database review it was found that past efforts to upgrade the IMSMA software package led to serious data loss which inhibited efforts to present an entirely accurate record of the history of mine action in South Sudan. The ongoing database review has resulted in significant gains in the understanding of mine and ERW contamination. UNMAS informed Mine Action Review that, wherever possible, the database disaggregates mined areas, CMR, and other ERW-contaminated areas, including spot tasks.³³

South Sudan submitted a timely and accurate Article 7 report covering 2019 which disaggregated by type of contamination. In addition, it submitted an initial extension request in March 2020, and a revised extension request in August 2020, which includes information on all types of explosive ordnance contamination in South Sudan, and a plan to completion of clearance of all contamination by 2026. The plan is disaggregated by type of contamination and method of land release.

PLANNING AND TASKING

South Sudan's most recent National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2022, developed with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and funded by Japan, was officially launched in September 2018.³⁴ A mid-term strategic review of the plan, goals and objectives was conducted in January 2020.³⁵ According to UNMAS, the strategy has three strategic goals with related targets:³⁶

STRATEGIC GOAL 1:

Advocacy and communication of South Sudan's mine/ERW problem continues through national and international awareness-raising and adoption and implementation of international conventions to facilitate a mine-/ERW-free South Sudan.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2:

The size of the mine/ERW contamination area is clarified and confirmed and the problem is addressed through appropriate survey and clearance methods, ensuring safe land is handed back to affected communities for use.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3:

Safe behaviour is promoted among women, girls, boys, and men to reduce mine/ERW accidents and promote safe livelihood activities.

UNMAS operations staff generate an annual operational clearance plan where priority tasks are identified.³⁷ According to UNMAS, the operational focus for 2019–20 was on further clarifying contamination remaining in the database, with re-survey of hazards thought to be exaggerated in size.³⁸

In its revised 2020 extension request South Sudan presents a work plan to 2026, split by region with data disaggregated by type of contamination and classified into SHAs and CHAs. South Sudan has classified each of the remaining tasks into the proposed clearance methodology (manual clearance, mechanical clearance, road clearance, or re-survey). In the milestones for completion section, targets for mine clearance are separated into manual and mechanical clearance but are not disaggregated by type of mine nor is there any mention of the extensive re-survey that is required.³⁹ In addition, there is a lack of clarity in the difference between tasks, minefields, and hazardous areas.⁴⁰

South Sudan's latest Article 7 report (covering 2019), contains annual targets for land release of anti-personnel mines to 2026 (see Table 3). However, the total amount of anti-personnel mined area exceeds the amount of contamination remaining as at the end of 2019. In the same Article 7 report, South Sudan also provides a written summary of annual clearance projections for anti-personnel mined area which totals 143 tasks over 15.65km².⁴¹

South Sudan intends to address all contamination including from anti-vehicle mines, CMR, and other ERW in addition to anti-personnel mines by its 2026 Article 5 deadline. To that end, aside from those tasks where specific humanitarian interventions are planned, the intention is to be pragmatic in the sequencing of tasks and to deploy clearance teams through a prioritisation process that aims to balance security, logistical requirements, and concentration of effort. South Sudan believes that this combination will lead to the most efficient clearance that allows for optimal monitoring of clearance efforts.⁴²

Table 3: Projected release of anti-personnel mined area⁴³

Year	Mined areas	Area (m ²)
2020	14	5,932,320
2021	33	1,832,963
2022	19	1,696,694
2023	23	1,707,268
2024	15	850,901
2025	14	268,074
2026	10	200,400
Totals	128	12,488,620

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

South Sudan's National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs) outline the technical requirements expected of all demining operators working in South Sudan, they are adapted from International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and tailored to the local context. The NTSGs are annually reviewed and revised by UNMAS and the implementing partners and then approved by the NMAA.⁴⁴ In 2019, revisions were made to the NTSGs for Animal Detection Systems, Site Preparation, Marking, Quality Management and Medical Procedures to keep them in line with changes to IMAS. An NTSG on "Stop-Operations Policy" was also introduced. This policy mandates that any party can and should suspend an operation whenever it believes a demining situation or operation is becoming unsafe.⁴⁵ The NTSG amendments were made in consultation with the implementing partners.⁴⁶

UNMAS noted that the NTSGs require all mine action teams to conduct regular internal quality assurance (QA), along with quality control (QC) sampling of 10% of each area cleared. UNMAS conducted additional external QA through visits to each clearance task in 2018, as well as upon the completion of a clearance task.⁴⁷ As part of the capacity development project of the NMAA from 2019 to 2020, 30 QA officers will receive training in quality management through workshops and field placements with the aim of the NMAA taking ownership of the QA of mine action operations.⁴⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Operators in South Sudan in 2019 included international demining NGO MAG and two commercial companies who are UNMAS's implementing partners (G4S Ordnance Management (G4S), and The Development Initiative (TDI)).⁴⁹ MECHEM were previously operational in South Sudan but lost their accreditation in 2018 following unsafe procedures which resulted in a staff fatality. Danish Demining Group (DDG) and Danish Church Aid (DCA) both have a small operational capacity that focuses on survey and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and clearance of cluster munition remnants, but neither is engaged in mine clearance.⁵⁰

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁵¹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	Comments
G4S	6x QRT	48	0	2	Quick Response Team (QRT)
	2x MTT	16			Multi-task team (MTT)
	2x ICC	20			Integrated Clearance Capacity (ICC)
TDI	8x MTT	64	4	0	Route Assessment and Clearance Capacity (RACC)
	2x RACC	30			
MAG	2x MAT	16	0	2	Mine Action Team (MAT)
	5x MTT	35-50			
	1x EOD	5			
	1x ICC	12			
Totals	29	246-61	4	4	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

In 2019, UNMAS reported that mine action operating capacity remained on a par with that deployed in 2018, with almost 1,000 persons working in the sector. Every team working in South Sudan is accredited to conduct non-technical survey and every team also has a community liaison element. In 2020, there was a reduction in capacity by four non-technical survey/EOD teams.⁵² MAG primarily operates multi-task teams that have the ability to conduct non-technical survey, mine clearance and BAC. During 2019, MAG's peak operational capacity was nine teams, an increase from the seven deployed in 2018. The mechanical clearance capacity includes a MineWolf 330 with 12 deminers which focused on minefield clearance. One of the multi-task teams conducted both mine and cluster munition clearance with a MineWolf 370 and eight deminers. The rest of MAG's operational capacity was focused on BAC during 2019.⁵³

South Sudan's revised extension request provides a detailed breakdown of the capacity that will be needed to achieve completion of clearance. South Sudan plans to deploy the full demining toolbox to address remaining contamination, including light and heavy machines, mine detection dogs (MDDs) and manual deminers equipped with appropriate detectors. It is expected that operators will reconfigure

their clearance teams to allow for more deminers and fewer support staff on each task to increase efficiency. This transformation has already begun, with UNMAS opting to field eight 15-lane demining teams from November 2020, but according to the extension request this move needs to be replicated across the sector in order to deliver the required clearance capacity. From 2021 there will need to be twelve 15-lane demining teams deployed to meet clearance targets.⁵⁴

South Sudan has disaggregated its mine clearance projections in its extension request into manual and mechanical clearance. The manual clearance teams of 15-lane demining teams are expected to clear 300m² per team per day, which equates to 52,800m² per team per year. It is expected that the manual clearance teams will clear 2.95km² in total plus 10% additional clearance to account for newly identified tasks and the impacts of other unforeseen circumstances.⁵⁵ Mechanical clearance teams cleared 3,500m² each per day for 200 days a year during a recent commercial contract deploying a Minewolf 370. It is expected that mechanical clearance teams will clear 2,000m² per day during the period of the extension request.⁵⁶ They are projected to clear 46 tasks totalling 2.41km² in total plus 10% area as a margin of safety.⁵⁷

DEMINER SAFETY

Throughout 2019, survey and clearance operations were targeted in four separate armed robberies and there was one break-in at a compound. During these incidents no personnel were injured but there was loss of personal belongings and some equipment.⁵⁸

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 19.16km² of mined area was released in 2019, of which 1km² was cleared, 0.02km² was reduced through technical survey, and 18.14km² was cancelled through non-technical survey.

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 18.16km² was released through survey, the majority of which was cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 5). This is a 58% decrease in non-technical survey from the 43.06km² cancelled in 2018. Since the review of the national database and nationwide re-survey began in 2018, annual cancellation rates through non-technical survey have been very high. However, as South Sudan moves towards an estimate of mine contamination that is more representative of the actual contamination in the country cancellation rates are slowing.⁵⁹

Reduction through technical survey rose slightly from 16,348m² in 2018 to 19,946m² (see Table 6).⁶⁰

CLEARANCE IN 2019

A total of over 1km² was cleared in 2019 with the destruction of 405 anti-personnel mines (see Table 7).⁶¹ This is less than half the 2.08km² cleared in 2018 when 1,163 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.⁶² The reason for this reduction in clearance output was a delayed start to the demining season and the decision to deploy one of the mechanical demining teams to a remote area where manual demining was proving to be ineffective and that involved a lengthy transit period.⁶³

Table 5: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁶⁴

State	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Central Equatoria	G4S	30
Central Equatoria	MAG	100,883
Eastern Equatoria	G4S	2,827
Eastern Equatoria	TDI	10,532
Eastern Equatoria	UNMAS	10,021
Jonglei	G4S	14,438,780
Jonglei	MAG	3,388,152
Jonglei	TDI	1,356
Lakes	TDI	2,500
Northern Bahr El Ghazal	TDI	32,829
Upper Nile	G4S	257
Upper Nile	TDI	8
Western Equatoria	G4S	150,000
Total		18,138,175

Table 6: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁶⁵

State	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Eastern Equatoria	TDI	4,813
Jonglei	TDI	1,766
Northern Bahr El Ghazal	TDI	13,367
Total		19,946

Table 7: Mine clearance in 2019⁶⁶

State	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Central Equatoria	G4S	418,870	83	0	10
Central Equatoria	MAG	317,632	97	5	22
Eastern Equatoria	G4S	74,932	34	0	2
Eastern Equatoria	TDI	26,241	43	0	8
Jonglei	G4S	74,871	141	0	0
Jonglei	TDI	3,185	6	0	0
Northern Bahr El Ghazal	TDI	50,350	0	0	21
Upper Nile	G4S	1,838	1	0	0
Upper Nile	TDI	35,728	0	0	3
Totals		1,003,647	405	5	66

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

In addition, 32 anti-personnel mines were destroyed during EOD spot tasks in 2019; of these, G4S destroyed 28; MAG 2; and TDI 2.⁶⁷

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APBC South Sudan is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 9 July 2021. It will not meet this deadline and submitted a request for a second extension of its Article 5 deadline in March 2020, for a period of five years, until 9 July 2026.

South Sudan reported in its extension request that insecurity has been the greatest impediment to fulfilling its clearance obligations. Since 2011 there have been several outbreaks of extreme violence, most notably in 2013 and 2016, and sporadic fighting continues to this day. This violence, as well as the banditry that is prevalent in areas that lack rule of law, has persistently inhibited the deployment of mine clearance teams and has been an obstacle to a countrywide survey. The Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) was established in February 2020, which it is hoped will enhance peace in the country and improve access for mine action.⁶⁸ In June 2020, a deal was reached on the selection of governors for the country's ten states and three administrative areas. Both the number of states and the selection of governors had been a contentious issue as it determines the division of power within the country.⁶⁹

Since the database review and re-survey began in 2018, South Sudan has cancelled nearly 69km^2 and now has the most accurate assessment to date of the extent of its anti-personnel mine contamination and the clearance required to achieve completion. Total land release from 2018 to 2019 more than halved, which in large part was due to the massive decrease in cancellation through non-technical survey. Historically, South Sudan has cancelled 6km^2 for every 1km^2 cleared which will not be feasible going forward to 2026. It is important to note that South Sudan plans to address *all* contamination (i.e. including anti-vehicle mines, on roads, from cluster munitions, and other UXO) in this extension period. Anti-personnel mine contamination is currently estimated at 12.19km^2 which makes up about half of the total contaminated area of 24.6km^2 . The progress in clearance of anti-personnel mined areas is therefore contingent on the progress in survey and clearance of other contamination. In light of this, the requested five-year extension looks overly ambitious.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

UNMAS reported that it was working with the NMAA to develop plans for a national capacity that will be responsible for the clearance of residual contamination. This will be the responsibility of the Government of South Sudan.⁷² As part of UNMAS's capacity building objectives for 2019 to 2020 it planned to develop the EOD response capacity within the NMAA, national police, and partner organisations to manage residual contamination through workshops and field placements.⁷³

Table 8: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	1.00
2018	2.08
2017	1.71
2016	2.65
2015	5.10
Total	12.54

In addition, the extension request clearly sets out the primary assumptions and risk factors in the implementation of land release targets: that there is access to contaminated areas and no resumption of fighting; that few additional minefields are recorded; that the largest recorded hazardous areas are cancelled, or drastically reduced, through re-survey; that one deminer will clear on average 20m^2 per day; that demining teams will be reconfigured to 15-lane teams and clear 300m^2 per day; that mechanical clearance teams will clear $2,000\text{m}^2$ per day. Logistical challenges will also need to be overcome due to the poor state of South Sudan's infrastructure and the effects of the seasonal rains, which mean that clearance in much of the country is only possible for eight months of the year given widespread flooding. Furthermore, the methodology previously used to clear roads was flawed as several mines have recently been discovered on roads that had been declared safe resulting in the need for re-clearance. This has diverted resources from clearance of anti-personnel mines.⁷⁰

South Sudan has also been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak which has led the government to ban all public gatherings and introduce social distancing and lockdown measures. As at April 2020, operators had stood down teams, which will undoubtedly impact on survey and clearance output.⁷¹

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- 1 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4.
- 2 Email from Richard Boulter, Senior Programme Manager, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 30.
- 5 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 6 Presentation by Richard Boulter, UNMAS, "South Sudan – Achieving Article Five compliance, and Delivering a Long-Term Solution", 23rd International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers, 12 February 2020.
- 7 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 8 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 47.
- 9 See Intergovernmental Authority on Development Offices of the Special Envoys for South Sudan, "Summary of Latest Reports of Violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (COHA) Investigated and verified by the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism in South Sudan from 1–16 March 2015", at: bit.ly/2Y5xsvT.
- 10 Statement by Jurkuch Barach Jurkuch, NMAA, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 8 June 2018. The three-day investigation involved formal interviews with Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) officers and the police commissioner, along with a physical inspection of the ground around the SPLA barracks.
- 11 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 12 "South Sudan De-Mining Authority", undated, at: bit.ly/2Y5Eb4o.
- 13 Email from Ayaka Amano, UNMAS, 2 May 2019.
- 14 UNMAS, "Mine Action Portfolio 2019".
- 15 Interview with Richard Boulter, NDM-UN23, 14 February 2020; emails from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 30 May 2019; and Tim Lardner, UNMAS, 27 February and 1 March 2018.
- 16 UNMAS, "Mine Action Portfolio 2019".
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 20.
- 19 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4.
- 20 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 75.
- 21 Ibid., pp. 20–21.
- 22 Emails from Tim Lardner, UNMAS, 27 February and 1 March 2018.
- 23 Email from Ayaka Amano, UNMAS, 2 May 2019.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 28 UNMAS "Mine Action Portfolio 2019".
- 29 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 30 Email from Ayaka Amano, UNMAS, 2 May 2019.
- 31 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 32 Emails from Katie Shaw, Programme Officer, MAG, 26 April 2019 and 29 June 2020.
- 33 Email from Ayaka Amano, UNMAS, 2 May 2019; and 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.
- 34 Email from Ayaka Amano, UNMAS, 2 May 2019.
- 35 "South Sudan – Achieving Article Five compliance, and Delivering a Long-Term Solution", NDM-UN23, 12 February 2020.
- 36 Emails from Tim Lardner, UNMAS, 27 February and 1 March 2018; and Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 6 June 2018.
- 37 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 38 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 22 July 2019.
- 39 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline extension request, pp. 72–74.
- 40 Ibid., pp. 55–65.
- 41 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4.
- 42 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 64.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4.
- 45 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 15 July 2020.
- 46 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 47 Email from Ayaka Amano, UNMAS, 2 May 2019.
- 48 UNMAS, "Mine Action Portfolio 2019".
- 49 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 50 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 15 July 2020.
- 51 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Emails from Katie Shaw, MAG, 19 July 2019 and 29 June 2020.
- 54 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 67.
- 55 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 20 July 2020.
- 56 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 26 August 2020.
- 57 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 63.
- 58 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 59 Presentation by Richard Boulter, UNMAS, "South Sudan – Achieving Article Five compliance, and Delivering a Long-Term Solution", NDM-UN23, 12 February 2020.
- 60 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4; and emails from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 22 July 2019; and Katie Shaw, MAG, 19 July 2019.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Emails from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 22 July 2019; and Katie Shaw, MAG, 19 July 2019.
- 63 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 64 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4; and emails from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020; and Katie Shaw, MAG, 29 June 2020.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4; and emails from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020; and Katie Shaw, MAG, 29 June 2020.
- 67 Email from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 8 July 2020.
- 68 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4.
- 69 Al Jazeera, "South Sudan leaders reach key deal on control of states", 17 June 2020, at: bit.ly/2Bii5pw.
- 70 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 47–49.
- 71 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 4.
- 72 Emails from Richard Boulter, UNMAS, 22 July 2019 and 8 July 2020.
- 73 UNMAS, "Mine Action Portfolio 2019".

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2028
ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Sri Lanka had hoped to complete mine clearance by the end of 2020, an ambitious target which was contingent on securing additional funding and increasing demining capacity. However, while demining capacity did steadily increase during 2019 and into 2020, it would not be sufficient to meet the 2020 completion target.

Furthermore, while a significant amount of mined area was released through survey and clearance in 2019, new, previously undiscovered contamination continues to be discovered. Additional survey/re-survey of all mine contaminated districts is therefore needed to ensure that Sri Lanka has made every effort to identify all remaining mined areas and address them in its planning for fulfilment of Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) should conduct survey/re-survey in mine-contaminated districts to ensure that every effort is made to identify remaining mined areas and include them in its completion strategy.
- Greater efforts should be devoted to information management, including ensuring that the national database is up to date; and that survey and clearance reports are sent to the NMAC and entered into the national database in a timely fashion. In particular, Sri Lanka should make the necessary changes to its International Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database to enable “sections” of large tasks that have been released to be recorded as “closed” and therefore reflected in the database.
- Sri Lanka should adopt, without further delay, the revised national mine action standards, which were developed with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining Centre (GICHD) and input from clearance operators in 2018.
- The NMAC should elaborate a new National Mine Action Strategy to replace the existing strategy which was due to expire at the end of 2020.
- The NMAC should establish an in-country forum/platform to bring together all relevant national and international stakeholders regularly to discuss progress and challenges in Article 5 implementation and help strengthen coordination.

- Sri Lanka should develop plans for the management of mine contamination found after fulfilment of Article 5 (i.e. residual contamination), including ensuring a sustainable long-term national capacity for survey and clearance and information management.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	8	Sri Lanka gained better clarity on the extent of confirmed contamination, through a district-by-district re-survey in 2015–17 of known hazardous area, which resulted in the cancellation of more than 42km ² of mined area. However, new, previously unknown mined areas continue to be discovered and additional survey/re-survey is still required to ensure that Sri Lanka has made every effort to identify remaining mine contamination.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	8	Sri Lanka's national mine action programme is nationally owned, with committed funding from the national government and significant contribution from the Armed Forces in the dedicated demining units. The NMAC suffers from frequent leadership changes, which impedes management and reduces its effectiveness. Following the November 2019 presidential election, NMAC sat under the Ministry of Community Empowerment and Estate Infrastructure Development and new leadership were in place. However, following parliamentary elections in August 2020, the NMAC again moved line ministry and will now sit under the Ministry of Rural Home Construction and Building Material Industry Promotion.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	8	8	Following a mid-term review in 2018, Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020 contains a section on gender and diversity as cross-cutting themes for all mine action. It reflects awareness of the cultural context of gendered employment in mine action specific to Sri Lanka, with a focus on women's empowerment.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	6	A number of efforts are ongoing to help strengthen information management in Sri Lanka's mine action programme. While some progress can be seen, data reporting between operators and the NMAC continued to reflect a number of disparities and inconsistencies, which are also apparent in the Article 7 reports. As at end of August 2020, however, Sri Lanka had still to submit its latest Article 7 report covering 2019.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	8	8	Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020, which was reviewed in 2018 with the support of the GICHD, elaborates the national planning and tasking criteria, which are centred around resettlement and urgent livelihood priorities for displaced and returning civilians.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	7	Revisions to Sri Lanka's NMAS in 2017 and in 2018 through an extensive review process with input from operators and support from the GICHD had still to be approved and adopted as at August 2020.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	7	As at end of August 2020, Sri Lanka had still to submit an Article 7 transparency report covering 2019, but the NMAC had provided Mine Action Review with requested land release data for 2019. However, the 2019 survey and clearance output reported by the NMAC was significantly less than data reported by international operators, HALO Trust and MAG, who reported releasing a combined total of more than 3.3km ² of anti-personnel mined area in 2019. Until a completion survey has been conducted, it is not possible to accurately forecast when Sri Lanka will fulfil its Article 5 commitments.
Average Score	7.0	7.4	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Ministry of Rural Home Construction and Building Material Industry Promotion (responsible line ministry following August 2020 Parliamentary elections, which was previously the Ministry of Community Empowerment and Estate Infrastructure Development)
- National Mine Action Centre (NMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH)
- SHARP
- Sri Lankan Army (SLA) Humanitarian Demining Units (HDUs)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at end of 2019, mined area in Sri Lanka stood at over 23km² across 257 mined areas (see Table 1).¹ This compares to a total of 280 mined areas, totalling close to 24km², as at end of 2019.² While there was significant clearance output in 2019 helping to reduce the amount of remaining contamination, this was in part offset by discovery of new, previously unknown, contamination added to the national database.

Sri Lanka was once extensively contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). Most remaining contamination is in the north, the focus of three decades of armed conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which ended in May 2009. Much progress in land release has occurred in the last decade. A district-by-district re-survey in 2015–17 of all existing registered SHAs in the national database resulted in cancellation of more than 42km² of mined area and helped provide greater clarity on the extent of remaining contamination.³ In April 2019, Sri Lanka reported that since demining operations began in 2002, it had been able to declare 4,616 areas totalling over 1,280km² free from the threat of mines, with the destruction of more than 737,000 anti-personnel mines and over 1,400,000 other explosive items, including anti-vehicle mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO).⁴

Estimates of total contamination have fallen sharply: from 506km² at the end of 2010. The Northern province is still by far the most affected, as set out in Table 1.⁵

However, while significant progress is being made in releasing mined areas through survey and clearance, previously unknown contamination continues to be identified. According to the NMAC, a total of 2,868,123m² of confirmed hazardous area (CHA) and 15,280m² of suspected hazardous area (SHA) of previously unrecorded mine contamination was added to Sri Lanka's national database in 2019.⁶ In 2019, HALO Trust reported confirming an additional 0.7km² of previously unrecorded contamination in 2019, in Kilinochchi, Jaffna, and Mullaitivu districts.⁷ MAG Community Liaison Teams (CLTs) found an additional 1.1km² of mined area in 2019.⁸ Previously unknown mine contamination is often discovered when communities return, settle, and try to rebuild their livelihoods, exploring the vicinity of their neighbourhoods.⁹

Table 1: Mined area and ERW contamination (at end 2019)¹⁰

Province	District	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs and CHAs	Total area (m ²)
Northern	Jaffna	18	1,319,934	1	182,403	19	1,502,337
	Kilinochchi	57	9,235,916	0	0	57	9,235,916
	Mannar	58	1,662,152	2	76,177	60	1,738,329
	Mullaitivu	89	7,719,024	5	649,220	94	8,368,244
	Vavuniya	14	1,161,672	1	667,057	15	1,828,729
Subtotals		236	21,098,698	9	1,574,857	245	22,673,555
Eastern	Batticaloa	2	25,059	0	0	2	25,059
	Trincomalee	6	379,302	0	0	6	379,302
Subtotals		8	404,361	0	0	8	404,361
North Central	Anuradhapura	3	169,779	0	0	3	169,779
	Polonnaruwa	1	6,053	0	0	1	6,053
Subtotals		4	175,832	0	0	4	175,832
Totals		248	21,678,891	9	1,574,857	257	23,253,748

Further survey/re-survey is still required to ensure that all mined areas have been identified.¹¹ In Jaffna, where the minefields were laid by the Sri Lankan Army (SLA), the extent of contamination is considered to be well known, with the exception of the remaining military-controlled High Security Zone area.¹² However, minefield maps and information on mine-laying strategy is not readily available for the LTTE-laid minefields, which pose more of a challenge to clear.¹³ Typically, LTTE mine laying was less predictable, more sporadic, and nuisance-type in nature; added to which, many of the LTTE-laid minefields are in jungle areas, where limited human activity occurs and contamination is more likely to remain unknown.¹⁴

Furthermore, some additional survey is also required due to the relocation of contaminated land for construction. For example, in February 2020 gravel from a quarry in Kilinochchi was delivered to a sports club in Jaffna. Whilst levelling the gravel, workers found landmines and HALO was subsequently called to survey and clear the area. HALO is seeking to establish where the quarry has distributed gravel to and thereby identify any further contamination.¹⁵

HALO Trust continues to urge the development of a unified "end state" strategy for the sector.¹⁶ In 2019, the sector began liaising with the NMAC to urge the development of a "completion survey", delivered through a village-by-village assessment, to locate any remaining evidence of contamination, prior to any district being officially declared as cleared. International non-governmental organisations (NGOs) believe this to be essential to fully understand remaining mine contamination, what resources are required to address it, and inform other key elements of Sri Lanka's completion strategy.¹⁷ In August 2020,

NMAC confirmed it planned to conduct a completion survey in conflict-affected areas together with demining organisations, in order to update its strategy.¹⁸ MAG started a pilot completion survey initially in Trincomalee district, and then in Mannar, whose findings will help the sector agree on SOPs.¹⁹

The NMAC said the current baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination has been established through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men, including, where relevant, from minority groups.²⁰

Most remaining contamination is located in Sri Lanka's five northern districts. Both sides made extensive use of mines, including belts of P4 Mk I and Mk II blast anti-personnel mines laid by the SLA, and long defensive lines with a mixture of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, laid by the LTTE.²¹ Indian peacekeeping forces also used mines during their presence from July 1987 to January 1990.²²

The SLA used both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, with all minelaying said to have been recorded.²³ Operators have encountered a wide range of LTTE devices, including anti-personnel mines with anti-tilt and anti-lift mechanisms. Tripwire-activated Claymore-type mines and, to a lesser extent, anti-vehicle mines, were also used by the LTTE, along with a number of forms of improvised devices to act as fragmentation mines, bar mines, electrical and magnetically initiated explosive devices, and mines connected to detonating cord to mortar and artillery shells.²⁴

Aside from mines, Sri Lanka remains contaminated with a wide range of ERW, including unexploded air-dropped bombs, artillery shells and missiles, mortar bombs, hand-held anti-tank projectiles, and rifle and hand grenades. Large caches of abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) also exist, particularly in the north.²⁵ These are being cleared at the same time as the remaining minefields.²⁶

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs became the lead agency for mine action in 2015 as chair of the inter-ministerial National Steering Committee for Mine Action (NSCMA). In 2019, the Ministry's name had changed to the Ministry of National Policies, Economic Affairs, Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, Vocational Training, Skills Development, and Youth Affairs. The Ministry's Secretary serves as the Director of the NMAC. Following the November 2019 presidential election, the NMAC sat under the Ministry of Community Empowerment and Estate Infrastructure Development and new leadership personnel were in place.²⁷ However, following the parliamentary elections in August 2020, the NMAC will now sit under the Ministry of Rural Home Construction and Building Material Industry Promotion.²⁸ NMAC has responsibilities for priority setting, information management, quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC), coordination with demining organisations and cooperation partners, and establishing policy and standards.²⁹

The NMAC suffers from frequent leadership changes, including under which ministry within the Sri Lankan government the Centre sits, while the Director of the NMAC is a political appointee by the secretary of the ministry in question. Lack of consistent leadership can impede management of the mine action centre and reduce its effectiveness. In the last five years, there are thought to have been four different ministerial secretaries/directors of the NMAC. This latest change only adds to confusion and impedes efficiency.

Clearance operations are coordinated, tasked, and quality managed by a Regional Mine Action Office (RMAO) in Kilinochchi, working in consultation with District Steering Committees for Mine Action. The Committees are chaired by government agents heading district authorities.³⁰ NMAC and RMAO also suffer from the impact of high staff turnover, following the national election in 2019 and also as military personnel are seconded and generally rotate fairly quickly.³¹ There is no national mine action legislation in Sri Lanka, based on available information.

The Government of Sri Lanka created a national budget line for mine action in 2015.³² According to Sri Lanka's initial Article 7 transparency report submitted in 2018, the government of Sri Lanka has committed 758,534,964 rupees (approx. US\$4.45 million) each year in 2018–20 to cover the operational costs of the SLA Humanitarian Demining Units and the Navy Humanitarian Demining Unit's survey and clearance activities, with an additional 20 million rupees (US\$118,497) a year to cover the administrative costs of the NMAC.³³

According to the NMAC, in 2019, Sri Lanka contributed 1.5 million Sri Lankan rupees (approx. \$8,000) towards the NMAC and 149.5 million Sri Lankan rupees (approx. US\$800,000) towards survey and clearance of mined areas in 2019.³⁴ Sri Lanka does not currently have a resource mobilisation strategy in place for Article 5 implementation.³⁵

HALO Trust continued to provide capacity development support to NMAC in 2019. In addition to support in information management (see the 'Information Management and Reporting' section), HALO also conducted a medic/trauma training course in 2019 for representatives of NMAC, RMAO, SLA, Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH) and SHARP, and a mechanical QA course to representatives of RMAO, SHARP, and the SLA.³⁶

MAG's Global Senior Community Liaison Advisor conducted a workshop on pre- and post-clearance impact assessments for personnel from MAG, DASH, and the NMAC, in May 2019.³⁷

Jointly with HALO Trust, MAG sponsored the Deputy Director of NMAC and a representative of the Sri Lanka Campaign to Ban Landmines (SLCBL) to attend the Fourth APMBC Review Conference in November 2019.³⁸

NMAC and the five operators (DASH, HALO Trust, MAG, SHARP, and SLA) generally maintain good cooperation and coordination, including ad-hoc meetings throughout the year. However, no regular formal in-country platform for coordination exists.³⁹

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Gender and diversity have been included in Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy for 2016–20, following the mid-term review in 2018. The revised strategy contains a specific section on gender and diversity, which it emphasises are cross-cutting issues for the planning, implementation, and monitoring of all mine action initiatives. The strategy pledges to ensure that all mine action activities, from survey and clearance to victim assistance, are conducted in a targeted manner to ensure the equal participation of all age and gender groups, and that all data is collected and disaggregated by sex and age. It further recognises that mine action in Sri Lanka should be tied to the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality and the empowerment of women, noting that the safe-guarding of non-discriminatory employment opportunities and the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women has been a particularly successful aspect of Sri Lanka's national mine action programme.⁴⁰ In 2019, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) carried out a study examining the socio-economic impact of the employment of female deminers. The key findings of the study were published in 2020.⁴¹

NMAC reported that 25% of its employees are female, including 12.5% of managerial level positions.⁴²

National operator DASH considers gender equality and employment of women important to its programme. As at the end of July 2020, 22% of DASH's 459 employees were female, including nearly 35% of demining personnel.⁴³

As at the end of July 2020, 12% of SHARP's total employees and of its demining personnel were female.⁴⁴

DASH and fellow national operator, SHARP, have both sought to progressively increase the number of women employed in operational positions, recognising the positive impact employment has on women and their families' well-being.⁴⁵

None of the SLA humanitarian demining unit's (HDU's) 328 employees was a woman.⁴⁶

International operators The HALO Trust and MAG confirmed that each organisation has gender policies in place, with a focus on achieving equal access to employment, gender-balanced survey and clearance teams, gender-focused community liaison outreach, disaggregated data collection, and a gender focus to be employed during pre- and post-clearance assessments.⁴⁷ Both organisations reported increasing efforts to encourage women to apply for operational, as well as managerial positions, and positive trends in the increasing number of women employed in their respective programmes as a result.⁴⁸

The HALO Trust reported that as at December 2019, 39% of its total staff in Sri Lanka were women. This included 43% of all operations staff and 25% of managerial/supervisory level positions.⁴⁹ HALO's deployment structure was designed to allow demining teams to be deployed daily from bases in Kilinochchi, Jaffna, and Jeyapuram, in order to allow female staff to return to their homes at the end of each working day, rather than being based in remote camps for lengthy periods of time. This ensured that women who had dependents at home were able to provide for their families while maintaining their daily home lives. HALO Trust also reported specific efforts to encourage women's employment through advertising maternity leave policies.⁵⁰

MAG reported that, as at December 2019, 9% of operational staff were female and 18% of managerial/supervisory positions. MAG continues to consider how more female staff could be recruited. As in previous years, in 2019 the main blockage to female recruitment in operations is the fact MAG deploys for a full work cycle (average operating days per month is 21) with teams staying out for that full period before returning to base and then having the remainder of the month as block leave. MAG is aware that this model of deployment is not attractive to potential female recruits who do not wish to be out of the family home for extended periods. The areas in which MAG works are generally very remote with large travel distances back to operating bases so this approach to team deployment makes sense in terms of efficiencies and economy.⁵¹ Following the mitigation measures introduced in response to COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka, MAG shifted to a non-camping approach in June 2020 and launched a specific recruitment campaign for female deminers, which led to a 20% increase of female staff in operations.⁵²

MAG stated that overcoming barriers which inhibited participation by women, girls, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and other marginalised groups was an essential focus for its programme operations in order to ensure that programme delivery is inclusive, both in terms of internal staff composition and external programme outreach. As such, it reported that internal training and awareness-raising ensure that staff working with communities recognise the importance of gender and diversity and have an understanding of tools and approaches to enable inclusive participation.⁵³ MAG has been assessing the need to establish a community reporting mechanism, which it planned to roll out in July 2020.⁵⁴

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Sri Lanka's IMSMA database has undergone substantial and continuing improvements since the installation of an updated version in 2015 and a subsequent process of data entry and ground verification.⁵⁵ Since that time, operators have reported that significant efforts have been exerted by all stakeholders to correct erroneous data entered into the IMSMA database and to update it on the basis of re-survey, leading to a more accurate representation of remaining contamination.⁵⁶ A transition to the use of IMSMA Core software with assistance from the GICHD had been planned for 2020,⁵⁷ but this was likely to be delayed until 2021 due to staff changes at NMAC⁵⁸ and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵⁹ Challenges to information management and establishing long-term sustainable national IM capacity, in part stem from lack of resources and also the high staff turn-over at the NMAC and RMAO, as military personnel are seconded and generally rotate fairly quickly.⁶⁰

Complications to data management are also posed by the existence of very large tasks on the database which consist of many "sections". These tasks show as "open" in IMSMA until all sections contained in them have been cleared, even if several sections have been reduced or cleared. This complicates land release figures and reduces the accuracy of the estimated size of mined area remaining in the database. This could be rectified with minor changes to IMSMA by allowing cleared sections to be recorded as "closed", thereby providing greater clarity on the remaining problem. The GICHD has offered support to NMAC to make the required minor changes to the database.⁶¹

One of the objectives of Sri Lanka's reviewed National Mine Action Strategy is that the Sri Lanka's mine action sector "can access good quality information for its strategic and operational decision-making."⁶² As at 1 August 2020, Sri Lanka had still to submit its annual Article 7 transparency report covering 2019.

In 2019, The HALO Trust reported it was submitting reports every two weeks to NMAC and that a review of IMSMA data was usually held on a quarterly basis.⁶³ HALO conducted a series of information management capacity development initiatives in 2019. This included funding two capacity development visits of its global experts to Sri Lanka in 2019, one in July, hosted in Kilinochchi by the RMAO, to deliver training on HALO's "predictions tool" to NMAC and RMAO staff, as well as representatives from MAG, DASH, and SHARP. The predictions tool is designed to help assess when clearance operators are likely to complete clearance and to analyse operator capacities in order to inform decision making regarding task reallocation, completion strategy, and demobilisation. Following feedback from other operators, HALO continues to make improvements to the tool, and once finalised will hand it to the NMAC to take ownership of the resource.

A second visit, in November 2019, was to help finalise an action plan for capacity development training in order to assist the NMAC with IM support and development and to address queries and reporting challenges, particularly prior to the Fourth Review Conference. An action plan was developed based on consultation with the NMAC IMSMA and geographic information system (GIS) Officers. Capacity development initiatives will continue periodically through 2020, focusing on database management.⁶⁴ While NMAC officers have been trained by GICHD to enter data into IMSMA, and also trained by HALO in GIS and mapping, most have limited formal training in database theory, management, and query design. It is hoped that training in the design of simple querying and reporting tools will allow the NMAC to generate reports much easier and will allow them more time to focus on the quality of the data.⁶⁵

During 2019, MAG began rolling out its new ESRI-based global operational management information system (OMIS) in Sri Lanka. The system and processes were put in place to update information and support tracking of land release and community liaison activities conducted by MAG staff in real time. Following planned training of staff in July 2020, the OMIS system was due to become operational in August,⁶⁶ but was subsequently postponed to early 2021 due to the restriction of staff movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

NMAC's current strategy was developed before Sri Lanka acceded to the APMB in 2017. At the request of the NMAC, Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy for 2016–20 was reviewed in April 2018 in a multi-stakeholder workshop facilitated by the GICHD, and in consultation with operators and the SLA. The reviewed strategy was formally approved by the government in March 2019 and officially launched at an event organised by the government of Sri Lanka and the GICHD in Colombo in April 2019, attended by representatives of all mine action stakeholders, government officials, civil society, and international donor governments.

The national strategy is guided by the vision of Sri Lanka to become "set free from the threat of landmines and ERW by 2020, enabling women, girls, boys and men to live in a safe environment where the needs of mine/ERW victims are met". The strategic vision is based around the following objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1.

The remaining mine/ERW problem is addressed using the most appropriate methodologies and tools.

OBJECTIVE 2.

Mine/ERW safe behaviour among women, girls, boys and men is promoted.

OBJECTIVE 3.

The needs of mine/ERW victims are determined and met and victims are integrated into society.

OBJECTIVE 4.

Sri Lanka complies with its international convention obligations.

OBJECTIVE 5.

Long-term residual contamination is effectively managed with appropriate and sustainable national capacities.

OBJECTIVE 6.

Sri Lanka mine action sector can access good quality information for its strategic and operational decision-making.⁶⁸

The initial strategy set an initial target of the release of 6.5km² of contamination by clearance and technical survey per year.⁶⁹ This target increased to 9km² released through clearance and technical survey per year in the revised version of the strategy.⁷⁰ The revised strategy states that "completion of clearance at the end of 2020 will only be possible if considerably more funding is made available, allowing all five operators to expand to their maximum capacity".⁷¹ However, the additional funding required to enable a sufficient increase in demining capacity, was not secured in time. Furthermore, previously unrecorded mined areas have continued to be discovered, further hampering progress towards completion.

Sri Lanka's current National Mine Action Strategy ends in 2020, and a new strategy will need to be elaborated. The GICHD had agreed with the previous NMAC administration to support the development of the new national mine action strategy and was due to support the organising of a strategy progress stakeholder workshop in December 2019, but this unfortunately had to be cancelled, due to the ministerial reshuffle following the November 2019 election. The GICHD

had planned to visit Sri Lanka in spring 2020 to meet new NMAC staff and discuss plans for developing the new strategy but due to the COVID-19 pandemic this had to be cancelled. GICHD remains ready to support the development of the new strategy,⁷² in collaboration with international operators and the mine action sector in Sri Lanka.⁷³ The NMAC also develops annual work plans for survey and clearance.⁷⁴

Sri Lanka's mine action programme has a well-developed prioritisation system, outlined in NMAC's national mine action strategy. The primary priority is clearance of land for resettlement, particularly the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Further to this, contaminated land planned for livelihood activities (mostly agricultural land), access to public services, and large-scale infrastructure, are also prioritised in accordance with NMAC's national mine action strategy.⁷⁵ According to the NMAC, despite marking of contaminated areas and sustained risk education, returnees are likely to enter contaminated areas, especially agricultural areas, to meet their basic livelihood needs. As such, socio-economic pressures and livelihood activities are vital considerations in the prioritisation process in relation to resettlement plans.⁷⁶

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

A review of Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), taking into account the local context, was carried out in May 2017 with the input of all demining operators, and support from the GICHD. Input on suggested changes to the NMAS was subsequently provided by all stakeholders in the second quarter of 2018 and a follow-up workshop was held in April 2018, facilitated by the GICHD, to discuss proposed revisions. However, as at June 2020, the expected revised version of the NMAS had yet to be approved and adopted, and the previous version remained in place.⁷⁷ In August 2020, the NMAC, under new leadership, reported that since Sri Lanka was in the final stages of its mine action programme there was no significant requirement for the development [revision] of NMAS and that during implementation the programme will apply the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).⁷⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2019, demining continued to be conducted by the SLA; national NGOs, DASH and SHARP; and the two international NGOs, The HALO Trust and MAG.

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁷⁹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	Comments
DASH	13	278	0	0	
HALO Trust	74	567	0	5 CASE front loaders, 6 Caterpillar excavators, 3 JCBs, 1 Beach Tech sand cleaner, 1 PrimeTech tiller machine, and tractors with various attachments.	Based on the average annual number of clearance teams and deminers in 2019.
MAG	36	407	0	18 (8 Back hoe excavators of various makes, 3 JCB excavators, and 7 mini excavators of various makes)	Mine Action Teams (MATs) also conduct technical survey as part of the standard land release process.
SHARP	4	99	0	0	
SLA HDU	8	320	8	13	
Partial Totals	135	Approx. 1,671	8	Approx. 49	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters. N/K = not known

HALO's clearance capacity was reduced in the first half of 2019, due to a decrease in donor funding, but then increased in the second half of the year after several new and renewed donor contracts were signed. During the period of rapid expansion, several hundred new deminers were recruited. The increase in clearance capacity was expected to be maintained throughout 2020. HALO's mechanical clearance capacity has also increased significantly in 2020.⁸⁰

MAG's clearance capacity rose significantly from 18 Mine Action Teams (MATs), nine mechanical assets (MSTs) and 11 Casualty Evacuation Teams (CETs) in 2018 to 40 MATs, 20 MSTs and 22 CETs by June 2020.⁸¹ MAG also established a Technical Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (TMEU) in 2019 to strengthen the quality of its operations. The Technical Field Manager was also temporarily seconded to DASH to provide additional technical capacity to their operational management.⁸²

With regards to survey capacity, DASH deployed three non-technical survey teams in 2019, totalling six personnel.⁸³ HALO Trust deployed two non-technical survey teams in 2019, totalling six personnel, and planned to deploy a third team from April 2020. Technical survey personnel are deminers and included in HALO's clearance capacity in Table 2.⁸⁴ MAG deployed two non-technical survey teams in 2019, totalling six personnel, and 45 technical survey teams, totalling 420 personnel.⁸⁵ The SLA HDU deployed four non-technical survey teams totalling twenty personnel. Technical survey personnel are deminers and are included as part of the clearance capacity summarised in Table 2.⁸⁶ SHARP did not deploy any survey teams in 2019.⁸⁷

According to the NMAC, in 2018, the SLA's demining unit deployed a total of 380 personnel in demining operations, which was a slight decrease from the 418 employed in 2017. DASH's demining personnel remained at 365 in 2018, but with a decrease in the number of demining staff deployed by its then subcontractor, SHARP, which fell by more than half to 50.⁸⁸

DEMINER SAFETY

The HALO Trust reported two demining accidents in 2019, resulting in injuries to three staff. One incident in January involved a deminer initiating a P4 anti-personnel mine during a break period. The accident, which was the result of a breach of standing operating procedures (SOPs), was fully investigated, with observations shared and lessons learned. The deminer made a full recovery. The second accident, in April 2019, involved initiation of a highly sensitive 40mm launched grenade during clearance operations, injuring the deminer and a section commander. The accident was fully investigated and both made a full recovery.⁸⁹ In addition, an accident during clearance of a Rangan 99 anti-personnel mine by SHARP.⁹⁰ The NMAC said that accidents are investigated in line with the national standards, in collaboration with operators and civil authorities, and lessons learned shared with relevant stakeholders.⁹¹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

According to data reported by the NMAC, a total of 1.82km² was released in 2019: 1.20km² through clearance, 0.59km² through technical survey, and 0.03km² through cancellation.⁹² However, the figures reported by the national authorities are significantly lower than those reported by international operators. In 2019, HALO Trust and MAG alone reported releasing a combined total of more than 3.32km² of anti-personnel mined area in 2019: nearly 2.46km² through clearance, reduction of over 0.60km² through technical survey, and more than 0.26km² cancelled through non-technical survey.⁹³ Mine Action Review believes that, based on best available data, the total released by clearance in 2019 was actually 2.94km² (estimated).

SURVEY IN 2019

The NMAC reported releasing a total of 0.62km² through survey in 2018: 0.03km² cancelled through non-technical survey and 0.59km² reduced through technical survey (see Table 4).⁹⁴ However, data provided by international NGOs, HALO Trust and MAG, to Mine Action Review reported survey output to be higher, with a combined total of 0.86km² of mined area released through survey (0.26km² cancelled through HALO and MAG non-technical survey (see Table 3) and nearly 0.60km² reduced through technical survey).⁹⁵

In 2018, a total of over 1.3km² was released through survey (7,590m² cancelled and 1.3km² reduced).⁹⁶

In addition, a total of 2,868,123m² of previously unrecorded CHA and 15,280m² of previously unrecorded SHA was added to Sri Lanka's database in 2019.⁹⁷ HALO Trust reported identifying 728,557m² of previously unrecorded mined area during survey in 2019.⁹⁸ MAG reported that it had identified 43 hazardous areas totalling 1,123,649m² of new mined area in 2019, during non-technical survey based on reports received from several sources in Mannar, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee and Vavuniya districts. This was an increase on the 743,695m² MAG discovered in 2018, which was reportedly due to an increasing number of people returning to their place of origin, as areas become available for returnees, in districts where MAG operates, resulting in new mine affected areas being identified.⁹⁹

As already mentioned, the NMAC reported only cancelling nearly 0.03km² through non-technical survey in 2019 (27,539m² by the SLA HDU in Mullativu district and 2,417m² by MAG in Trincomalee district),¹⁰⁰ significantly less than that reported by HALO and MAG in Table 3 above.

Table 3: HALO and MAG cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019¹⁰¹

District	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Jaffna	HALO Trust	24,784
Mannar	MAG	227,838
Trincomalee	MAG	2,417
Total		255,039

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2019¹⁰²

District	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)	Comments
Anuradhapura	SLA HDU	9,762	
Jaffna	DASH	13,420	
	HALO Trust	18,402	HALO reported to Mine Action Review reducing 20,589m ²
	SLA HDU	21,986	
Kilinochchi	DASH	39,378	
	HALO Trust	178,423	HALO reported to Mine Action Review reducing 216,822m ²
Mannar	MAG	100,628	MAG reported to Mine Action Review reducing 176,598m ²
Mullaitivu	DASH	100,157	
	HALO Trust	4,188	HALO reported to Mine Action Review reducing 17,357m ²
	MAG	26,374	MAG reported to Mine Action Review reducing 37,866m ²
	SLA HDU	21,778	
Trincomalee	MAG	18,726	MAG reported to Mine Action Review reducing 61,426m ²
Vavuniya	MAG	31,842	MAG reported to Mine Action Review reducing 71,842m ²
Total		585,064	

CLEARANCE IN 2019

The NMAC reported clearance of more than 1.2km² in 2019, with the destruction of 9,000 anti-personnel mines and 5 anti-vehicle mines (see Table 5).¹⁰³ This excludes 2019 clearance data for national operator, SHARP, which was not reported by NMAC.

However, international NGOs, HALO Trust and MAG alone reported a clearing a combined total of nearly 2.46km² of mined area in 2019, with a total of 13,820 anti-personnel mines, and 37 anti-vehicle mines destroyed – significantly more than reported by NMAC.¹⁰⁴ This is most likely due to a number of reasons, including a database issue that currently prevents NMAC from reporting release of partially cleared polygons; and NMAC appearing to only report tasks completed in 2019, whereas operator data includes all clearance that was conducted in 2019.¹⁰⁵

In 2018, more than 3.46km² of mined area was reported as having been cleared.¹⁰⁶

All anti-personnel mines were destroyed by the SLA – Engineers Brigade. As per national standards, humanitarian mine action operators are not authorised to conduct explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) in Sri Lanka.¹⁰⁷

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019¹⁰⁸

District	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	Comments
Ampara	SLA HDU	12,886	0	0	
Amuradhapura	SLA HDU	7,867	151	0	
Batticaloa	SLA HDU	7,900	44	0	
Jaffna	DASH	18,123	1,876	0	
	HALO Trust	62,509	94	0	HALO reported to Mine Action Review clearing 93,987m ² and destroying 418 AP mines and 15 AV mines
	SLA HDU	47,164	27	0	
Kilinochchi	DASH	86,840	838	0	
	HALO Trust	196,429	634	0	HALO reported to Mine Action Review clearing 1,300,369m ² , and destroying 8,060 AP mines and 22 AV mines
	SLA HDU	78,327	12	0	
Mannar	MAG	241,006	1,298	0	MAG reported to Mine Action Review clearing 478,606m ² , and destroying 2,794 AP mines
Mullaitivu	DASH	124,265	1,813	5	
	HALO Trust	69,436	255	0	HALO reported to Mine Action Review clearing 155,264m ² , and destroying 513 AP mines
	MAG	36,068	93	0	MAG reported to Mine Action Review clearing 124,309m ² , and destroying 475 AP mines
Trincomalee	SLA HDU	36,314	53	0	
	MAG	38,402	108	0	MAG reported to Mine Action Review clearing 103,428m ² , and destroying 212 AP mines
Vavuniya	SLA HDU	72,202	1,626	0	
	MAG	65,501	78	0	MAG reported to Mine Action Review clearing 202,313m ² , and destroying 1,348 AP mines
Totals		1,201,239	9,000*	5	2,458,276m² cleared and 13,820 AP mines and 37 AV mines destroyed (based HALO and MAG data only)

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle *Of the 9,000 anti-personnel mines destroyed, 16 were of an improvised nature.

In addition, a further 42 anti-personnel mines were destroyed by during EOD spot tasks in 2019: 2 by DASH and 40 by HALO Trust.¹⁰⁹

According to the NMAC, two mined areas were cleared by MAG in 2019, which proved to contain no anti-personnel mines.¹¹⁰

HALO also reported clearing 86 devices of an improvised nature during clearance, which due to the clearance methodology (for example mechanical clearance), it was not possible for HALO to identify the method of initiation. Degradation of items, particularly LTTE-laid devices in jungle areas, also contributes to this challenge. Of the 36 minefields completed by HALO Trust in 2019, all contained anti-personnel mines.¹¹¹

The total area released by MAG in 2019 was very similar to the previous year, despite a significant increase in clearance capacity during 2019. The reason for this is that the ratio of clearance to technical survey shifted from 55:45 in 2018 to 20:80 in 2019. MAG reported that as at April its 2020 tasks were also continuing to require a greater focus on clearance. Of the 4,829 anti-personnel mines destroyed by MAG during clearance in 2019, 20 were of an improvised nature. No mines or UXO were found during clearance of a MAG task Trincomalee in 2019, and only one item of UXO was destroyed at another task in Vavuniya. All of MAG's other clearance tasks contained mines.¹¹²

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	*2.94
2018	3.46
2017	3.25
2016	2.35
2015	3.52
Total	15.52

*Mine Action Review calculation

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Sri Lanka is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 June 2028. It should still complete clearance by this deadline and may even fulfil its Article 5 obligations by the end of 2025, but this was looking less likely as at 1 September 2020.

Sri Lanka's target to complete mine clearance by the end of 2020, was overly ambitious and contingent on significantly increasing funding and capacity. The anticipated increase in capacity of the SLA demining units did not materialise as was hoped,¹¹³ with expansion hindered by the army's focus on responding to the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks in April 2019 and by the subsequent COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, progress towards achieving the 2020 target was also hampered by the continued discovery of new, previously unknown mined area adding to the contamination baseline.

According to international operators, despite challenges such as the constitutional crisis, terrorist attacks in 2019, and COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Sri Lankan government is still committed to complete mine clearance before 2025, but it needs sustained political and financial support from the international community to achieve the target.¹¹⁴

The re-launch of the National Mine Action Strategy in March 2019 and the government of Sri Lanka's renewed commitment to becoming mine free, has however, attracted new attention from the international donor community and operators reported receiving increased funding.¹¹⁵ As a result of additional funding, HALO was deploying an increased clearance capacity in 2020 (an average of 98 clearance teams, compared to the average of 74 teams in 2019), and also an additional non-technical survey team too from April.¹¹⁶ MAG's capacity has also risen significantly from 18 MATs, 7 MSTs and 11 CETs in 2018 to 36 MATs, 18 MSTs and 21 CETs by December 2019, and it expected to continue to increase capacity in 2020.¹¹⁷

HALO Trust was due to complete clearance of all HALO allocated tasks before the end of 2020 with a capacity of 700 staff. In contrast, two other operators had too many tasks allocated to them which would see mine clearance continue for many more years. Considering this mismatch, and HALO's recent increase in capacity to over 1000 staff, the NMAC allocated additional minefield tasks to HALO and particularly those minefields where the terrain is better suited to mechanical clearance. This additional tasking being added to HALO's overall clearance plan is crucial in helping Sri Lanka fulfil its Article 5 commitment as soon as possible, by ensuring that all operators are working at maximum capacity up to completion.¹¹⁸

HALO, in coordination with NMAC and its RMAO, has now cleared the majority of accessible SLA-laid minefields in Jaffna district. While the High Security Zone is currently only accessible to the SLA, the HALO Trust hopes to work in partnership with the SLA to assess and clear any remaining contamination when areas of the High Security Zone are made accessible.¹¹⁹ The SLA is currently conducting clearance within the High Security Zone, but it is not known how much mined area remains within the zone.

At the same time, HALO Trust was continuing to focus operations on the Muhamalai minefield, along with other tasks in southern Kilinochchi district and northern Mullaitivu district.¹²⁰

Newly identified and previously unrecorded mined areas continue to be discovered. In 2019, HALO discovered more than 0.7km² of previously unknown mined area and MAG identified more than 1.1km².¹²¹ HALO Trust believes that until the end-state/completion survey has been conducted and the forecasting tool finalized, it is not possible to accurately forecast when Sri Lanka will fulfil its Article 5 commitments. However, providing donors continue current levels of funding for mine clearance and the NMAC allocates minefield tasks proportionally to demining operator capacity, HALO is confident Sri Lanka will be mine free before the end of 2025.¹²²

In agreement with NMAC, in early 2020 MAG introduced a pilot for a district-level 'completion survey' with the aim to conduct a final survey of a district to identify any as yet unidentified areas of mine contamination.¹²³ It was agreed with NMAC and other operators that the process would include: a desktop assessment, meetings with District Secretariats (DS) and Grama Niladari (GN) authorities, and group interviews with communities at village level to determine whether there is further knowledge of any remaining hazardous areas (HAs) and/or explosive ordnance. According to MAG, "if any such report is made, standard non-technical survey activities will be conducted, to identify any remaining evidence through key informant interviews and a field visit. If required, new SHAs/CHAs will be then

recorded on the IMSMA database and technical survey and clearance operations will be conducted as per normal tasking procedures." According to MAG, upon completion of this process, NMAC would be able to inform GNs, the DS, and Government Administrator (GA) that "all reasonable effort" had been applied to identify and release all mined area. Following some initial issues around conducting the pilot in Trincomalee, the pilot district survey was currently on hold as at August 2020, but a pilot in Mannar district had resumed.¹²⁴ It was anticipated though that NMAC and the operators will work with relevant authorities, including the military, to relaunch the survey after the general elections (which were subsequently postponed to August 2020, due to COVID-19). Dependent on the results of the pilot project, NMAC will then make a decision regarding rolling-out the process to other districts.¹²⁵

At the time of writing, the full impact of COVID-19 on Sri Lanka, the sector, and donors was unknown but it is likely that disruption may occur, particularly as the army diverts resources to respond to the pandemic.¹²⁶ Due to COVID-19, HALO Trust and MAG stopped land release operations in Sri Lanka on 18 March. With the permission of national authorities and with COVID-19 mitigation measures in place and staggered deployment, HALO Trust resumed demining operations on 30 April 2020, with 45% of teams deployed, rising to 100% by mid-May.¹²⁷ MAG recommenced its operations on 23 May 2020, staggering deployment to adhere to physical distancing rules.¹²⁸

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Sri Lanka's Mine Action strategy commits the government of Sri Lanka to ensure that relevant plans are in place to ensure effective management of residual contamination.¹²⁹ It sets out that the NMAC will lead efforts to plan for a transitional phase, a process which will involve the SLA, relevant government ministries, and civil society, noting that post-completion roles and responsibilities for management of residual contamination must be clarified, transparent, and communicated to all relevant stakeholders. It also commits the government and mine action operators to develop strategies for the demobilisation of deminers as completion approaches, in order to enable them vocational training and other employment prospects.¹³⁰ As at August 2020, the NMAC reported that the Sri Lankan Army EOD team was deployed to cover residual contamination.¹³¹

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| <p>1 Email from V. Premachanthiran, Deputy Director, National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), 25 August 2020.</p> <p>2 Email from Sasi Jalatheepan, Deputy Director, NMAC, 11 August 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), p. 9. The Article 7 report states that the amount of suspected hazardous area remaining was 1,392,454m², but still reports total contamination as 24,002,670m², which is consistent with Sri Lanka's reporting to Mine Action Review that the size of the remaining amount of SHA was in fact 1,575,237m². Article 7 Report (covering 2018), p. 11. There were also discrepancies and inconsistencies in the figures reported in the Article 7 report on the projections for cleared area not included in IMSMA; area to be cancelled; and area to be reduced versus the total estimate of remaining contamination based on these projections.</p> <p>3 Emails from Belinda Vause, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; Valentina Stivanello, Programme Manager, MAG, 6 April 2020; and GICHD, 13 May 2020.</p> <p>4 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), p. 5.</p> <p>5 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.</p> <p>6 Ibid.</p> <p>7 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.</p> <p>8 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.</p> <p>9 Ibid.</p> <p>10 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.</p> <p>11 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.</p> <p>12 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.</p> <p>13 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Statement of Sri Lanka, Fourth APMBRC Review Conference, Oslo, 29 November 2020.</p> <p>14 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.</p> <p>15 Ibid.</p> <p>16 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.</p> | <p>17 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.</p> <p>18 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.</p> <p>19 Email from Simon Rea, MAG, 3 September 2020.</p> <p>20 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.</p> <p>21 Interviews with demining operators, Colombo, 29 March–2 April 2010; and with Maj. Pradeep Gamage, Officer-in-Charge, North Jaffna Humanitarian Demining Unit (HDU), Jaffna, 3 April 2007.</p> <p>22 Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs, "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.</p> <p>23 Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs, "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6; and interview with Rob Syfret, Operations Manager, HALO Trust, in Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.</p> <p>24 Email from Valon Kumnova, HALO Trust, 11 April 2014; and "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.</p> <p>25 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.</p> <p>26 Email from Matthew Hovell, Regional Director, HALO Trust, 30 September 2018.</p> <p>27 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.</p> <p>28 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 2 September 2020.</p> <p>29 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 12.</p> <p>30 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 9.</p> <p>31 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.</p> <p>32 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 22.</p> <p>33 Initial Article 7 Report, submitted in 2018, p. 13; and Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 12.</p> <p>34 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.</p> |
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- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 37 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 40 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 6.
- 41 "The Socioeconomic Impact of Employing Female Deminers in Sri Lanka", GICHD, July 2020, available at: bit.ly/33aAIGb.
- 42 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 6.
- 46 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 47 Emails from Belinda Vause, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019 and 3 April 2020; Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 48 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 49 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 14 July 2020.
- 50 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 51 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 52 Emails from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 23 June 2020; and Simon Rea, MAG, 3 September 2020.
- 53 Emails from Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 54 Emails from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April and 23 June 2020.
- 55 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018.
- 56 Emails from Bartholomew Digby, HALO Trust, 5 March 2018; Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018 and 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 57 Email from Asa Masleberg, GICHD, 5 September 2019.
- 58 Email from Asa Masleberg, GICHD, 23 June 2020.
- 59 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 60 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 61 Email from Asa Masleberg, GICHD, 23 June 2020.
- 62 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 11.
- 63 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 64 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 23 June 2020.
- 67 Email from Simon Rea, MAG, 3 September 2020.
- 68 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Revised version, September 2018, p. 11.
- 69 Ibid., p. 13.
- 70 Ibid., p. 11.
- 71 Ibid., p. 4.
- 72 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 73 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 14 July 2020.
- 74 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 75 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 76 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 3.
- 77 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 23 June 2020; and GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 78 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
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- 80 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 81 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 23 June 2020.
- 82 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 83 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 84 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 85 Emails from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020; V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 86 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Email from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019.
- 89 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 90 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 91 Ibid.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 94 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 95 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 96 Emails from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 97 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 98 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 99 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 100 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 101 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 102 Ibid.; and emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 103 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 104 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 105 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 2 September 2020; and Simon Rea, MAG, 3 September 2020.
- 106 Emails from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July and 22 August 2019.
- 107 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 108 Emails from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 109 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 110 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 111 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April and 14 July 2020.
- 112 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 113 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 114 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 115 Emails from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 116 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 117 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 118 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.
- 119 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 14 July 2020.
- 120 Ibid, 9 August 2019.
- 121 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 122 Ibid.
- 123 Emails from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 124 Email from Simon Rea, MAG, 3 September 2020.
- 125 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.
- 126 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.
- 127 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 14 July 2020.
- 128 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 23 June 2020.
- 129 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 1.
- 130 Ibid., p. 17.
- 131 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 APRIL 2023
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

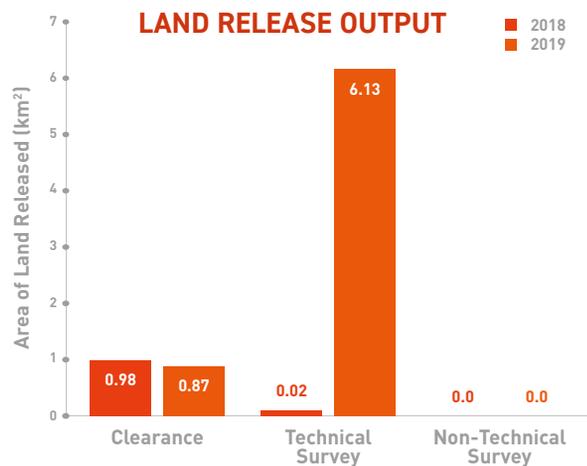
MEDIUM, 10 KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0.87 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

1



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Sudan's land release output increased in 2019, exceeding its land release target for the year, due to an improved security situation and an increase in funding. However, during clearance Sudan only found and destroyed one anti-personnel mine, indicating extremely poor survey. Positively, Sudan initiated a baseline survey in 2019, which should allow it to establish a more accurate estimate of contamination. Completion is, though, heavily dependent on improvements in the security situation in both Blue Nile and South Kordofan states..

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Sudan should ensure it only clears land where there is firm evidence of mine contamination.
- Sudan should clarify land release targets and ensure that land release and contamination figures are consistent and correct in any official reporting.
- Sudan should provide updated work plans as the baseline survey progresses and it has a more accurate understanding of remaining contamination.
- Sudan should continue its efforts to encourage international operators to return, which could significantly boost mine action capacity and output.
- Sudan should endorse the new national mine action strategic plan for 2019-2023 and the revised national mine action standards (NMAS).

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	7	Sudan initiated non-technical survey towards the end of 2019 to establish a national baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination. Survey will take place across South Kordofan, West Kordofan, Blue Nile and the five Darfur states with planned completion by the end of 2021. However, this is dependent upon access being granted to currently insecure areas. It is expected that newly found contamination will be added to the database but that a large proportion of existing suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) will be cancelled.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	7	Sudan's national mine action programme is entirely nationally owned. It benefits from experienced national mine action centre staff and national mine action operators. The government has provided consistent funding for mine action reported at US\$2 million per year. Sudan projects that \$33 million is required for land release from 2020 to 2023.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	Gender is said to be mainstreamed in the national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 and in the national mine action standards, with an emphasis on gender-balanced survey teams and the employment of women. At the same time, Sudan acknowledges difficulties in employing women in operational roles due to local customs and traditions. However, Sudan has managed to achieve gender parity in non-technical survey teams and in 2019, the programme hired its first female deminer.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	8	The process of upgrading Sudan's Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) is ongoing. During 2019, improvements were made to the reporting process and staff were given additional training to reflect the changes. At the request of States Parties, Sudan submitted its updated work plan to 2023 and while the objectives are sound the plan is let down by numerous errors and discrepancies in contamination and land release figures, causing the plan to lack clarity.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	7	A new national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 has been finalised and, as at April 2020, is still awaiting endorsement. Sudan has provided updated land release targets in its work plan to 2023 which require some clarification. It is expected that this plan will be updated as survey progresses and should security improve and access increase.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	7	Sudan's revised National Mine Action Standards were still awaiting endorsement as at April 2020. During clearance of mined areas in 2019, Sudan only found and destroyed one anti-personnel mine, indicating extremely poor survey. There was no change in operational capacity in 2019 but it was planned that Sudan would increase its non-technical survey capacity in 2020. A mine action training centre was established in 2019.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	6	Sudan exceeded its land release target for 2019 with a massive increase in technical survey output. Its clearance output fell from 2018, however, with only one anti-personnel mine found and destroyed. Sudan's updated work plan to 2023 projects large amounts of cancellation through non-technical survey though none has taken place in the past two years. Ongoing peace talks are encouraging and increased access through improved security would allow Sudan to complete its baseline survey and increase land release output providing it has the required capacity in place.
Average Score	6.5	6.8	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Sudanese National Mine Action Authority (NMAA)
- Sudan National Mine Action Centre (NMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD)
- JASMAR for Human Security
- Friends for Peace and Development Organization (FDPO)
- Global Aid Hand

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2019, Sudan reported a total of 95 areas suspected or confirmed to contain anti-personnel mines, covering a total area of just under 13.28km². According to the Sudanese National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), of this total, 52 areas covering 2.4km² are confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), while a further 43 areas covering almost 10.9km² are suspected hazardous areas (SHAs). For details, see Table 1.¹ This is a decrease from the 18.9km² of total anti-personnel mine contaminated area reported as at the end of 2018. The main difference between the 2018 and 2019 figures is in the total area covered by SHAs, which has decreased by 5.64km².² This difference cannot be explained by land release during 2019.

Sudan reported in its multiyear work plan 2020–23 that as at 1 March 2020 there were 90 recorded hazardous areas contaminated with anti-personnel mines in eight localities within the Blue Nile, South Kordofan and West Kordofan states covering 19km².³

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by state (at end 2019)⁴

State	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHA/CHA	Total area (m ²)
Blue Nile	4	219,663	7	840,889	11	1,060,552
South Kordofan	48	2,182,597	33	10,014,564	81	12,197,161
Western Kordofan	0	0	3	21,991	3	21,991
Totals	52	2,402,260	43	10,877,444	95	13,279,704

South Kordofan is believed to be the most heavily contaminated state, as set out in Table 1.⁵ On 4 April 2019, Abu Karshola town in South Kordofan state, once heavily contaminated with mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), was declared free of known contamination, a positive indication of increasing access and improvements in the security situation.⁶ No mines have been reported in Darfur, where the main threat is from ERW.⁷ The extent of mine and ERW contamination within the disputed area of Abyei and the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone (SDBZ) between Sudan and South Sudan is unknown due to security and political issues.⁸ An additional 28 areas covering nearly 11km² are suspected to contain only anti-vehicle mines, as set out in Table 2.⁹

Table 2: Mined area (at end 2019)¹⁰

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Anti-personnel mines	52	2,402,260	43	10,877,444
Anti-vehicle mines	0	0	28	10,849,256
Totals	52	2,402,260	71	21,726,700

Sudan's mine and ERW contamination results from decades-long conflict since the country's independence in 1956. Twenty years of civil war, during which mines and other explosive ordnance were used heavily by all parties to the conflicts, resulted in widespread contamination that has claimed thousands of victims.¹¹ In January 2005, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) ostensibly ended the civil war. A Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) was conducted in 2007–09 covering Blue Nile, Gadaref, Kassala, Red Sea, and South Kordofan states, before armed conflict erupted again in 2011 and continued until 2016. It is expected that more areas will be found to be contaminated with explosive ordnance including anti-personnel mines. There have been "ad hoc" reports of additional mined and ERW-contaminated areas which have been registered as "dangerous areas" in the national database. This has caused the LIS baseline of 221 hazards to expand significantly, including by encompassing areas not originally surveyed.¹²

NMAC reported that significant survey is required to more accurately determine the actual extent of anti-personnel mine contamination in Sudan.¹³ NMAC initiated non-technical survey in November 2019, which was due to continue throughout 2020 and 2021 across South Kordofan, West Kordofan, Blue Nile, and the five Darfur states to establish evidence-based, accurate baselines of contamination for all explosive ordnance.¹⁴ The NMAC predicts that up to 90% of existing SHAs will be cancelled, based on historical Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) data.¹⁵ Once surveys have been completed a revised clearance plan will be shared with States Parties to the APMBC.¹⁶ However, insecurity and lack of access is a major impediment to the completion of survey as most of the known impacted communities in Blue Nile, South Kordofan and Jabal Marra areas in the Darfur states are still inaccessible.¹⁷ The UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) reported that all affected communities are being consulted during non-technical survey, with special attention being paid to at-risk communities.

In 2019, a total of 65,083m² of previously unrecorded legacy anti-personnel mine contamination across two mined areas in the states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan was added to the database.¹⁸

EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND CLUSTER MUNITION REMNANTS

Sudan also has a significant problem with ERW, including very limited contamination from cluster munition remnants, primarily as a result of the more than 20 years of civil war that led to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 and South Sudan's independence in July 2011 (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Sudan for further information). While no mines have been found in Darfur, ERW there includes unexploded air-delivered bombs, rockets, artillery and mortar shells, and grenades.¹⁹ According to the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), 81 localities in Darfur are highly affected by ERW, 431 localities in the medium category, and 84 localities that have low impacts from contamination.²⁰

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Sudanese National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) and NMAC manage Sudan's mine action programme. Upon the independence of South Sudan, NMAC assumed full ownership of national mine action with responsibility for coordinating and supervising the implementation of all mine action activities, including quality assurance (QA), accreditation and certification of clearance operators. Sudan adopted the Mine Action Bill by Presidential Decree No. 51 in March 2010. The act is comprised of 29 articles divided into four chapters. Chapter four covers APMBBC obligations, such as clearance of contaminated areas and reporting, and penalties for those who work in mine action without obtaining a licence from NMAC.²¹

After starting an emergency programme in 2002, UNMAS re-established activities in Sudan in 2015, following an invitation from the Sudanese Government, in an advisory and support capacity, to further enhance the national mine action capacity and support the country to meet its APMBBC obligations.²² As part of its mandate, UNMAS provides organisational and individual capacity development to NMAC.²³

As UNISFA does not have a mandate to conduct mine clearance, UNMAS continued its UN Security Council-mandated role in Abyei, which includes identification and clearance of mines and route assessment in the SDBZ and Abyei through its implementing partners, in support of peacekeeping operations, humanitarian aid delivery, safe return of internally displaced populations (IDPs), and the nomadic migration of animals.²⁴

In Darfur, under the umbrella of UNAMID, UNMAS works under the name of the Ordnance Disposal Office (ODO) in direct support of UNAMID priorities.²⁵ UN Security Council Resolution 2429 (2018) called the complete closure of UNAMID by June 2020.²⁶ As at May 2020, UNAMID teams were still working and UNMAS reported that they might continue working throughout 2020.²⁷

Sudan is part of the Arab Regional Cooperation Programme (ARPC) and as part of this programme, which is coordinated by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the NMAA attend regional trainings and workshops. In December 2019, the NMAA attended the ARPC annual conference where they discussed and approved recently translated IMAS into Arabic and shared experiences of their own NMAS.²⁸

In 2019, the Government of Sudan contributed a total of US\$2 million to the running costs of NMAC and for demining activities. It has consistently funded the national mine action programme at this level for the past four years.²⁹ In addition, international donors contributed US\$5.84 million through UNMAS to undertake mine action activities. UNMAS reported that, in 2020, a total of \$15.8 million would be required to meet mine action needs in the country, including demining in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states and ERW response in Darfur.³⁰

In 2018, Sudan reported that as a result of enhanced cooperation, both nationally and internationally, in particular stemming from a meeting on Sudan of the APMBBC's Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance's "individualised approach" initiative in 2017, a number of positive developments had resulted. This initiative, Sudan reported, alongside nationally convened mine action events and donor field visits to mine-affected areas, had resulted in an increase in earmarked funds to the mine action programme, with some US\$7.1 million in new funding for mine action pledged by the governments of Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.³¹

Sudan's resource mobilisation strategy aims to increase donations from existing donors; increase the number and sources of donations; and increase the amount of the government's contribution. This includes identifying new donors, including Gulf States; emerging economies receptive to becoming "donor" governments; and "non-conventional" partners such as philanthropists, private individuals and foundations; and commercial companies and corresponding funding modalities and mechanisms. Sudan has estimated in its 2020–23 work plan that \$33.7 million will be required for land release. In 2020, Sudan has reported that sufficient funding is in place for the year but that if currently inaccessible areas open up then the programme will need additional funds for an emergency post-conflict mine action response.³²

In Sudan, not including Jabal Maarah and Abyei, UNMAS and NMAC lead mine action sub-cluster meetings to coordinate progress, challenges, and support for Article 5 implementation in Sudan. All relevant implementing partners, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), UN agencies and government authorities participate. During these meetings mine action projects for the annual Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) are developed and prioritised through a consultation process with all stakeholders.³³

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In 2019, NMAC reported that it has a gender and diversity policy in place and that gender is mainstreamed in the national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 and in the national mine action standards. It stated that under those standards, all survey and community liaison teams are to be gender balanced, and that women and children are consulted during survey and community liaison activities. It said that gender is also taken into account in the prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance, as per the national standards and the new standard IMSMA forms.³⁴

Mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age.³⁵ UNMAS reported working with NMAC and implementing partners to improve this aspect of mine action reporting and information management because sex and age disaggregated data of land release beneficiaries were not being captured in IMSMA.³⁶ New reporting tools were added to the system and new reporting formats were developed for the NGOs to include this information.³⁷

NMAC says it always encourages women to apply for employment in the national programme, whether at the office level or in the field. Positively, it reported that almost 40% of NMAC staff employed at the managerial or supervisory levels are women. But it acknowledged that few women were employed in operational roles in survey and clearance teams due to "local customs and traditions".³⁸ UNMAS reported that, as at May 2020, around 55% of the new non-technical survey teams are female. One female deminer started in late 2019, and it is hoped to increase in the number of female deminers in the future.³⁹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

As at April 2020, NMAC informed Mine Action Review that it was using both the IMSMA legacy version in parallel with the newer version, IMSMA-NG.⁴⁰ In 2018, NMAC began a process of upgrading the IMSMA software to the newer New Generation version, with assistance from the GICHD. Significant efforts to correct errors in the database were also undertaken.⁴¹ In 2019, new reporting tools were designed and new reporting formats were developed in IMSMA-NG, IMSMA staff and NGO staff were trained, and all old forms were removed. However, some data still need to be migrated and the GICHD has been contacted to support this. In 2020, NMAC planned to commence online data collection and to obtain the ArcGIS and Esri License.⁴² The database contains old information about the disputed Abyei area.⁴³ However, UNMAS informed Mine Action Review in June 2019 that UNISFA was working with NMAC on database sharing and had co-located an IMSMA officer within the NMAC office in Khartoum to help share historical data, while it was also providing NMAC a monthly report on activities in Abyei.⁴⁴

Sudan's extension request submitted in 2018 was notably thorough, generally of good quality, and includes a work plan with annual targets for completion.⁴⁵ The request does, however, contain discrepancies in the total amounts of survey and clearance output projections.⁴⁶ Sudan submitted its Article 7 report in a timely fashion and, as per the extension request decision, an updated work plan for 2020 to 2023. Again, the major issue is with errors in the figures.⁴⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

In May 2019, NMAC reported that a new national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 had been finalised and was awaiting approval. The plan aims to fulfil Sudan's APMBBC obligations, and was developed in coordination with the GICHD to replace its previous national strategy for 2016–19.⁴⁸ NMAC stated that detailed annual work plans had been developed for each year under the new strategic plan.⁴⁹ As at April 2020, the strategic plan was still awaiting approval.⁵⁰

Sudan's 2018 extension request contained a detailed work plan with annual survey and clearance projections on a state-by-state basis with a total planned release for all types of ordnance of 224 hazardous areas with a size of 26.5km² by 1 April 2023 (see Table 3). During 2019, Sudan planned to release 16 SHAs and 2 CHAs, cancelling 4.9km² through non-technical survey, and releasing 0.5km² through technical survey and clearance.⁵¹ In 2019, Sudan released only four SHAs but massively surpassed its technical survey/clearance target with a total area of just over 7km². There was, however, no cancellation through non-technical survey.⁵² The main reason for this was limited access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile due to insecurity.⁵³

Table 3: Annual land release targets (2017–23)⁵⁴

Year	SHAs	CHAs	Cancelled through NTS (km ²)	Released through TS/clearance (km ²)	Total SHAs/CHAs	Total area (km ²)
2017–18	80	3	3,783,116	420,346	83	4,203,462
2018–19	54	3	11,944,390	1,327,154	57	13,271,544
2019–20	16	2	4,943,930	549,326	18	5,493,256
2020–21	4	16	1,045,828	116,203	20	1,162,031
2021–22	13	7	1,054,315	117,146	20	1,171,461
2022–23	4	22	1,044,614	116,068	26	1,160,682
Totals	171	53	23,816,193	2,646,243	224	26,462,436

In 2020, in accordance with the terms of its latest Article 5 extension, Sudan submitted an updated work plan for 1 March 2020–31 March 2023 with revised estimates of contamination, annual targets for land release, and budgetary requirements. Sudan has also promised to provide annual updates to this work plan based on new evidence and to report on adjusted milestones in their Article 7 reports, including information on the number and size of the contaminated areas to be addressed and on how priorities have been established.⁵⁵ Sudan included updated annual land release projections to 2023, though again this was not disaggregated by type of ordnance (see Table 4). This table differs from the annual land release projections provided in Sudan's latest Article 7 report.

Table 4: Annual land release targets (2019–23)⁵⁶

Year	SHAs	CHAs	Cancelled through NTS (km ²)	Released through TS/clearance (km ²)	Total SHAs/CHAs	Total area (km ²)
2019-20	50	8	5,486,687	147,267	58	5,633,954
2020-21	69	16	10,332,944	147,153	85	10,480,097
2021-22	66	19	7,785,727	1,457,643	85	9,243,370
2022-23	22	8	1,450,916	462,678	30	1,913,594
Totals	207	51	25,056,274	2,214,741	258	27,271,015

One of the main operations in 2020 will be opening the roads and routes in newly accessible areas in support of humanitarian aid delivery. Sudan also plans to initiate clearance on the border with Chad. Dependent on the security situation, re-survey of recorded hazardous areas and survey of communities close to these areas will take place in Abyei. UNMAS planned to deploy four multi-task teams throughout Darfur in addition to the UNAMID teams that are working in the area.⁵⁷

UNMAS reported that all task dossiers relating to survey and clearance are issued in accordance with agreed criteria and prioritisation. NMAC and UNMAS are working together on planning and tasking to meet the need for further development.⁵⁸ A systematic prioritisation system will be introduced as part of the new NMAS and linked with IMSMA with each SHA and CHA classified as high, medium, or low impact and prioritised accordingly.⁵⁹ During prioritisation, in addition to taking the affected communities needs into account, all stakeholders are consulted to also take their objectives into account. NMAC expects the prioritisation process to be more effective once the baseline survey has been completed.⁶⁰

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In May 2019, NMAC reported that a review of Sudan's NMAS had been completed and the revised standards were awaiting endorsement.⁶¹ As at August 2020, these were still awaiting endorsement.⁶² NMAS were reviewed by a technical committee comprised of representatives from NMAC, UNMAS, and national operators with the support of an international expertise from UNAMID-ODO. Once the NMAS are endorsed they will be uploaded on the NMAC website and all mine action operators will need to ensure their SOPs comply with the new NMAS.⁶³

NMAC confirmed that in 2018, QA and quality control (QC) activities were carried out according to the NMAS.⁶⁴ During 2019, NMAC has completed 46 accreditations and 33 QA visits. During 2019, the accreditation of Global Aid Hand was reviewed and survey and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) were added to their EORE existing accreditation.⁶⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2019, no international NGOs were demining in Sudan. National operators are JASMAR for Human Security (JASMAR), National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD), the Friends for Peace and Development Organization (FPDO), and Global Aid Hand. A commercial demining company (Dynasafe) and national mine action organisation (NUMAD) continue operations in Darfur funded by UNAMID to conduct non-technical survey, surface/subsurface battle area clearance and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks.⁶⁶

Table 5: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁶⁷

Operator	Manual clearance teams (MCTs)/ Multi-task teams (MTTs)	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines
FPDO	2 MCTs	16	0	0
NUMAD	4 MCTs 5 MTTs	32 20	9 dogs & 3 handlers	0
JASMAR	3 MTTs	12	0	0
Totals	14	80	9/3	0

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers.

Table 6: Operational survey capacities deployed in 2019⁶⁸

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS personnel*	TS teams	Total TS personnel*
JASMAR	3	6	Clearance capacity is also technical survey capacity	
NUMAD	0	0		
Global Aid Hand	7	14		
Totals	10	20		

According to NMAC there was no change in operational capacity from 2018 to 2019 until November 2019 when additional non-technical survey capacity was deployed by JASMAR and Global Aid Hand.⁶⁹ According to UNMAS, the MCTs and MTTs were not only working on anti-personnel mine clearance but also on priority areas contaminated with anti-vehicle mines and ERW. This is because most of the anti-personnel mine contaminated areas are located in Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLMN)-controlled areas.⁷⁰ In Darfur, in 2019, clearance operations continued to be conducted by commercial operator Dynasafe and NUMAD.⁷¹ The clearance capacity was not fully operational throughout the year with the FPDO deployed only until May 2019. Two of the NUMAD MTTs were tasked with investigating residual risk in Kassala state, which was announced free from known mined areas and ERW contamination in 2018. Some of the teams only became operational in October 2019 as the season in most parts of Sudan, especially South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, runs from October to June the following year.⁷²

Demining in Sudan is carried out primarily using manual clearance, as well as through the use of mine detection dog (MDD) teams. In 2019, a mine action training centre was established, MDD training and accreditation sites were re-established with increased number of training and accreditation boxes, two non-technical survey training courses were also delivered. It is planned that new mechanical assets would be deployed in 2020.⁷³

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 7,001,425m² of mined area was released in 2019, of which 874,068m² was cleared and 6,127,357m² was reduced through technical survey. Just one anti-personnel mine was found and destroyed. A total of 65,083m² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination was added to the database in 2019.⁷⁴

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 6,127,357m² of mined area was reduced through technical survey by NUMAD in South Kordofan.⁷⁵ A massive increase from the 21,000m² that was reduced in 2018.⁷⁶ No areas were reported cancelled through non-technical survey in 2018 nor 2019.

Table 7: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁷⁷

State	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
South Kordofan	NUMAD	6,127,357
Total		6,127,357

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 874,068m² was cleared by NUMAD, JASMAR, and FPDO in Blue Nile and South Kordofan.⁷⁸ This is a decrease from the 979,448m² that was released through clearance in 2018. In 2018 and in 2019, the number of anti-personnel mines found and destroyed was low, from 31 in 2018 to just one in 2019.⁷⁹ In five of the six areas cleared in 2018 no anti-personnel mines were found but a small number of anti-vehicle mines, 11 in total, were found in all but two of the mined areas.

Table 8: Mine clearance in 2019⁸⁰

State	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Blue Nile	NUMAD	179,900	1	4	7
	JASMAR	2,956	0	2	114
	FPDO	9,396	0	1	2
South Kordofan	NUMAD	660,436	0	4	5747
	JASMAR	11,527	0	0	35
	FPDO	9,853	0	0	3
Totals		874,068	1	11	5,908

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

NMAC and UNMAS reported that four mined areas were cleared in 2019 which proved to contain no anti-personnel mines. Overall there was a significant increase in the amount of land release in 2019, compared to 2018, due to an increase in the amount of funding and an improvement in security situation with expansion in access for the demining teams, both in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states.⁸¹

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the four-year extension granted by States Parties in 2018), Sudan is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 April 2023. It is not on track to meet this deadline.

The updated work plan for 2020 to 2023 foresees a considerable increase in land release output to nearly 10.5km² in 2020 and over 9.2km² in 2021. It is planned that the majority of this, 92%, will be land released by cancellation through non-technical survey of which there was none in 2018 nor 2019. However, Sudan did exceed its land release target for 2019 with a massive increase in its reduction through technical survey output. Sudan's clearance output fell from 2018 to 2019 with just one anti-personnel mine found and destroyed. Sudan is planning to increase its non-technical survey capacity in 2020 and is conducting survey to establish a more accurate baseline of contamination which would improve planning to 2023. While Sudan does expect to cancel a large amount of suspected hazardous area there is also the possibility that a large amount of contamination will be added to the database.

Table 9: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	0.87
2018	0.98
2017	0.71
2016	1.04
2015	0.42
Total	4.02

The main impediment to survey and clearance is the security situation and the lack of access to most of the known impacted communities in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states.⁸² During 2019, access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile was improved, which allowed for roads to be assessed and cleared opening access for humanitarian assistance and population movement. It is hoped that with the establishment of the transitional government and the onset of peace talks between government and opposition groups that this may lead to a comprehensive nationwide peace agreement. As at June 2020, it was reported that Sudanese parties were entering the final stages of negotiation and were planning to sign an initial peace deal on 20 June.⁸³ This would improve accessibility for the mine action programme but, Sudan reports, it would also pose a challenge as roads and other routes will need to be cleared before people can move safely and humanitarian assistance can be provided and Sudan does not currently have the capacity to be able to do this.⁸⁴

In addition, Sudan reported that obstacles to completion include: inadequate funding for mine action, outdated demining equipment that is not fit for purpose which restricts Sudan's ability to operate at full capacity, poor infrastructure which also impedes access and, difficult climatic conditions.⁸⁵ A further significant factor which continues to impede progress is a lack of clearance capacity formerly provided by international demining operators. Sudan has made numerous requests for technical and logistical support and appeals for international operators to return.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Sudan has a plan to deal with residual risk and liability post-completion, but it requires that the national capacity is restructured. As at April 2020, NMAC deals with any residual contamination in the eastern states.⁸⁶

- 1 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, Technical Advisor, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 2 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019.
- 3 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 15.
- 4 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 5 According to NMAC, however, as these two states have been inaccessible due to insecurity for many years, the information recorded in the database for these states may no longer be accurate, and survey will be carried out as soon as the security situation permits. NMAC, "Updated Work Plan to Meet Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Article Five Extended Deadline by April 2019", 30 April 2017.
- 6 Statement of Sudan, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 7 Article 7 Report (covering 2015), Forms C and F.
- 8 UNMAS, "2019 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan".
- 9 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, Chief of Operations, NMAC, 9 May 2016.
- 12 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Executive Summary, 25 November 2013, pp. 2-3.
- 13 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 14 Ibid.; and Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 17.
- 15 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 22.
- 16 Ibid., p. 23.
- 17 Ibid., p. 14.
- 18 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020; and Aimal Safi, Senior Operations and QM Advisor, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 19 UNMAS, "2018 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan", at: bit.ly/2GjD3nm.
- 20 UNMAS, "2019 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan", at: bit.ly/3d0FtVH.
- 21 GICHD, "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Sudan", March 2012; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 22 UNMAS, "Sudan (excluding Darfur)", Updated March 2019, at: bit.ly/2Y3IDUg.
- 23 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 24 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Abyei", updated May 2016, at: bit.ly/32DIUPk; UNISFA, "UNISFA Mandate"; and UNMAS "UNMAS Annual Report 2019", New York, 2019, p. 8.
- 25 UNMAS, "2017 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan".
- 26 UNMAS, "Sudan (excluding Darfur)", Updated March 2019, at: bit.ly/2Y3IDUg.
- 27 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 28 Email from Hayder AlShakeri, Programme Officer, GICHD, 13 August 2020.
- 29 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 30 UNMAS, "Sudan (excluding Darfur)", Updated March 2019.
- 31 Statement of Sudan, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 28 November 2018.
- 32 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 15.
- 33 UNMAS, "2019 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan" at: bit.ly/3d0FtVH; and email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 34 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020; and from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 35 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 36 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 37 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 22 July 2020.
- 38 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019.
- 39 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 40 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 41 Emails from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May and 8 June 2016; and Third APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, March 2018, pp. 37-38.
- 42 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020; and from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 43 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 44 Email from Dandan Xu, Associate Programme Management Officer, UNMAS, 28 June 2019.
- 45 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Table 26, p. 53.
- 46 Sudan's extension request also states that a total of 53 CHAs with a size of 22.2km² and 171 SHAs with a size of 24km² will be released, with a total land release projection of 26.4km² on p. 51 and then claims 53 CHAs with a size of 26.4km² and 171 SHAs with a size of 23.8km² will be addressed, again with a total land release projection of 26.4km² on p. 18.
- 47 In Sudan's Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, Table 4 (p. 11) and Table 6 (p. 12) purport to show the same information but have differing land release figures. Likewise, Table 5 does not match with land release figures in Tables 4 or 6 or with figures provided by NMAC to Mine Action Review on land release of anti-personnel mines in 2018 to 2019. Remaining anti-personnel mine contamination on p. 15 does not match the figures in Table 9, and neither figure matches reported land release. In Table 13 on p. 21, area cancelled through NTS and released through TS/clearance do not add up to total area released and do not match figures in operations plan by state (pp. 22-26). Projected land release figures to 2023 in the Article 7 report (covering 2019) do not match the projections in the work plan.
- 48 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019 and 13 May 2018.
- 49 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019.
- 50 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 51 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Table 26, p. 53.
- 52 Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request Detailed Narrative, 17 August 2018, Table 14, p. 18.
- 55 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 17.
- 56 Ibid., p. 21.
- 57 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 14.
- 60 Ibid., p. 30.
- 61 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019 and 13 May 2018.
- 62 Ibid., 9 April 2020.
- 63 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 64 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019.
- 65 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 11 August 2020.
- 66 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 67 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 22 July 2020.
- 71 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 72 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 7 September 2020.
- 73 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 74 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.
- 75 Ibid.; and email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020; and Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 76 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019.
- 77 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020; and from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019.
- 80 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020; and from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F. UNMAS and NMAC did not report 2,500m² of clearance in Kassala (not included in total above) which was reported in the latest Article 7 Report (covering 2019).
- 81 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020; and from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.
- 82 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 14.
- 83 Sudan Tribune, "Sudanese parties close to signing off on initial peace deal: Arman", 11 June 2020.
- 84 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 36.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2025
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

MEDIUM, 12 KM²
(NATIONAL ESTIMATE)

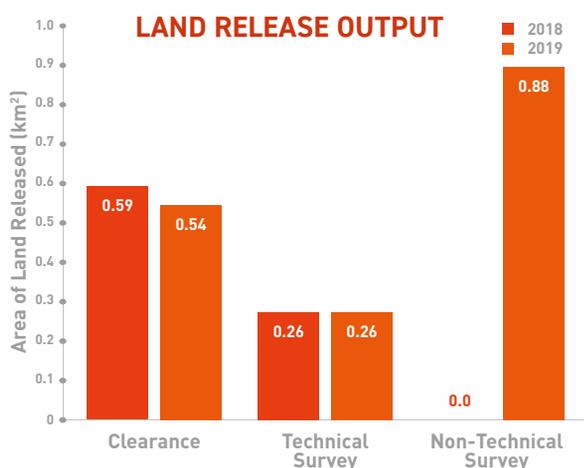
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0.54 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

5,254

(INCLUDING 67 DESTROYED
DURING SPOT TASKS)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2019, Tajikistan sought and obtained an extension to its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline through to the end of 2025 to complete anti-personnel mine clearance, a timeline that looked unrealistic in view of the capacity and resources available. The Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) completed its transition to full national management after the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) concluded its programme of support. It also completed an upgrade of its national mine action database to Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Tajikistan should explore all possible avenues of increasing capacity in order to reach its extension request targets, including training and deployment of Border Guard forces on the Afghan border as deminers.
- TNMAC should set up a Survey Working Group to expedite planning and prioritisation of accelerated survey to reach a clear national baseline estimate of contamination, as outlined in information supporting Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline Extension Request.
- Tajikistan should draw up a resource mobilisation strategy in consultation with key national and international stakeholders.
- Tajikistan should report land release data more accurately and in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	5	Tajikistan lacks a clear baseline estimate of contamination, with 41 SHAs still requiring survey at the end of 2019 and some re-survey planned to more accurately define the extent of other mined areas. Lack of access has also prevented an accurate determination of contamination on the disputed Tajik-Uzbek border.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	7	Tajikistan has strong national ownership of mine action, including through the Ministry of Defence clearance teams. It has political will and provides an enabling environment for Article 5 implementation but plans for achieving it rely on a sharp increase in international donor support.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	7	7	Tajikistan has a national gender strategy drawn up with support from Geneva Mine Action Programme (GMAP), but few women are employed in mine action. Mine Action data is disaggregated by sex and age, and women and children are said to be consulted during community liaison.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	6	TNMAC has upgraded its information management converting its database to IMSMA Core and modified reporting forms to facilitate reporting. The programme still struggles to report on land release accurately and consistently.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	7	Tajikistan's national mine action strategy for 2017–20 has been superseded by an Article 5 extension request that sets out annual targets, but these far exceed past results and require a doubling of capacity. This is dependent on availability of donor funding, which appears unlikely, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	7	Tajikistan has national mine action standards that were revised in 2017 and are IMAS-compliant. They are available in Russian and English. But UNDP has observed that operations could be more effective and efficient through better analysis of data, non-technical and technical survey, and greater use of a range of clearance approaches. Tajikistan reported its mine action capacity in 2019 consisted of a total of 90 deminers. To meet the targets set out in its Article 5 deadline extension request Tajikistan said it would need to double capacity to 180 deminers.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	6	Land released in 2019 was reportedly close to 50% more than in 2018, mainly because of higher rates of cancellation through non-technical survey. Clearance, however, was less than half the annual target set for 2019 and for the period of its Article 5 deadline extension. To accelerate clearance Tajikistan will need increased funding to expand capacity or it will not meet its 2025 completion deadline.
Average Score	6.3	6.3	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law (CIIHL)
- Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- TNMAC
- Ministry of Defence (MoD), Humanitarian Demining Company (HDC)
- Union of Sappers Tajikistan (UST)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- Tajik Border Guard Forces
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Tajikistan estimated its outstanding anti-personnel mine contamination at just short of 12km² at the end of 2019, almost unchanged from the previous year. It included 164 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), covering almost 7.8km², which made-up nearly two-thirds of the total contaminated area, and 85 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) mostly located on the border with Uzbekistan (see Table 1).¹

Tajikistan acknowledges that this data does not yet represent a reliable baseline estimate of contamination. Survey and analysis of minefield records conducted between 2010 and 2018 identified 10.5km² of additional mined area. Tajikistan reported in 2019 that it still needs to survey 41 minefields which it believes affect a little under 1km² and resurvey 30 areas covering approximately 2.8km². It also has yet to determine the extent of contamination on the Uzbek border.²

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end 2019)³

Province	District	CHA		SHA		Total area (m ²)
		Nos.	Area (m ²)	Nos.	Area (m ²)	
Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region	Darvoz	14	960,274	3	303,138	1,263,412
	Vanj	6	908,119	0	0	908,119
	Shugnan	3	56,000	0	0	56,000
	Ishkoshi	0	0	1	5,000	5,000
Subtotals		23	1,924,393	4	308,138	2,232,531
Khatlon	Farkhor	6	96,800	1	8,000	104,800
	Hamadoni	3	80,772	6	177,000	257,772
	Panj	25	1,613,484	5	41,000	1,654,484
	Jayhun	8	135,636	11	307,000	442,636
	Shamsiddin Shohin	94	3,719,243	1	15,000	3,734,243
	Kabodiyon	1	0	0	0	0
	Shahri	1	30,000	0	0	30,000
	Khovaling	2	120,000	1	30,000	150,000
Subtotals		140	5,795,935	25	578,000	6,373,935
Sughd Region (Uzbek border)	Asht	0	0	11	610,000	610,000
	Ayni	0	0	5	535,000	535,000
	Isfara	0	0	20	1,105,000	1,105,000
	Konibodom	0	0	3	165,000	165,000
	Panjakent	0	0	13	715,000	715,000
	Shahriston	0	0	2	120,000	120,000
Subtotals		0	0	54	3,250,000	3,250,000
Central Region	Sangvor	1	50,000	2	50,000	100,000
Subtotals		1	50,000	2	50,000	100,000
Totals		164	7,770,328	85	4,186,138	11,956,466

Mine contamination in Tajikistan is the consequence of different conflicts. Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan was mined by Russian forces in 1992–98; the border with Uzbekistan was mined by Uzbek forces in 1999–2001; and the Central Region of Tajikistan was contaminated as a result of the 1992–97 civil war.⁴

A national survey in 2003–05 by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) estimated that mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination extended over 50km².⁵ Tajikistan subsequently alleged that lack of experience among the initial survey teams, the absence of minefield records and other important information, and inadequate equipment led to that first impact survey generating unreliable results. As a result, the sizes of SHAs were miscalculated and their descriptions not clearly recorded.⁶ While most minefield maps/records are of good quality, some do not reflect the reality on the ground and need to be verified and validated through new survey and data analysis.⁷

Mine contamination remains in the provinces of Khatlon and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) along the Afghan border (reported to contain 60,357 anti-personnel mines); in the Central Region; and along the Uzbek border.⁸ Shamsiddin Shohin district (formerly known as Shurobood district) in Khatlon province is the most heavily mined district. Mines were laid in and around military positions on hilltops overlooking the Panj river valley, mostly delivered remotely by helicopter or laid by troops who were moved in and out by helicopter as there are no established roads or tracks to access the minefields for survey or clearance.⁹

Information about mined areas on the Tajik-Uzbek border is limited and based on non-technical survey conducted in 2011–15 by FSD and a needs assessment survey by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 2013–15. However, the FSD survey only covered one part of the border, Sughd province, and survey teams did not have access to the border and relied mainly on incident forms. As a result, records lack detail on the exact location where mine incidents occurred.¹⁰

Tajikistan and Uzbekistan settled most of their 1,283km-long border dispute following the collapse of the Soviet Union but certain areas have not yet been delineated and the exact location of mined areas is still not known. Most mined areas are thought to be in disputed sections of the Tajik-Uzbek border which have not been accessible and assessed.¹¹ Most of the mines are believed to be on Uzbek territory,¹² but there is a possibility that some mines may have been displaced downhill into Tajikistan due to landslides or flooding.¹³ The 3.25km² of SHA on the border with Uzbekistan, included in Tajikistan's 2019 extension request,¹⁴ is a rough estimate and the actual extent of any anti-personnel mined area on Tajik territory along this border will only be more accurately established once both countries permit survey and have delimited the border. According to online media sources, as at January 2020, mine clearance on the Uzbek side of the border with Tajikistan had been completed.¹⁵

Tajikistan estimates the total size of un-surveyed area to be 941,000m² (with approximately 11,685 mines) and the total area planned for re-survey is 2,770,557m². Survey and re-survey of these areas will be conducted by Union of Sappers of Tajikistan (UST) and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). Tajikistan acknowledges the urgency and importance of establishing a clear baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination as soon as possible, and in August 2019 TNMAC announced that a survey working group will be established with expert representatives from all key stakeholders and implementing partners to help plan and prioritise survey tasks.¹⁶ As of June 2020, however, the working group had not been established.¹⁷

With the introduction of an arrangement for medical evacuation by helicopter, in collaboration with the Armed Forces, there are no longer any mined areas deemed to be "inaccessible".¹⁸ There are, however, mined areas on two islands in the Panj river on the Tajik-Afghan border, one of which is 538,500m² in size and the other 30,000m², which are said to be "non-executable" at the present time. The islands were created by a change in the flow of the river, and it is possible that the river may again change its path and re-connect the islands with the Tajik river bank in the future.¹⁹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law (CIIHL), chaired by the first deputy of the Prime Minister, and containing key representatives from relevant line ministries, acts as Tajikistan's national mine action authority, responsible for mainstreaming mine action in the government's socio-economic development policies.²⁰

TNMAC is the executive arm of CIIHL and the body coordinating mine action, responsible for issuing task orders, information management and quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC).²¹ It was set up by government decree in January 2014 replacing the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre and taking over the process of managing transition to a fully nationally-owned programme.²² In 2016, Tajikistan's Parliament adopted a Law on Humanitarian Mine Action, which covers all aspects of mine action, and in 2017 it approved a national mine action strategy for 2017–20.²³

With transition in place, UNDP formally concluded its Support to Tajikistan Mine Action Programme (STMAP) project in September 2019. UNDP's programme had aimed to build sustainable national structures and TNMAC's technical capacity and in 2018 it helped TNMAC to elaborate Tajikistan's plan for Article 5 completion.²⁴ Any future support will be provided remotely from UNDP's regional hub in Istanbul.²⁵ The end of the programme resulted in loss of trained capacity for TNMAC as most STMAP staff were on UN salaries and left when the programme ended rather than continue on lower national salaries. It also raised questions as to whether TNMAC had sufficient staff capacity to fulfil its roles, notably in relation to planning and developing strategy.²⁶

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) plays a major role in Tajikistan's mine action sector, in particular by conducting demining directly.²⁷ The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Programme Office in Dushanbe (OSCE POiD) has supported the MoD to update its multiyear plan, entitled "Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Tajikistan Co-operation Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2023."²⁸

In May 2019, during the APMBC intersessional meetings, Tajikistan convened an “Individualised Approach Platform” meeting, with support from the Implementation Support Unity (ISU). The meetings allowed TNMAC to outline its current work and to present the challenges and opportunities faced in meeting its Article 5 obligations.²⁹

TNMAC also conducted several meetings promoting coordination in the mine action sector in 2019, including a “Mine Free” workshop in June, a Mine Action Forum in October, and a technical working group meeting in November.³⁰ The Mine Action Forum was convened with financial support from the US Department of State and facilitated by Norway, and was attended by the national authorities, MoD, international and national clearance operators, the GICHD, the OSCE, donors and representatives from Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the European Union. It provided a platform for discussions on the current status of the TNMAC and the successes and challenges it faces, and Tajikistan planned to convene the Mine Action Forum again in 2020.³¹

Tajikistan informed the States Parties to the APMBC that it planned to establish a management working group involving key stakeholders to develop a working plan for implementation of its Article 5 extension request as well as a survey technical working group to promote survey planning and prioritisation, but, as at mid 2020, had yet to convene either group.³²

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

TNMAC adopted a gender programme in October 2018 that was prepared by the Geneva Mine Action Programme (GMAP, now a programme of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, GICHD) and is committed to improving the situation of women in the mine action sector.³³ A UNDP evaluation concluded TNMAC had made progress mainstreaming gender and diversity in mine action but the strategy has not yet been systematically implemented. Areas for further action included ensuring that training of trainers for MRE was gender balanced, introducing female quality assurance (QA)/quality control (QC) officers and developing a code of conduct and complaints mechanisms.³⁴

Women account for around one fifth of personnel in survey and clearance teams in Tajikistan, and around one quarter of managerial/supervisory level positions. TNMAC plans to diversify survey teams to help reach a wider audience and more sources of information. Relevant mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age.³⁵

TNMAC acknowledged that it would be a challenge to achieve gender balance in view of the predominance of men in the military. The MoD’s Humanitarian Demining Company (HDC) deploys conscript soldiers as deminers, with regular MoD personnel overseeing operations. In Tajikistan, military service is compulsory for men and voluntary for women and while there is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in the HDC survey and clearance teams, including for managerial level/supervisory positions, in practice women do not apply for these positions.

However, TNMAC said where it could identify key positions that can be filled by female candidates like paramedics and/or QA/QC officers this will be discussed and prioritised. In addition, TNMAC will also seek to increase female civilian capacity in coordination with other implementing partners.³⁶ OSCE, which funds three HDC demining teams, also seeks to promote gender awareness by collecting comprehensive sensitive information.³⁷ Meantime, the HDC does consult with all groups, including women and children, during survey and community liaison activities.³⁸

NPA has a gender and diversity policy which is integrated into its Tajikistan project proposals and operations. Three of its six support staff are women but its 59 operational staff include 13 women (22%) with more men than women in its survey and community liaison teams. NPA ensures that all groups are included during community consultation activities, and has a gender balanced community liaison team to help ensure this. NPA disaggregates mine action data by sex and age.³⁹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

TNMAC completed an upgrade of its mine action database from Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) version 6.0 to IMSMA Core, which became fully operational in May 2019 making it easier to input, edit and retrieve data. TNMAC also introduced new data collection forms intended to simplify data entry and improve data quality.⁴⁰ The closure of UNDP’s support programme led to loss of trained staff and raised concerns it would be difficult to maintain information management standards.⁴¹

Tajikistan submits annual Article 7 transparency reports and delivers updates on its progress in Article 5 implementation at the APMBC intersessional meetings and meetings of States Parties. However, TNMAC should aim to improve its reporting on land release, to make it more consistent with the IMAS, and disaggregate accurately the amount of mined area cancelled through non-technical survey or reduced through technical survey.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Tajikistan's Article 5 extension request submitted in March 2019 forms the basis of its operational planning, superseding the National Strategy on Humanitarian Mine Action 2017–2020. The request said land release would concentrate on the Central region and the Tajik-Afghan border, especially the Shamsiddin Shohin district as the area most contaminated with anti-personnel mines.⁴²

The request said Tajikistan planned to clear approximately 1.3km² a year for the duration of the extension which runs until the end of 2025,⁴³ a target that appeared more ambitious than realistic. In 2019, TNMAC aimed to clear 1.37km² but achieved less than half that amount.⁴⁴ In 2020–21, Tajikistan set a target of clearing a total of 60 mined areas covering more than 2.6km²: 26 mined areas totalling 1.36km² in 2020 and 34 mined areas affecting 1.27km² in 2021.⁴⁵

TNMAC tasks operators according to a set of priorities agreed with the government and based on criteria that include humanitarian impact, national development priorities and the seasonal constraints on access to mined areas in mountainous terrain. It has also worked with the GICHD on developing the Priority Setting Tool for Mine Action (PriSMA) to identify specific criteria and indicators for different regions.⁴⁶

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Tajikistan's revised National Mine Action Standards (TNMAS) were approved by decree on 1 April 2017 and are available in Russian and English.⁴⁷ The standards were developed as general guidelines allowing implementing partners scope to develop their own standing operating procedures (SOPs).⁴⁸ No changes were made to the NMA in 2019.⁴⁹ At the same time, UNDP observed that operations could be more effective and efficient through better analysis of data, non-technical and technical survey and greater use of a range of clearance approaches.⁵⁰

TNMAC introduced a new approach to survey in 2017 known as "non-technical survey with technical intervention". In addition to standard non-technical survey, survey teams use technical assets to confirm the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) and also to identify their location avoiding poorly defined and inflated polygons.⁵¹ It is especially useful, as minefield records are sometimes incomplete or inconsistent due to incorrect coordinates and grid numbering or lack of landmarks/reference points, and there are often few local people to ask about evidence of mines or accidents as people have moved away because of the contamination. In addition, mines are sometimes displaced due to landslides, rock falls, or flooding.⁵²

UST has conducted non-technical survey with technical survey intervention, in line with the new methodology since 2017.⁵³ Prior to this, UST was only conducting non-technical survey. The new approach is expected to improve operational efficiency but was also expected to slow down its rate of survey of remaining minefields.⁵⁴ In many instances, some suspected mined area is cancelled or reduced through survey but minefield records do not always capture the full extent of contamination and survey reveals a larger mined area than that in the national database. This can be due to a number of factors, such as windy conditions at the time when helicopter-dropped mines were deployed which leads to greater dispersal of the mines; the height of the helicopter above the ground at the time of deployment (in time of hostilities, the distance of the helicopter from the ground is significantly increased, resulting in wider dispersal of the mines); and mountainous terrain.⁵⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Tajikistan reported its mine action capacity in 2019 consisted of a total of 90 deminers. To meet the targets set out in its Article 5 deadline extension request Tajikistan said it would need to double capacity to 180 deminers.⁵⁶

The MoD HDC provided the main national capacity, operating five multi-purpose teams employing 50 deminers. They included three teams financed by the OSCE and two by the United States. TNMAC reported it was in discussion with the MoD on standing up five additional teams of deminers. It said the government had agreed to pay salaries of the deminers but Tajikistan needed to raise donor funding to cover operating costs.⁵⁷

NPA also operated five clearance teams with 38 deminers in 2019 and in April added another four-person multi-task team with a specific focus on non-technical survey. NPA planned to add another survey team staffed by civilians in 2020 together with a clearance team staffed with personnel seconded by Tajikistan's Border Guard Force.⁵⁸ NPA took on two Border Guard officers to work with civilian deminers in 2019 as a pilot project supporting TNMAC plans to engage Border Guard forces in demining on the border with Afghanistan.⁵⁹

UST, a national not-for-profit organisation, is accredited to conduct non-technical survey, risk education, and victim assistance. UST received additional accreditation to conduct non-technical survey with technical survey intervention in 2017, but it is not yet accredited to conduct clearance.⁶⁰ TNMAC and UST have also discussed plans for converting UST's survey teams to multi-tasking teams but did not take that step in 2019.⁶¹ Some staff positions, such as the Operations Manager, are permanent but deminers are recruited annually for the operations period from Spring until October, based on UST's annual survey plan.⁶²

TNMAC, NPA and the MoD planned a joint initiative to re-activate a Mini Mine Wolf that had been provided in 2015 by the US Department of Defense. The asset is intended to conduct mechanical ground preparation for tasks assigned to both NPA and the MoD.⁶³ TNMAC estimates that around 1.4km² or 15–20% of remaining contamination is suitable for mechanical clearance, most of it in Panj. Tajikistan said it would need external support to provide initial maintenance and to retrain operators.⁶⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

TNMAC reported at the end of May 2020 that Tajikistan had released a total of 1.67km² in 2019, almost 50% more than in 2018, with two-thirds released through survey and one-third by clearance.⁶⁵ The total was a little lower than the amount published earlier in Tajikistan's Article 7 report, which showed release of a total of 1.72km² in 2019.⁶⁶

SURVEY IN 2019

TNMAC said NPA and UST cancelled 0.9km² through non-technical survey in 2019, more than double the area cancelled the previous year (see Table 2). It reported a further 0.26km² reduced through technical survey, much the same level as the previous year (see Table 3), half of it attributed to the MoD and half to NPA.⁶⁷

NPA, working with a dedicated survey team that started operating in April 2019, cancelled more area through non-technical survey in 2019 than the previous year⁶⁸ but recorded less area reduction through technical survey than TNMAC and more land released through clearance.⁶⁹ NPA said many of the minefields it resurveyed in the border with Afghanistan were found to be bigger than originally estimated leaving little opportunity for area reduction.⁷⁰

Table 2: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019

Province/Region/District	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Panj	UST	28,000
Sh. Shohin	UST	189,675
Darvoz	UST	626,000
Sh. Shohin	NPA	34,220
Total		877,895

Table 3: Reduction through technical survey in 2019

Province/Region/District	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Panj	MoD	42,960
Sh. Shohin	MoD	99,201
Sh. Shohin	NPA	45,949
Darvoz	NPA	72,205
Total		260,315

CLEARANCE IN 2019

Tajikistan cleared 0.54km² of anti-personnel mined area in 2019, marginally less than the previous year, but destroyed 5,187 mines through clearance in 2019 compared with 4,998 the previous year (see Table 4). A further 67 mines were destroyed in spot tasks by FSD's explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams and by NPA.⁷¹

Table 4: Mine clearance by operator in 2019⁷²

Operator	Province	District	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
NPA	GBAO	Darvos	25,474	9	23
		Khatlon	Sh. Shohin	52,286	106
MoD HDC	Khatlon	Panj	178,392	1,474	20
		Sh. Shohin	279,159	3,598	117
Totals			535,311	5,187	172

AP = Anti-personnel

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the extension granted by States Parties in 2019), Tajikistan is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025.

Tajikistan is within sight of completion but without a major increase in donor funding will not be able to achieve it by 2025. Its extension request set ambitious land release targets that far exceed its achievements to date. The request calls for clearance of an average of 1.3km² a year.⁷³ Operating results in 2019, when TNMAC had also aimed to clear 1.3km², underscore the extent of the challenge. Operators cleared 0.5km², the annual average for the last five years (see Table 5).⁷⁴

Table 5: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	0.54
2018	0.59
2017	0.62
2016	0.50
2015	0.25
Total	2.50

Moreover, Tajikistan does not yet know the full extent of the contamination it needs to address. The extension request clearance targets do not cover 41 minefields that are due to be surveyed by 2023, some of them located in remote, mountainous areas where conditions only permit 40 operational days a year, or the estimated 3.25km² of SHA on the Uzbek border which Tajikistan says will be addressed only once a political agreement has been made.⁷⁵ Insecurity on the border with Afghanistan has previously prevented access to some of Tajikistan's most heavily mined districts and adds a further element of uncertainty to the outlook for implementation.⁷⁶

Tajikistan said to achieve its clearance targets it would need to double the number of deminers deployed by the MoD/HDC to 100 and by NPA to 80 for a total of 180.⁷⁷ It estimated it needed US\$33 million for costs of manual clearance alone to complete its Article 5 obligations.⁷⁸ Funding has been heavily dependent on the US Department of State. Tajikistan conducted a workshop with other major international donors in June 2019 in an effort to diversify its sources of support but by the end of the year had not received any additional funding.⁷⁹ Furthermore, there was general uncertainty about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global funding for mine action. In view of such uncertainties, the APMBC requested Tajikistan to provide updated work plans by 30 April 2021 and by 31 October 2023, detailing all known or suspected anti-personnel mined areas, annual projections of which areas would be dealt with and by which organisations during the remaining period covered by the request, and a revised detailed budget.⁸⁰

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Tajikistan has not yet set out plans for dealing with any residual contamination after completion. It informed the APMBC it had started discussions with the GICHD on long-term risk management and expected to address the arrangements in a new national strategy due to be unveiled in 2020.⁸¹

1 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.

2 Additional information on Tajikistan's Article 5 extension request, 3 August 2019, pp. 2-3.

3 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.

4 Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (TMAC), "Scope of the Problem", accessed 29 July 2019 at: bit.ly/2ZhlFpN.

5 R. Roberts, "Evaluation of United Nations Development Programme Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", January 2012, p. 11, at: bit.ly/2QqRe0B.

6 2009 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1.

7 Statement of Tajikistan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 8 June 2017.

8 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D and Annex II; 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 9-10; and email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.

9 Interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda and Murtazo Gurezov, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018; and Statement of Tajikistan, APMBC 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.

10 Interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda and Murtazo Gurezov, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018; and Statement of Tajikistan, APMBC 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.

11 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018.

12 Statement of Tajikistan, APMBC 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.

- 13 "National Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan on Humanitarian Mine Action for 2017–2020", 25 February 2017.
- 14 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), 31 March 2019.
- 15 "Uzbekistan, Tajikistan to finalise border demarcation", *Azernews*, 7 January 2020; "Uzbekistan reportedly completes demining work on Tajik border", *The Diplomat*, 10 January 2020; and "Uzbekistan completes demining of border with Tajikistan, say officials", *Central Asia News*, 4 February 2020.
- 16 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 3 August 2019.
- 17 Email from Melissa Andersson, Country Director, NPA, 1 June 2020.
- 18 Interviews with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, and Kurbonmamad Kurbonmamadov, MoD, Dushanbe, 29 May 2018.
- 19 Interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda and Murtazo Gurezov, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018.
- 20 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 31 March 2019, p. 20.
- 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.
- 22 2009 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1; and TMAC, "About TMAC", 2012, accessed 10 March 2014 at: bit.ly/2LvPub1.
- 23 Email from Aubrey Sutherland-Pillai, NPA, 18 October 2016; 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 20–21.
- 24 Email from Aubrey Sutherland-Pillai, NPA, 18 October 2016.
- 25 Email from Olaf Juergensen, Regional Development and Mine Action Specialist, UNDP, 27 May 2020.
- 26 UNDP, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", Rebecca Roberts, 30 December 2019, pp. 12–13.
- 27 MoD, "Strategic Plan on Humanitarian Demining 2013–2016", Dushanbe, 17 July 2013; and Response to Landmine Monitor questionnaire by Luka Buhin, Mine Action Office, OSCE Office in Tajikistan, 8 April 2014.
- 28 Email from Luka Buhin, OSCE Tajikistan, 9 October 2017.
- 29 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 3 August 2019.
- 30 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 29 April 2020; UNDP, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", Rebecca Roberts, 30 December 2019, p. 13.
- 31 Presentation by Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, Side event at the APMBC Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 28 November 2020.
- 32 Additional information provided for Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 3 August 2019, pp. 3, 7.
- 33 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 14 June 2019.
- 34 UNDP, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", Rebecca Roberts, 30 December 2019, pp. 17–18.
- 35 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.
- 36 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 3 August 2019.
- 37 Email from Johan Dahl, Acting Head, Political-Military Department, OSCE Programme Office, Dushanbe, 13 May 2020.
- 38 Email from Johan Dahl, with information provided by Khurram Maksudzoda, Head of the MoD HDC, 27 August 2019.
- 39 Emails from Melissa Andersson, Country Director, NPA, 11 April 2019 and 29 April 2020.
- 40 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020.
- 41 UNDP, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", Rebecca Roberts, 30 December 2019, p. 15.
- 42 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 35.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- 44 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.
- 45 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 46 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018; and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 5 April 2018.
- 47 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 31 March 2019, p. 21.
- 48 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 29 April 2020.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 UNDP, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", Rebecca Roberts, 30 December 2019, p. 14.
- 51 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 August 2016, 22 May 2017, and 27 April 2018; GICHD, Presentation on "NTS Field Studies: General Findings", 15 February 2018, Geneva; and Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Forms A and D.
- 52 "Non-technical survey/technical intervention", Presentation by Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, at the 21st International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers, Geneva, 13–16 February 2018; and interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018.
- 53 Email from Luka Buhin, OSCE Office in Tajikistan, 9 October 2017.
- 54 Interview with Saynuridin Kalandarov, UST, Dushanbe, 29 May 2018.
- 55 Email from Saynuridin Kalandarov, UST, 30 August 2018.
- 56 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 45.
- 57 *Ibid.*
- 58 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 29 April 2020.
- 59 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019; and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 11 April 2019; 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 22.
- 60 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 May 2017; and Aubrey Sutherland, NPA, 18 October 2017.
- 61 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional information provided 3 August 2019.
- 62 Interview with Saynuridin Kalandarov, UST, Dushanbe, 29 May 2018.
- 63 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 29 April 2020; 2019 Article 5 Extension Request, p. 36.
- 64 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional information provided 3 August 2019, p. 5.
- 65 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020.
- 66 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 67 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020.
- 68 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 24 April 2020.
- 69 NPA reported that it cancelled 58,153m² through NTS, reduced 18,209m² through TS (total through survey: 76,362m²) and cleared 156,273m² for total land release of 233,035m². TNMAC data showed NPA released 152,074m² through survey and 77,760m² through clearance, for total land release of 229,834m².
- 70 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 24 April 2020.
- 71 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020.
- 72 *Ibid.* NPA, however, reported that it cleared 156,273m². The reason for the huge disparity is unclear.
- 73 The annual land release milestones in the Article 5 extension request are 1,388,819m² (2020), 1,218,722m² (2021), 1,284,655m² (2022), 1,277,666m² (2023), 1,138,919m² (2024) and 1,170,000m² (2025). However, Tajikistan needs an additional US\$12.4 million in total, to enable it to double capacity in order to reach these targets and complete by the end of 2025.
- 74 Presentation by Tajikistan on Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Geneva, 23 May 2019.
- 75 Presentation by Tajikistan on Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Geneva, 23 May 2019.
- 76 *Ibid.*
- 77 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 46.
- 78 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 79 UNDP, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", 30 December 2019, p. 19.
- 80 APMBC decision on Tajikistan's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, undated but 2019, p. 1.
- 81 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional information provided 3 August 2019, p. 9.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 OCTOBER 2023
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

HEAVY, OVER 20 KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

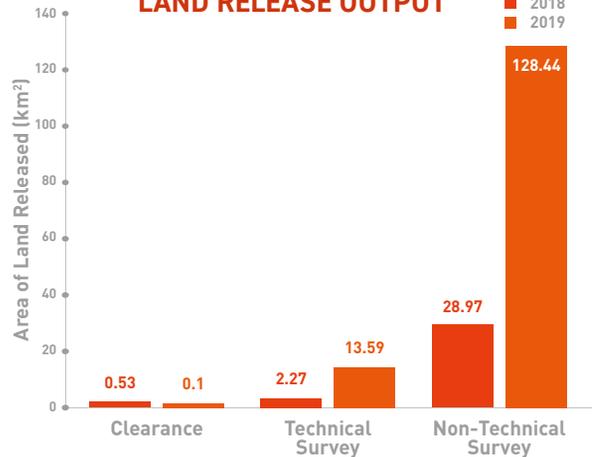
0.1 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

2,713

(INCLUDING 36 DESTROYED
IN SPOT TASKS)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Thailand's mine action programme continued to improve during 2019, with publication of a "Five-Year Humanitarian Mine Action Plan, 1 November 2018–31 October 2023" in April 2019, containing ambitious annual targets. The Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC) reported significant land release output for 2019. The effort was underpinned by an online information management system that became fully operational during the year and by effective coordination between TMAC and its implementing partners.

TMAC exceeded its land release target for 2019 by more than 21 km², mostly as a result of non-technical survey in the first phase (2019–20) of its Five-Year plan. It was uncertain whether all areas identified for resurvey, and in particular those in areas with unclear border demarcation along the Thailand-Cambodia border, would be accessible in 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Thailand should ensure that the pilot border clearance project with Cambodia runs to schedule and should seek to conclude a bilateral cooperation mechanism that would enable both countries to survey and clear all mined areas along the shared border.
- TMAC should develop suitable national mine action standards and standing operating procedures (SOPs) for the use of mine detection dogs (MDDs)/animal detection systems (ADS) and for the use of mechanical assets.
- Thailand should elaborate a gender policy and supporting implementation plan for mine action.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	7	Thailand has been conducting non-technical survey on all suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), which was due to conclude in 2020, though the end date may be delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 on operations.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	7	There is strong national ownership of Thailand's mine action programme, with armed forces personnel conducting survey and clearance operations, supported by and in good collaboration with non-governmental clearance organisations.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	4	The overall proportion of women at TMAC increased in 2019 compared to the previous year, and four senior positions are now filled by women. However, most female personnel at TMAC are employed in administrative roles and military regulations prevent women working in the demining teams. However, this policy does not apply to civilian operators. Thailand's ongoing baseline survey is based on inclusive community interviews in all areas where the survey is conducted, during which women, girls, boys and men are consulted. In areas where minority groups reside, they are also consulted.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	7	The Arc Geographic Information System (GIS) online information management system, introduced in 2018, became fully operational in 2019, allowing demining units to submit information online and enabling TMAC to verify data and make corrections.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	8	8	In April 2019, Thailand published a five-year strategic mine action plan through to the end of October 2023, containing annual targets and detailing prioritisation for the release of mined areas. TMAC exceeded its planned land release target for 2019, releasing more than 142km ² , primarily through non-technical survey.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	8	8	TMAC is applying efficient land release methodology, conducting non-technical survey to cancel a significant amount of the overestimated SHA in its database and to determine more accurately the location of mine contamination.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	7	Land release output in 2019 exceeded that in 2018, due to the focus on non-technical survey. TMAC has been achieving the annual land release targets largely through non-technical survey. Technical survey and clearance targets for phase two of its plan (2021-23) are very ambitious and will require sustained funding, extra capacity, and successful coordination with Cambodia to address all mined areas along the border, including those in areas with unclear border demarcation.
Average Score	7.1	7.0	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Committee for Humanitarian Mine Action (NMAC)
- Thailand Mine Action Centre (TMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Humanitarian Mine Action Units (HMAU 1-4) and HMAU TMAC
- Thai Civilian Deminer Association (TDA)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

OTHER ACTORS

- Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (Golden West)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at 31 October 2019 (the end of Thailand's fiscal year), Thailand estimated that it had over 218km² of mined area remaining over 254 hazardous areas in 9 provinces (see Table 1 below).¹ This was a reduction of 142km² from the 360km² of mined area in 2018.²

Contamination as at the end of October 2019 consisted of 82 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) totalling over 14.5km² and 172 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) totalling over 203.6km².³ In 2019, over 0.32km² of additional mined area was identified and confirmed in Sa Kaeo, Trat, Chanthaburi, and Buri Ram provinces.⁴

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end-October 2019)⁵

Region	Province	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
North	Phitsanulok	0	0	1	25,263,004	25,263,004
North-East	Ubon Ratchathani	14	4,109,965	44	76,751,085	80,861,050
	Si Sa ket	19	2,267,521	21	24,013,551	26,281,072
	Surin	0	0	26	27,299,749	27,299,749
	Buri-Ram	14	1,119,179	1	1,838,511	2,957,690
East	Sa Kaeo	5	326,000	15	6,440,538	6,766,538
	Chanthaburi	2	17,750	10	3,508,622	3,526,372
	Trat	25	6,660,719	54	38,529,552	45,190,271
South	Chumphon	3	48,499	0	0	48,499
Totals		82	14,549,633	172	203,644,612	218,194,245

Since 2016, TMAC and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) have been working on a pilot project resurveying the vastly overestimated SHA. Taking into account the results of the pilot project, TMAC has forecasted that up to 80% of existing SHAs can be cancelled or at least significantly reduced in size through survey.⁶

In its "Five-Year Humanitarian Mine Action Plan, 1 November 2018–31 October 2023" (hereafter, Five-Year Plan), published in April 2019, Thailand projected that of the outstanding 360km² of contamination, 269km² will be cancelled through non-technical survey and nearly 91km² of CHA will remain for technical survey and clearance.⁷ TMAC is therefore focusing its efforts in 2019–20 on cancelling land through non-technical survey before moving on to technical survey and full clearance in 2021–23.⁸

NPA estimates that ongoing non-technical survey will result in an even smaller area (approximately 20km²) requiring clearance. But NPA also foresees a need for further non-technical survey and updating of survey data during reduction and clearance operations as more information becomes available.⁹

The baseline non-technical survey project was expected to be completed by October 2020.¹⁰ Furthermore, most of the mined areas are located along the Thai-Cambodia border¹¹ and it is uncertain whether all areas identified for resurvey will be accessible in 2020 due to the unclear border demarcation in many areas along the Thailand and Cambodia border. This is likely to further delay the completion of resurvey.¹²

Thailand is affected by mines as well as by explosive remnants of war (ERW), the result of conflicts on its borders with Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Malaysia, and Myanmar. The majority of remaining contamination is in seven eastern and north-eastern provinces bordering Cambodia, with the rest in Chiang Mai and Chumphon, bordering Myanmar, and in Pitsanuloke, on the border with Lao PDR.¹³

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Thailand created the National Committee for Humanitarian Mine Action (NMAC) in 2000, chaired by the prime minister and with responsibility for overseeing the national mine action programme. Since 2008, NMAC did not convene until it was reconstituted in May 2017, again with the prime minister as chairman. The engagement of national leadership in the Committee was seen as important in facilitating policy direction and progress on issues affecting national security, notably regarding cooperation with neighbouring countries on clearing border areas.¹⁴

NMAC is currently tasked with creating policy guidance and mobilising resources from all sectors to support mine action to be able to complete clearance in the allotted timeframe.¹⁵ In reality, however, NMAC has no operational or strategic power and is purely procedural.¹⁶

TMAC was established in 1999 under the Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters to coordinate, monitor, and conduct mine/ERW survey and clearance, risk education, and victim assistance throughout Thailand.¹⁷ While the roles and responsibilities within the sector are clear and coherent TMAC has had to contend with limited funding and, as a military organisation, with regular rotation of personnel at all levels.¹⁸ Lieutenant-General Sittipol Nimnuan took over as TMAC's director in October 2017, the eleventh director since TMAC was created in 2000 and the seventh in the last nine years. In order to maintain continuity, TMAC has made a request with the Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters that personnel working within TMAC remain in post for at least two years rather than be rotated out on an annual basis. General Sittipol's directorship since 2017 has brought continuity to TMAC and improved its effectiveness. TMAC also requested that personnel working in the Humanitarian Mine Action Units (HMAUs) either have the required training and qualifications before they assume the role or that personnel remain in post for no less than two years. TMAC aims to have a 60:40 ratio of old personnel to new for the purposes of continuity and to retain knowledge.¹⁹ Classes taught by US Marine Corps Forces, Pacific (US MARFORPAC) help TMAC to train newly assigned personnel, as well as providing mentorship to operational and staff personnel who can remain at TMAC for several years.²⁰

While the roles and responsibilities within TMAC are clear and coherent there have been some challenges with the command structure of the HMAUs. With the exception of one of the HMAUs, HTMAC, personnel come from the Division-Level Force of the Royal Thai Army and the Royal Thai Navy, which means they must report both to TMAC and to their respective divisional command.²¹ TMAC has worked to educate the HMAUs, high-ranking generals, and the Chief of Defence Forces on the importance of mine action.²²

The cost of TMAC (including personnel, equipment, operational costs, meetings, workshops, and trainings), is covered by the Thai government, through the Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters. Survey and clearance costs of the HMAUs are also nationally funded.²³ In 2018, TMAC received a budget of about THB70 million a year (approx.

US\$2.1 million), much lower than the THB177 million (approx. US\$5.8 million) budgeted in Thailand's 2017 Article 5 deadline extension request.²⁴ In 2019, TMAC's budget was greatly increased to THB248 million (approx. \$7.5 million).²⁵ TMAC is also seeking additional funds to procure new equipment and repair of existing equipment, amounting to THB23 million (approx. \$746,000) through to 2022.²⁶ Thailand indicated in its Five-Year Plan, and at the Fourth Review Conference in November 2019, that it would welcome international assistance for capacity building and equipment (especially to facilitate access areas with rough and challenging terrain).²⁷

TMAC is reported to be very supportive of NPA. Staff from HMAU-2 and HMAU-3 are seconded to NPA and the regional military command in HMAU-3 provided support to NPA to ensure quick and efficient introduction of MDDs and their handlers from Cambodia to Thailand, as well as providing free and secure training areas for the MDDs and access to explosives/landmines for training purposes. TMAC also provides NPA with space at its office free of charge.²⁸ That said, strict regulations on who can handle explosives in Thailand, along with restrictive rules on most demining equipment which define it as military equipment, hampers the ability of civilian entities to conduct explosive ordnance disposal (EOD)/clearance.²⁹

While Thailand has not yet created a formal in-country platform, such as a National Mine Action Platform (NMAP), regular monthly meetings between TMAC, relevant ministries, and all HMAU's and clearance operators are convened, during which progress is reported and questions and concerns raised.³⁰ In addition, a mid-year workshop for all stakeholders is planned, along with an end of year seminar to plan for the next fiscal year. Furthermore, orientation occurs in October, at the start of the new fiscal year, during which new TMAC personnel are brought up to date and HMAUs can make suggestions or raise concerns.³¹

TMAC began a partnership with Golden West in January 2019, under which Golden West provides technical advisory support to TMAC and other partners if requested. Golden West works closely with US MARFORPAC and US Department of Defense Humanitarian Demining Research and Development (US DOD HDR&D).³²

US MARFORPAC provides a range of trainings to TMAC related to demining, including in non-technical and technical survey, and IMAS EOD Level 1–2 training, which are supported by Golden West's technical advisor. Along with training in 2019, US MARFORPAC constructed mine detector training lanes and an outdoor classroom facility, and also donated 200 sets of personal protective equipment (PPE, face shields, and body armour) and 50 Minelab metal detectors. This effort took place following a program assessment where former students were interviewed at their respective HMAUs. US MARFORPAC, US HDR&D, and Golden West participated in the assessment. An EOD Level 3 course by US MARFORPAC, with Golden West providing technical advisor support and mentorship, was scheduled for June 2020, but was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.³³

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

TMAC does not have a policy or guidelines on gender and diversity. While TMAC attempts to diversify gender where applicable, challenges are posed by virtue of it being a military organisation. In 2019, 40% of staff at TMAC headquarters were women, though they were mainly occupying administrative positions.³⁴ This is, however, an increase on the 27.5% of female staff reported in 2018.³⁵ Furthermore, as at March 2020, TMAC had female senior grade officers serving as the deputy chief of special affairs, deputy chief of coordination and evaluation, budget officer, and head of admin and personnel.³⁶ There are no women working within the HMAUs as the Thai military does not allow women to perform combat duties and the roles are restricted to combat personnel.³⁷

Thailand's ongoing baseline survey of mine contamination is based on inclusive community interviews in all areas where the survey is conducted, during which women, girls, boys and men are consulted. In areas where they reside, minority groups are also consulted.³⁸ All these stakeholders are also present and consulted at the end of the survey, when the results are presented.³⁹

NPA has an organisational gender and diversity policy and all NPA survey teams are gender balanced. NPA encourages TMAC and the HMAUs to become gender balanced. When NPA conducts non-technical survey or community liaison activities, all local people are invited to participate, including women and children, and where they reside, members of minority groups. In NPA's field teams, 45% of personnel are women, while three of NPA's five managers (60%) are female as are two of the four supervisors (50%).⁴⁰

During non-technical survey, the Thai Civilian Deminer Association (TDA) speaks to both men and women and employs both male and female local informants as part of its teams. There is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in TDA survey and clearance teams, including for managerial level/supervisory positions. As at July 2020, women made up 15% of TDA operational roles, which was due to increase to 30%. Approximately 50% of managerial level/supervisory positions at TDA are held by women.⁴¹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

TMAC established a data centre to process land release, risk education, and quality management data. It manages the central database using Excel and Arc Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping.⁴² ArcGIS Online is being used as part of a support package provided by the Department of Survey of the Royal Thai Armed Forces. ArcGIS assists TMAC and the HMAUs in data collection and dissemination, and mapping of SHAs and CHAs; and TMAC senior management in decision-making and operational planning.⁴³ The online system started in 2018 and became fully operational in 2019. HMAUs submit information to TMAC via the online system every 15 days, which allows for the verification of progress in the field and rectification of any issues.⁴⁴

NPA and TDA deem data in Thailand to be accurate and reliable, with data in the national information management system accessible to clearance organisations.⁴⁵ Thailand submits timely and accurate Article 7 reports. Thailand was requested by the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties to provide an updated work plan to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation by 30 April 2019,⁴⁶ which it duly submitted. The Five-Year Plan provides details on remaining challenges, outstanding mine contamination, the prioritisation system, and land release outputs.⁴⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

Thailand's Five-Year Plan, published in April 2019, is divided into two phases. During the first phase, from 2019–20, non-technical survey is prioritised in all outstanding SHAs with the expected cancellation of more than 269km². During this stage TMAC aims to release non-contaminated areas in the north-eastern region and parts of the eastern region, and gain more precise information on the mine-contaminated areas, including those along its border with Cambodia.⁴⁸ The second phase in 2021–23 will focus on technical survey and clearance of CHAs, based on the results of the national non-technical survey.⁴⁹ TMAC expects to release more than 90km² of land through technical survey and clearance during this phase. Thailand is operating under the assumption that the border demarcation issues will be resolved through bilateral cooperation, allowing the HMAUs to access these areas.⁵⁰

Table 2: Planned land release from Five-Year Plan 2019-23⁵¹

Region	Province	2019 (m ²)	2020 (m ²)	2021 (m ²)	2022 (m ²)	2023 (m ²)
North	Pitsanulok	9,510,170	9,510,170	9,510,180	LF	LF
	Chiang Mai	1,103,526	0	0	9,308,072	15,203,590
North-east	Buri Ram	15,587,142	0	3,896,786	LF	LF
	Surin	0	21,839,800	5,459,949	LF	LF
	Si Sa Ket	39,495,981	19,210,841	0	14,676,704	LF
	Ubon Ratchathani	21,364,937	59,617,291	0	0	20,245,556
East	Chanthaburi	3,562,113	374,111	LF	LF	LF
	Sa Kaeo	1,724,472	1,695,254	1,669,773	1,490,174	1,117,125
	Trat	26,912,587	34,354,161	3,107,481	3,005,862	2,274,040
South	Chumphon	1,586,760	1,586,760	LF	LF	LF
Totals		120,847,688	148,188,388	23,644,169	28,480,812	38,840,311

LF = Landmine Free

As at the end of October 2019, TMAC had released 142km² of SHA⁵², exceeding the land release target of 120.8km² in its Five-Year Plan, but had also identified 14.5km² of CHA. According to information provided to Mine Action Review, in 2020, TMAC planned to complete the resurvey and release an additional 154.3km² of SHA, slightly higher than in Thailand's five-year plan. It expects to have 64 CHAs at the end of the resurvey.⁵³

Thailand's Five-Year Plan replaced the land release targets detailed in its Second Article 5 deadline Extension request in 2017, in which the previous projected annual land release targets were 34.74km² (2017); 29.05 km² (2018); 72.12km² (2019); 72.06km² (2020); 73.23km² (2021); 74.54km² (2022), and 66.86km² (2023).⁵⁴

Thailand is prioritising the north-eastern region, the most heavily contaminated area of the country where 61% of SHAs are located, but is also taking into account resource limitation and access issues in certain areas. Thailand is prioritising clearance according to the following five criteria (in order of importance): development potential; the access needs of the local community; proximity to the local population; terrain and environmental challenges; and border and security concerns.⁵⁵

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

TMAC drafted its first national mine action standards (NMAS) with NPA's support in 2010, formally adopting them in June 2012, the year Thailand initiated a land release process.⁵⁶ Since then, the NMAS have undergone revisions in 2015 and 2018 in support of Thailand's shift towards using the full toolbox of land release methodologies rather than solely relying on technical survey and full clearance.⁵⁷ In 2018, TMAC revised the NMAS on worksite planning and released a new NMAS on the "Cancellation of SHAs by Evidence Based Survey", which has made it easier to cancel previously inflated, largely uncontaminated SHAs.⁵⁸ TMAC personnel have also been undergoing training on non-technical survey to improve speed and efficiency.⁵⁹

TMAC says it considers input from operators and IMAS guidelines when revising the NMAS, ensuring there is a proper consultation process with input gathered at the beginning of every fiscal year.⁶⁰ Operator SOPs are then adjusted accordingly.⁶¹

While TMAC did not officially amend any part of NMAS in 2019, there was a year-end seminar in which stakeholders agreed to fully incorporate and clarify land release methodology and terminology into NMAS to prevent confusion; extend consideration of specific dog breeds for future demining operations; revise EOD requirements for relevant staff from level 3 to level 4; and identify required updates to hazard marking and mine risk education.⁶²

NPA has developed an organisational SOP for the use of MDDs, but a national standard for the use of MDDs/ADS in technical survey and clearance operations had yet to be developed. As at early September 2020, Thailand was in the process of drafting a national standard on this and also on the use of mechanical assets in technical survey and clearance operations, in consultation with its implementation partners, Golden West, NPA, and TDA.⁶³

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Table 3: Operational survey capacities deployed in 2019⁶⁴

Operator	NTS teams	NTS personnel	TS teams	TS personnel
HMAU 1	1	4	1	5
HMAU 2	2	7	2	8
HMAU 3	3	12	3	18
HMAU 4	1	5	1	5
HTMAC	0	0	2	10*
Totals	7	28	9	46

* These personnel can conduct both NTS (non-technical survey) and TS (technical survey) operations.

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁶⁵

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers	Dogs and handlers	Machines
HMAU 1	1	3	1	0
HMAU 2	1 (2)	14	1	4
HMAU 3	1 (3)	10	1	0
HMAU 4	1 (1)	7	1	0
HTMAC	1	2	2	0
Totals	5	36	6	4

All clearance in Thailand is conducted by the military due to national regulations on who can handle explosives and operate demining equipment. There are five HMAUs, supervised by TMAC with personnel from the Royal Thai Army and Royal Thai Navy, which carry out survey and clearance operations. In addition, there is one national operator, TDA, and an international operator, NPA, which carry out survey in support of the HMAUs.⁶⁶ TMAC expected the number of personnel to remain the same in 2020, but then planned to restructure and increase technical survey and clearance personnel for the second phase of its Five-Year Plan in 2021–23.⁶⁷

There may be changes to the regulations in the coming years due to the complications and related security concerns for military personnel entering the border areas. Once the TMAC/Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) border pilot project is completed, there is a possibility that civilian deminers will take part in clearance operations.⁶⁸

While only the military can conduct EOD, NGO operators work with the full support from HMAUs and are permitted to partially uncover buried landmines, which HMAU support staff then excavate and destroy.⁶⁹ In some cases military EOD staff are being embedded in NPA technical survey teams and for spot tasks, to conduct required EOD on mines and ERW detected and uncovered.⁷⁰

NPA has supported TMAC operations since 2011, conducting land release through non-technical and technical survey. In 2019, NPA deployed three non-technical survey teams for 12 months, supporting HMAUs 2 and 3. An additional NPA survey team was also deployed in 2019, which conducted non-technical survey for half the year and technical survey to support the MDDs operations for the other half.⁷¹ The use of two MDDs for technical survey was successfully piloted and NPA planned to continue to use MDDs throughout 2020.⁷²

TDA has supported TMAC operations since 2014.⁷³ In 2019, due to an increase in Japanese funding, the number of field staff increased from 18 field staff in 2018 to 22 persons in 2019, including approximately 8 local key informants.⁷⁴ TMAC's focus in 2019 was on expanding its "SIMA", its survey to identify mined areas comprised of non-technical survey, technical survey, and clearance of EOD spot tasks, which is focusing on technical survey capacity.⁷⁵ TDA is planning to do research on mine detection using bees, but as at July 2020 this had yet to begin.⁷⁶

TMAC now employs a comprehensive toolbox approach, including use of mechanical assets to identify the existence of landmines if the terrain permits.⁷⁷

DEMINER SAFETY

In 2019, two people from HMAU-1 (Sa Kaeo province) and two people from HMAU-2 (Trat province) were injured while clearing PMN mines. Every accident is investigated first by the HMAU and then by TMAC, and operations are suspended while personnel undergo refresher training. Lessons learned from accidents are discussed and reviewed for future operations, and are used in TMAC training.⁷⁸

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Thailand released a total of more than 142km² in 2019, of which nearly 0.1km² was cleared, nearly 13.6km² was reduced through technical survey, and more than 128.4km² was cancelled through non-technical survey.

In addition, over 0.32km² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination was found and added to the database as CHA in 2019.⁷⁹ This comprised 247,245m² in Sa Kaeo, 2,332m² in Trat, 2,030m² in Chanthaburi, and 73,429m² in Buri Ram.⁸⁰

SURVEY IN 2019

A total of more than 142km² was released through survey in 2019: over 128.4km² through non-technical survey and nearly 13.6km² through technical survey (see Tables 5 and 6). This marked a huge increase on the 31.2km² released through survey in 2018, when focused survey efforts by TMAC only properly began in November.⁸¹

In 2019, over 0.32km² of additional confirmed mined area was discovered in Sa Kaeo, Trat, Chanthaburi, and Buri Ram provinces.⁸²

Compared to the previous year, NPA saw a 56% increase in the amount of land it cancelled in 2019. This was due to the addition of a one non-technical survey team and also increased support from TMAC and the HMAU-2 and HMAU-3, which seconded additional personnel who were embedded in all NPA's non-technical survey teams.⁸³

In 2019, NPA successfully piloted technical survey with MDDs. NPA reported that the results were very promising and that it expected NPA technical survey operations in 2020 to yield greater results.⁸⁴

CLEARANCE IN 2019

A total of nearly 0.1km² was cleared by 3 HMAU units and the HTMAC in 2019 (see Table 7).⁸⁵ The decrease on the 0.5km² cleared in 2018 is due to the focus on non-technical and technical survey in 2019, rather than on clearance which was only conducted where deemed absolutely necessary, for example in areas close to communities.⁸⁶

In addition, in 2019, HMAU units destroyed 36 anti-personnel mines, 1 anti-vehicle mine, and 17 items of UXO during EOD spot tasks in six districts.⁸⁷

All mined areas cleared in 2019 contained anti-personnel mines.⁸⁸

Table 5: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁸⁹

Province	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Sa Kaeo	HMAU 1	414,122
Chanthaburi	HMAU 2	365,676
Trat	HMAU 2 (+NPA)	24,299,440
Buri Ram	HMAU 3 (+TDA)	10,283,323
Si Sa ket	HMAU 3 (+NPA and TDA)	41,471,791
Ubon Ratchathani	HMAU 3 (+TDA)	20,234,757
Phitsanulok	HMAU 4	3,267,516
Chiang Mai	HMAU 4	19,101,812
Mae Hong Son	HMAU 4	6,513,376
Chumphon	HTMAC	2,490,290
Total		128,442,103

Table 6: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁹⁰

Province	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Sa Kaeo	HMAU 1	697,514
Chanthaburi	HMAU 2	46,206
Trat	HMAU 2	148,022
Buri Ram	HMAU 3	6,316,344
Si Sa ket	HMAU 3	5,627,443
Ubon Ratchathani	HMAU 3	131,977
Chumphon	HTMAC	627,272
Total		13,594,778

Table 7: Mine clearance in 2019⁹¹

Province	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Sa Kaeo	HMAU 1	65,869	2,539	4	0
Trat	HMAU 2	18,730	63	2	6
Si Sa ket	HMAU 3	3,220	42	0	12
Chumphon	HTMAC	7,459	33	0	134
Totals		95,278	2,677	6	152

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 8: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2019	95,278
2018	528,902
2017 ⁹²	427,983
2016	394,238
2015	2,047,662
Total	3,494,063

Thailand has made significant improvements to its mine action programme since the Third Review Conference in Maputo in 2014, moving away from an over reliance on clearance to the use of the full range of land release methodologies demonstrated in its Five-Year Plan. Thailand plans to cancel more than 269km² through non-technical survey from November 2018 to October 2020 before moving on to technical survey and clearance of the remaining 90km² over the following three years.

Thailand is making excellent progress in meeting and exceeding its annual land release targets for survey during the first phase of the Five-Year Plan, which focuses on resurvey. As at June 2020, COVID-19 had not impacted operations too severely and while technical survey with the use of MDDs had to be postponed, non-technical survey had continued more or less as planned.⁹³

However, TMAC has set extremely ambitious targets for the second phase, during which TMAC plans to release more than 23.6km² of mined area through technical survey and clearance in 2021, nearly 22.5km² in 2022, and more than 38.8km² in 2023.⁹⁴ To meet these targets, TMAC plans to increase the number of technical survey and clearance personnel, while decreasing non-technical survey personnel, with an overall increase in the total number of personnel during the second phase (2021–23).⁹⁵ Current overall capacity is far from sufficient to meet the clearance targets.

Whether the required upscaling of technical survey and clearance capacity proves possible remains to be seen. NPA believes that Thailand's Article 5 deadline of end October 2023 is too ambitious due to the lack of sufficient clearance capacity to address the CHAs established from the ongoing baseline survey and because the border demarcation issues with Cambodia, which prevent access to certain mined areas and have yet to be resolved.⁹⁶ Thailand will need to significantly increase its technical survey and clearance capacity and will need to apply effective and efficient land release methodology in order to reach its current Article 5 deadline. This implies both more staff as well as more equipment, i.e. detectors, personal protective equipment, mechanical assets, and MDDs. With a predicted 20km² of confirmed mined area requiring clearance, NPA believes that Thailand would need to more or less double its current capacity (potentially with less deminers if more mechanical assets/MDDs were made available) to reach the current deadline.⁹⁷

Thailand fully commits to the aim of completing clearance by its Article 5 deadline of 2023⁹⁸ and TMAC believes that Thailand is on track to meet the 2023 goal, but highlights that more assistance and support are welcomed to expedite TMAC's work and further ensure success.

TMAC also recognises that cooperation between Thailand and Cambodia is vital in order for Thailand to meet its 2023 Article 5 deadline, including access to sensitive (non-demarcated) mined areas along the Thailand-Cambodia border, which will require close coordination.⁹⁹ Areas to be demarcated (ADs) have been divided into two categories: areas that can be accessed immediately and more complicated areas where access will need to be negotiated. In border areas with Lao PDR, 96% of the land boundary has been demarcated and there are no security concerns, while the border areas with Cambodia are still subject to the demarcation process.¹⁰⁰

Improved relations between Thailand and Cambodia have opened the way for increased contact with Cambodia on border cooperation. The Thailand-Cambodia General Border Committee, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence from both countries, has agreed that TMAC and CMAC can cooperate to conduct demining along the Thai-Cambodian border.¹⁰¹

In September 2018, TMAC and CMAC met and agreed to find a task for a pilot border project for landmine clearance: a small area that could be cleared within a month as a symbolic demonstration of two sides working together. On 14 January 2019, TMAC and CMAC held meetings in Sa Kaeo province on the Thai side of the border and Banteay Meanchey province on the Cambodian side to further discuss the demining cooperation project. On 16–17 June 2019, TMAC and CMAC met in Sa Kaeo province, to conduct a survey and assess prospective areas for demining.¹⁰² On 22 and 23 September 2019, TMAC and CMAC, accompanied by senior representatives of the General Border Committee, agreed upon the respective mined areas on a demarcated section of the Thai-Cambodia border, distanced not too far apart.¹⁰³

The selected pilot project area on the Thai side is in Sano-noi Village, Tha-kham Subdistrict, Aranyaprathet District, Sa Kaeo province. The selected area on the Cambodian side is Kilobuan Village, Poipet District, Banteay Meanchey province.¹⁰⁴ TMAC and CMAC signed the record for the pilot site survey on 2 March 2020,¹⁰⁵ after which operations were expected to start shortly thereafter and were expected to take no more than 50 days to complete.¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately, however, operations had yet to commence at the time of writing, due to the impact of COVID-19 and the cessation of cross-border activity since mid-March.¹⁰⁷

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

TMAC's mandate covers only formal SHAs and CHAs. Any explosive ordnance (including landmines) found outside of SHAs and CHAs comes under police jurisdiction. Once Thailand fulfils its Article 5 obligations, TMAC will act as the information and knowledge centre for mines and UXO. If previously unknown mine contamination (i.e. residual contamination) is discovered following completion, the local mine risk education network will inform the local authorities, community leaders, and relevant government agencies. If the area in question is under the jurisdiction of the military, combat engineers will address the contamination. If located in other areas, police EOD teams will take the lead in addressing the contamination.¹⁰⁸

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| <p>1 Statement of Thailand, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; APMBC Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 4; and email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, Interpreter, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, Director General, TMAC, 27 February 2020.</p> <p>2 APMBC Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.</p> <p>3 Statement of Thailand, Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; and email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.</p> <p>4 Email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 4.</p> <p>5 Statement of Thailand, APMBC Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, on 27 February 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 4.</p> <p>6 Five-Year Humanitarian Mine Action Plan, 1 November 2018–31 October 2023, p. 12 (hereafter, Five-Year Plan), submitted alongside Thailand's Article 7 Report (covering 2018).</p> <p>7 Five-Year Plan, p. 13.</p> <p>8 <i>Ibid.</i>, p. 12.</p> <p>9 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, Country Director, NPA, 30 March 2020.</p> <p>10 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.</p> <p>11 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Sections 4 and 8.</p> <p>12 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.</p> <p>13 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.</p> <p>14 Interview with Lt.-Gen. Prasopchai Kongburan, TMAC, in Geneva, 8 June 2017.</p> <p>15 Five-Year Plan, p. 49.</p> <p>16 Interview with Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA, Bangkok, 9 April 2019.</p> | <p>17 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1.</p> <p>18 Interview with Col. Terdsak Trirattanagool, Assistant Director General, TMAC, Bangkok, 15 May 2017.</p> <p>19 Email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, Interpreter, TMAC (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 15 August 2019.</p> <p>20 Email from John Kelsch, Thailand Country Director/Technical Advisor, Golden West, 1 June 2020.</p> <p>21 Email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, TMAC (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 15 August 2019.</p> <p>22 Interviews with Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA; and with Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, in Bangkok, 9 April 2019.</p> <p>23 Email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.</p> <p>24 Interview with Maj.-Gen. Terdsak Trirattanagool, TMAC, Bangkok, 27 April 2018; 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 26.</p> <p>25 Five-Year Plan, p. 20.</p> <p>26 <i>Ibid.</i>, p. 21.</p> <p>27 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 28; and Five-Year Plan, p. 20; and Statement of Thailand, Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.</p> <p>28 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.</p> <p>29 Emails from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 28 March 2019 and 30 March 2020.</p> <p>30 Emails from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020; and Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.</p> <p>31 Email from Ft. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.</p> <p>32 Email from John Kelsch, Golden West, 1 June 2020.</p> <p>33 Emails from John Kelsch, Golden West, 1 June and 22 July 2020.</p> |
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- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Email from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019.
- 36 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 37 Emails from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019; and Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 38 Emails from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020; and Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.
- 39 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.
- 40 Emails from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 28 March 2019 and 30 March 2020.
- 41 Email from Amornchai Sirisai, Director, TDA, 18 July 2020.
- 42 Emails from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019; and Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 43 Email from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019.
- 44 Ibid.; and email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 45 Emails from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 28 March 2019 and 30 March 2020; and Amornchai Sirisai, TDA, 21 March 2019.
- 46 Decisions on the request submitted by Thailand for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the APMB, 16MSP, para. iii.
- 47 Five-Year Plan, p. 5.
- 48 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 4.
- 49 Five-Year Plan, p. 13; and Statement of Thailand, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 50 Five-Year Plan, p. 13.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 Statement of Thailand, Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019; and email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 53 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, on 27 February 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 4.
- 54 2017 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5.
- 55 Five-Year Plan, p. 45; and email from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019.
- 56 Thai National Mine Action Standards, 1 April 2015.
- 57 Email from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019.
- 58 Emails from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 28 March 2019; and Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, TMAC (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 15 August 2019.
- 59 Statement of Thailand, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 29 November 2018.
- 60 Email from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, on 27 February 2020.
- 63 Emails from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020; and Eva Veble (on behalf of Aksel Steen-Nilsen), NPA, 9 September 2020.
- 64 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 Five-Year Plan, p. 11; and email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 67 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 68 Interview with Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, Bangkok, 9 April 2019.
- 69 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 70 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Email from Amornchai Sirisai, TDA, 18 July 2020.
- 74 Emails from Amornchai Sirisai, TDA, 18 and 20 July 2020.
- 75 Email from Amornchai Sirisai, TDA, 18 July 2020.
- 76 Email from Amornchai Sirisai, TDA, 21 March 2019.
- 77 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt. Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.
- 80 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 81 Email from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019.
- 82 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 83 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020. Included in the cancellation data and working together with the HMAU 2 and 3, NPA reported cancelling over 23km² in 2019 (over 19km² in Ubon Ratchathani, over 1km² in Trat, and over 3km² in Surin). Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.
- 84 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.
- 85 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 Ibid.; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 4. TDA reported releasing a combined total of 10.5km² through both non-technical and technical survey in Buriram province and 10.5km² in Sri Sa province, in 2019. Emails from Amornchai Sirisai, TDA, 18 and 20 July 2020.
- 90 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 4. Included in the technical survey data and working together with the HMAU 3, NPA reported reducing 48,849m² in 2019 in Ubon Ratchathani. Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.
- 91 Ibid.; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 4.
- 92 Thailand's Article 7 report includes only TMAC's operating results.
- 93 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 17 June 2020.
- 94 Five-Year Plan, p. 5.
- 95 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 96 Email from Aksel Steen-Nilsen, NPA, 30 March 2020.
- 97 Ibid.
- 98 Statement of Thailand, Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 99 Ibid.; and email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, 27 February 2020.
- 100 Analysis of the request submitted by Thailand for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, 23 October 2017, para. 16.
- 101 Email from Shushira Chonhenchob, NPA (on behalf of Lt.-Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC), 8 April 2019.
- 102 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 8.
- 103 Ibid.; and 'CMAC, Thais join forces to clear mines at border provinces', *The Phnom Penh Post*, 24 September 2019, at: bit.ly/3ejuyrW.
- 104 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt. Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, on 27 February 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Section 8.
- 105 Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), "A record of discussions signed between CMAC and TMAC", 3 March 2020, available at: bit.ly/34yiUEW.
- 106 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt. Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, on 27 February 2020.
- 107 Email from Eva Veble (on behalf of Aksel Steen-Nilsen), NPA, 9 September 2020.
- 108 Email from Flt. Lt. Chotiboon Anukulvanich, on behalf of Lt. Gen. Sittipol Nimnuan, TMAC, on 27 February 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2022
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

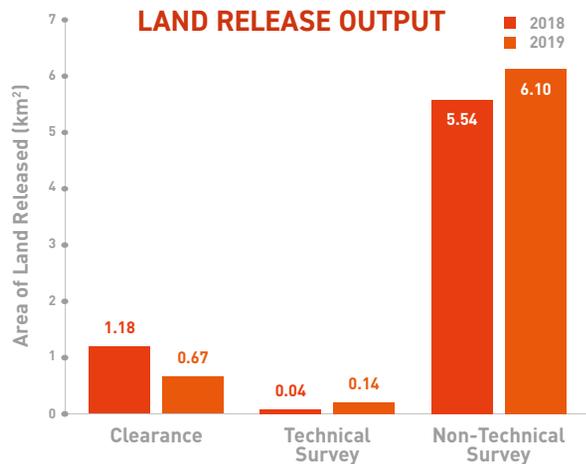
HEAVY, 157 km²
(ESTIMATE BY TURKEY)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0.67 km²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

25,959



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Turkey published a Strategic Plan for 2020–25 which sets a target of becoming mine free by 2025 while acknowledging it will seek an extension to its 2022 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline. The Ministry of National Defence and the Turkish Mine Action Centre (TURMAC) significantly increased the military's demining capacity in 2019, accrediting 12 more teams, purchasing large volumes of equipment, and preparing to take delivery of new mechanical assets. Nonetheless, mine clearance in 2019 fell to the lowest level in three years.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Turkey should commit to a timeline for survey and clearance of its south-eastern border with Iraq.
- Turkey should accelerate survey to define hazardous areas in non-border areas as a prelude to faster clearance.
- Turkey should report systematically and in detail on all victim-activated explosive devices to fulfil its APMBC obligations.
- Turkey should report on all mine action plans and activities in Northern Cyprus and the territory it controls in northern Syria.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	6	Turkey has good knowledge of its mine contamination and continued to refine that understanding in 2019 adding many areas previously identified as suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) to its record of confirmed hazards.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	6	Since 2015, Turkey has developed an institutional framework for focused mine action under the control of the military and since 2018 has embarked on significant expansion of its operational capacity although management has suffered from high turnover of senior staff.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	4	Turkey makes no reference to gender and diversity in its 2020–25 strategic plan and military regulations prevent employment of women in military demining teams but TURMAC says women are included in survey and community liaison teams and in non-operational roles. It also claims that it takes gender into account in planning new projects.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	7	TURMAC operates an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database which became operational in 2018. It supported a desktop review of contamination data in 2019 that led to a significant adjustment in estimates of both SHAs and confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). Turkey submits comprehensive and timely Article 7 reports.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	5	Turkey published a long-awaited strategic plan for 2020-25 in a 12-page document that set out five main goals, including becoming mine free by 2025 while confirming the intention to seek a further extension to its 2022 Article 5 deadline.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	7	Turkey published 44 chapters of mine action standards in 2019 which it prepared in consultation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	7	Turkey did not sustain the improvement in clearance achieved in 2018 and although it released slightly more land through reduction and cancellation, overall productivity remained far below the levels needed to meet its strategic plan goals.
Average Score	6.3	6.2	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Ministry of Defence
- Turkish Mine Action Centre (TURMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Altay (national sub-contractor under MECHEM)
- Turkish Armed Forces

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Denel MECHEM
- RPS-Explosive Engineering Services (QA and QC of the EU project)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Turkey reported 150km² of anti-personnel mine contamination at the end of 2019, continuing the decline in recent years from 164km² at the end of 2017 and 157km² at the end of 2018. The reduction in contaminated area was largely on the border with Syria and, to a modest extent, on the border with Iran. The estimate of mined areas on the borders with Iraq and Armenia remained unchanged.¹

Despite the drop, a review of existing data by TURMAC's Survey and Information Management departments resulted in Turkey reporting 670 more confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) at the end of 2019 than a year earlier and slashing the number of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs).² It had reported 701 SHAs at the end of 2018, of which 373 were on the border with Iraq and 206 in non-border areas. A year later, it acknowledged only 162 SHAs, all of them in non-border areas.³

Almost all contamination is located along Turkey's borders (see Table 1). It said that just 1% of CHA area is in the interior of the country but also reported 701 SHAs affecting 2.8 km² inside the country.⁴

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end 2019)⁵

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	AP mines	AV mines	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Syrian border	1,527	128,186,299	411,991	194,618	0	0
Iraqi border	875	2,862,835	79,017	0	0	0
Iranian border*	485	15,515,775	125,558	0	0	0
Armenian border	43	1,097,077	20,275	0	0	0
Non-border areas	762	2,756,422	34,106	0	162	N/K
Totals	3,692	150,418,408	670,947	194,618	162	N/K

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle N/K = Not known * Mined area also intersects with the Azerbaijan border.

Turkey reports mines were first laid along the Syrian border in the 1950s to prevent smuggling and later in south eastern regions for military security.⁶ Mines inside the country were laid around military installations during the 1984–99 conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan, PKK) in the south-east of the country. These are mostly in Diyarbakır, Batman, Sirt, Mardin, Şırnak, Tunceli, Bingöl, Bitlis, Hakkari, and Ardahan.⁷ According to Turkey, these mines, which were marked and fenced, have been progressively cleared since 1998.⁸ The mines on Turkey's other borders were mostly laid in 1955–59 and on some sections of the border with Armenia, Iran, and Iraq in 1992–95.⁹ Turkey reports that its western borders with Bulgaria and Greece, as well as the border with Georgia, are mine-free.¹⁰

In addition to mines laid by Turkish security forces, non-state armed groups have also emplaced mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), rendering clearance more challenging.¹¹ Devices are mostly remote controlled or victim-activated pressure plate (in which case they fall within the definition of an anti-personnel mine under the APMBBC). Explosive charges are mostly ammonium nitrate supported with plastic explosives.¹²

The number of mined areas along the Iraqi border, as well as part of the Iranian border, is an estimate, as, according to Turkey, precise calculation is hampered by armed group activities and the presence of unconfirmed mined areas. In addition, fewer mines are expected along the Syrian border than indicated because of detonations by smugglers and as a result of wildfires.¹³

NEW CONTAMINATION

Turkey's Operation Peace Spring launched in northern Syria in October 2019 put it in effective control of territory contaminated by mines and other explosive hazards, which humanitarian organisations report have caused civilian casualties.¹⁴

NORTHERN CYPRUS

Turkey's original Article 5 clearance deadline was 1 March 2014. In 2013, States Parties granted Turkey an eight-year extension until 1 March 2022, for clearance of mines in Turkey, but Turkey did not request additional time for clearance of the areas it controls in northern Cyprus¹⁵ (see the report on Cyprus in this work for further information). This puts into question its compliance with Article 5 of the APMBBC.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Turkey adopted Law No. 6586 establishing a national mine action centre under the Ministry of National Defence in February 2015.¹⁶ Its director reports directly to the Undersecretary of the Ministry of National Defence.¹⁷ The law gave the centre, now known as TURMAC, responsibility for the clearance of mines and/or unexploded ordnance (UXO) to humanitarian standards.¹⁸ It also has responsibility to elaborate policies for clearance; to plan and steer related activities and to monitor their implementation; and to carry out the necessary coordination and cooperation with domestic and foreign institutions.¹⁹ To strengthen project management, TURMAC planned to establish project offices in the regions where it is operational.²⁰

Turkey reports that the formation of TURMAC has led to significantly increased mine action activities and clearance²¹ but a high turnover of senior staff, including the director, has also had a negative effect on the national mine action programme. Colonel Yıldırım Özerkan, the present director, who was appointed director by presidential decree in July 2019, became the third person to lead TURMAC in less than five years.²²

TURMAC is entirely funded by the Turkish government, as are the Turkish Armed Forces demining units.²³ Turkey reported investing around 50 million Turkish Lira (approx. US\$8.6 million) in 2019 to procure new equipment to establish additional demining companies, and pledged that support for personnel, training, deployment, maintenance of equipment, and other costs will be increased.²⁴ In 2020, Turkey said the government had allocated an additional TL 53.2 million (US\$7.8 million) for demining for the period 2020 to 2025.²⁵

In addition, Turkey reported providing some €10 million (approx. US\$11.4 million) to the Eastern Borders Mine Clearance Project, which is implemented by UNDP and jointly funded by the European Union (EU), Turkey, and the UN.²⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Gender and diversity are not mentioned in Turkey's 2021–25 strategy or taken into consideration in planning and prioritisation.²⁷ TURMAC says national standards closely follow International Mine Action Standards on gender and that the issue of gender is taken into consideration in the preparation of new project documents. Survey and community liaison teams include women to facilitate access and participation by all groups, including women and children.²⁸

Women are reported to have equal access to survey and quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) positions and make up 40% of TURMAC personnel in non-operational positions, including holding the position of department chiefs. Turkish Armed Forces regulations do not permit employment of women in military demining units but TURMAC says civilian contractors are encouraged and advised to deploy female personnel.²⁹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

TURMAC installed the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) with support from the Geneva International Centre for Mine Action (GICHD) in 2017, and personnel from TURMAC and the armed forces have been trained in its use.³⁰ Turkey reported the system contains all minefield and mine victim data and is used for all reporting and documentation.³¹

Turkey has been submitting comprehensive, accurate, and timely annual Article 7 transparency reports.

PLANNING AND TASKING

TURMAC's work plan for 2019 called for MECHEM to clear around 0.5km², under the Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project.³² The plan called for a total of 18 MoD and *gendarmerie* demining teams to deploy as follows:

- Doğubeyazıt (Eastern Border) 4 teams (gendarmerie)
- Ardahan Göle (non-border) 2 teams
- Syrian Border in Hatay (8 teams), Kilis (4 teams)
- Hakkari (4 teams)
- Diyarbakır (2 teams)
- Şırnak (2 teams).³³

Turkey's first National Strategic Mine Action Plan, which was announced in 2017 and covered 2018–20 was never published.³⁴ Changes in government regulations, legislation, and structures were said to have held up publication.³⁵ In November 2019, Turkey informed the Fourth APMBC Review Conference in Oslo that it had prepared a three-year national mine action plan for 2019–21.³⁶ It later reported that TURMAC's director had prepared and signed a Strategic Mine Action Plan (2020–25).³⁷

In 2020, TURMAC released a 12-page Strategic Mine Action Plan through to the end of 2025 setting out a vision of Turkey becoming mine-free by 2025. It estimated the cost of completion at about US\$332 million, to be financed by the national budget and international sources. The plan identified five general goals:³⁸

- To clear all of the emplaced anti-personnel mines in Turkey
- To strengthen national capacity and ensure its sustainability
- To reduce the number of mines held in depots for training
- To provide Mine Risk Education and support mine victims; and
- To develop coordination and cooperation with national and international organisations related to mine action.

SYRIAN BORDER

The 2013 Article 5 deadline extension request had projected completing clearance of the border with Syria, which accounts for 85% of its contamination, by the end of 2019.³⁹ This was not achieved. The border is Turkey's easiest clearance task because the terrain is flat and has experienced minimal mine displacement due to environmental factors but despite some clearance to support construction of a border security surveillance system operations were delayed by the Syria conflict.⁴⁰ Clearance operations under way since 2018 focused on Hatay and Kilis provinces.⁴¹ The Strategic Plan said Turkish demining assets would clear a total of around 3.4km² in Hatay, Gaziantep, Kilis, Şanlıurfa, Mardin and Şırnak provinces on the Syrian border at a cost of TLM 55 million (US\$8 million) funded from the national budget.⁴²

EASTERN BORDERS

Turkey proposed a two-phase Eastern Border Mine Clearance project, starting on the Armenian border and continuing southwards to the borders with Azerbaijan, Iran, and Iraq.⁴³ The project is supervised by Turkish authorities and implemented in a joint project with UNDP.⁴⁴ Under the project, UNDP is both managing and quality assuring the demining while also supporting capacity development of TURMAC.⁴⁵ Denel MECHEM (MECHEM) was awarded a contract to conduct demining as part of a consortium in which national operators would be subcontracted by MECHEM.⁴⁶

Phase 1 of the project, implemented between June 2016 and the end of 2017,⁴⁷ released a total of almost 3.3km² of mined area, much less than the 13.5km² envisaged in the Article 5 deadline extension request, and destroyed 25,667 anti-personnel mines.⁴⁸ Phase 2, which started behind schedule in June 2018 and was completed in 2019,⁴⁹ resulted in release of close to 1.7km² of land, bringing the total area released in the first two phases to 4.8km².⁵⁰

Turkey planned a third phase that was due to start in 2020 and continue until 2022, which would be funded mainly by the EU (€18.5 million) and Turkey (€2.12 million). The project will include non-technical survey of all remaining mined areas in the eastern border region and clearance of 4km².⁵¹ In slight contrast, the Strategic Plan 2020–25 said the project involved clearance of 4km² in Van province and 5km² in Kilis province.⁵² Turkey said activities scheduled for 2020 would be delayed by measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NON-BORDER AREAS

Turkey planned to complete clearance of all 873 identified mined areas inside the country by 2021, involving release of 3.1km² and destruction of 34,410 mines. The 2013 extension request said the armed forces would conduct clearance in non-border areas until the establishment of a national mine action centre, after which a tender would be issued. Operations would prioritise areas used for military operations; areas with low or no security threats; and areas where the local population may benefit from agriculture and livestock.⁵³ The only non-border activity conducted up to 2020 was clearance of 0.3km² at a former military range in 2018.⁵⁴ The mined areas are scattered and TURMAC considers it more practical for clearance to be conducted by military units but their capacity has been limited.⁵⁵

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Turkey issued 44 national mine action standards, including on land release, in February 2019. The standards were prepared with support from UNDP and the GICHD.⁵⁶ A separate set of standards specific to the Eastern Border Clearance project were also reviewed in 2019, including regulations and medical standards for private companies.⁵⁷

As at July 2019, TURMAC's SOPs had been completed and were available on its webpage. The SOPs of the military demining units and MECHEM have been in use since 2017.⁵⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Turkey's military has undergone significant expansion of its manual demining capacity since 2018. Three new demining companies (equivalent to 12 nine-strong demining teams) were established in June 2018 and accredited for manual demining.⁵⁹ Twelve more teams making up three demining companies were accredited in 2019, most of them becoming operational in the second half of the year. By 2020, total military capacity amounted to 32 teams, including six gendarmerie teams.⁶⁰ Turkey expected to recruit eight more Land Forces demining teams and to complete their training and accreditation by the end of 2020. The MoD was also in the process of developing a light-medium sized mechanical demining machine with a tiller attachment, particularly suitable for demining on the flat Syrian border terrain. If the

machine passed its evaluation, the MoD planned to buy six machines.⁶¹ Turkey aimed to take delivery of two machines in 2020 and four in 2021.⁶² It cautioned those plans could be set back by the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶³

MECHEM, a South African company, is contracted for mine clearance under the EU Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project.⁶⁴ In 2019, MECHEM deployed 15 mine detection dog (MDD) teams, 6 manual clearance teams (approx. 60 deminers), and 1 MineWolf machine.⁶⁵ Before 2019, MECHEM had subcontracted its demining to a national company, Altay, but in 2019 it recruited Turkish nationals directly.⁶⁶ RPS-Explosive Engineering Services, a United Kingdom-based company, was contracted for QA and QC.⁶⁷ TURMAC also had oversight of operations on site.⁶⁸

TURMAC, which has three non-technical survey teams, conducted non-technical survey for the Eastern Border Mine Clearance Project in 2019. TURMAC also conducted a desk survey of minefield records in 2019 to support planning and prioritization of the project activities in 2020. TURMAC has 10 QA/QC personnel who conduct quality management of military demining teams.⁶⁹

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers	Dogs and handlers	Machines*	Comments
MoD	32	N/R	0	0	12 more teams accredited in 2019
MECHEM	6	60	15 teams	1 team	
Totals	38	60	15 teams	1 team	

* Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

MECHEM and Turkish army demining teams both conduct mechanical as well as manual demining, and also use MDDs. In 2020, the MoD planned to deploy two MDDs that have been accredited for humanitarian mine action by the gendarmerie's Horse and Dog Training Centre and to increase the number of dogs in service.⁷⁰

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Turkey released a total of 6.91km² in 2019, about 9% less than the previous year, mainly as a result of a fall in the amount of clearance. Of the 2019 total, close to 90% was cancelled through non-technical survey.⁷¹

SURVEY IN 2019

Turkey cancelled 6,099,493m² through non-technical survey in 2019, one-tenth more than in 2018, with most of the released land (5,564,625m²) located on the border with Syria. The remaining 534,868m² of cancelled area was on the Iranian border.⁷²

Turkey did not release any land through technical survey in 2018 but in 2019 said it reduced 136,472m², including 79,055m² on the Syrian border and 55,156m² in non-border areas with a tiny amount on the Iranian border.⁷³

CLEARANCE IN 2019

Turkey's mine clearance of 0.67km² in 2019 (see Table 3) represented less than one-third the amount of land cleared in 2018 and the lowest output in three years, with sharp falls in each of the three areas where clearance was conducted. Army and gendarmerie deminers accounted for clearance of 127,788m² in the eastern border provinces of Ardahan, Doğubeyazıt, and Iğdır. Most of the Syria border clearance was conducted by six demining teams operating in the Hatay region with a small amount cleared by four teams in the Beşiriye/Kilis region.⁷⁴

Operators still managed to destroy more mines in 2019 than the 22,220 destroyed in 2018 largely due to a 60% increase in mines cleared on the Iranian border.⁷⁵

Table 3: Mine clearance in 2019⁷⁶

Region	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Iran border	513,814	25,619	0	4
Syria border	140,067	36	17	0
Non-border areas	18,844	304	0	0
Totals	672,725	25,959	17	4

Army EOD teams also reportedly destroyed 4,038 improvised explosive devices in 2019 in the course of security operations usually focused on non-border areas. Turkey did not provide any details of devices to indicate if any, or how many, were victim activated devices that qualify as anti-personnel mines and fall under its APMBBC obligations.⁷⁷ Turkey's Article 7 report also did not provide details of mine clearance, including of improvised mines, conducted in areas of northern Syria where it took control after launching Operation Peace Spring in October 2019. The MoD reported in January 2020 only that security forces had destroyed 891 mines and 1,660 IEDs.⁷⁸

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the eight-year extension granted by States Parties in 2013), Turkey is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2022.

Turkey will not meet this deadline and has confirmed it will seek a new extension in 2021.⁷⁹ Turkey's 2020–25 strategic plan says Turkey will request a three-year extension to its Article 5 deadline,⁸⁰ but it appears the amount of extra time to be requested has yet to be finalised.⁸¹ The plan also sets a general target of completing mine clearance by 2025 in line with the Oslo Action Plan.⁸² Neither target can be achieved without a dramatic acceleration in mine clearance operations.

Turkey has made significant progress in the past five years creating the institutions, processes, and operational capacity to pursue the goals set out in its 2013 Article 5 extension request and fulfil its APMBC obligations. The first two phases of the Eastern Border Project conducted between 2016 and 2018 resulted in release of 4.8km², a marked improvement on what was achieved in the 15 years between 1998 and 2013, when Turkey cleared a total of 1.15km² of mined area. However, the results remain modest in relation to the 150km² of remaining contamination and Turkey's strategic plan targets.

Turkey believes it will cancel at least a quarter of this contamination through non-technical survey,⁸³ but it will need to sharply accelerate clearance to achieve its strategic goals. Instead, clearance in 2019 fell back from the level achieved the previous year and has averaged a little under 0.75km² a year for the past five years (see Table 4). The setback to operations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic makes it unlikely land release will significantly accelerate in 2020. Turkey, meanwhile, added to its treaty obligations by taking control of an area of northern Syria heavily contaminated by mines and improvised devices.

Table 4: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	0.67
2018	2.08
2017	*0.82
2016	0.12
2015	0
Total	3.69

*Also included previously unreported clearance output relating to 2016.

- 1 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 2 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, Head of QM Section, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 3 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ministry of National Defence Mine Action Centre, Strategic Plan 2020–2025, undated but 2020, p. 1.
- 7 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 8 Response to Landmine Monitor questionnaire by Elif Comoglu Ulgen, Head, Disarmament and Arms Control Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 14 July 2008; and email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 9 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D; 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. A-1 and A-5.
- 10 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. A-1.
- 11 Ibid., p. A-5.
- 12 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 13 Article 7 Report (covering 2015), Form C.
- 14 See for example "Turkey destroys dozens of mines in northern Syria", *Anadolu Agency*, 28 March 2020; "Syria: Bachelet warns of 'ticking time-bomb' as civilian casualties mount", Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 8 May 2020.
- 15 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.
- 16 Article 7 Report (covering 2014), "Work plan for mine clearance activities", Annex 1; and Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report, Form A, 2015.
- 17 Presidency Decree No. 1 of 10 July 2018; Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form A; and Statement of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018.
- 18 Article 7 Report (covering 2014), "Work plan for mine clearance activities", Annex 1; and Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report, Form A, 2015.
- 19 Article 7 Report (covering 2014), "Work plan for mine clearance activities", Annex 1; and CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report, Form A, 2015.
- 20 Ministry of National Defence Mine Action Centre, Strategic Plan 2020–2025, undated but 2020, p. 8.
- 21 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 22 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 23 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 24 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 25 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 26 Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, Geneva, 24 May 2019.
- 27 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 28 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 29 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 30 Statements of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018; email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form A.
- 31 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 32 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Statement of Turkey, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.
- 35 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 36 Statement of Turkey, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, 27 November 2019.
- 37 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 38 Ministry of National Defence Mine Action Centre, Strategic Plan 2020–2025, undated but 2020, pp. 7–8, 10.
- 39 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 29 March 2013, pp. A-2, A-13, and A-14.
- 40 Article 7 Report (covering 2014), "Work plan for mine clearance activities", pp. 3 and 8; and Statement of Turkey, 15th Meeting of States Parties, Santiago, 29 November 2016.
- 41 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 42 Ministry of National Defence Mine Action Centre, Strategic Plan 2020–2025, undated but 2020, p. 8.
- 43 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. A-14.
- 44 Article 7 Report (covering 2014), "Work plan for mine clearance activities", p. 6.
- 45 Email from Hans Rissler, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, 3 October 2016.
- 46 Interview with Gen. Celalettin Coban and Col. Ali Güngör, TURMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 47 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017; interview with Col. Zaki Eren and Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, in Vienna, 20 December 2018; and Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form A.
- 48 Statements of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018; and Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 49 Statements of Turkey on Clearance, 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 50 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 51 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 52 Ministry of National Defence, Strategic Plan 2020–2025, undated but 2020, p. 8.
- 53 Article 7 Report (covering 2014), "Work plan for mine clearance activities", pp. 5 and 6.
- 54 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017; Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form A; Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 55 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 56 Email from Hans Rissler, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, 3 October 2016; and Article 7 Report (covering 2015), Form F; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 57 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A; email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 58 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 59 Statement of Turkey, 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017. Statement of Turkey, Standing Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form A.
- 60 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 61 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 62 Ministry of National Defence Mine Action Centre, Strategic Plan 2020–2025, undated but 2020, p. 7.
- 63 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 64 UNDP, "Turkey, UNDP begin clearing landmine along eastern borders", 4 April 2016.
- 65 Emails from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019 and 24 June 2020.
- 66 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 67 UNDP, "Turkey, UNDP begin clearing landmine along eastern borders", 4 April 2016.
- 68 Email from Lt.-Col. Halil Şen, TURMAC, 21 June 2017.
- 69 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A; email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 70 Ministry of National Defence Mine Action Centre, Strategic Plan 2020–2025, undated but 2020, p. 7.
- 71 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 75 Ibid., Form D.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form A.
- 78 Burak Bir, "Turkey destroys hundreds of mines, IEDs in Syria", *Anadolu Agency*, 9 January 2020.
- 79 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC, 24 June 2020.
- 80 Strategic Mine Action Plan for 2021–2025, p. 5.
- 81 Email from Maj. Can Ceylan, TURMAC 24 June 2020.
- 82 Strategic Mine Action Plan, 2021–2025, p.
- 83 Ministry of National Defence Mine Action Centre, Strategic Plan 2020–2025, undated but 2020, p. 6.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2021
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 1 DECEMBER 2023

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

MEDIUM, 10KM²
(MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE)

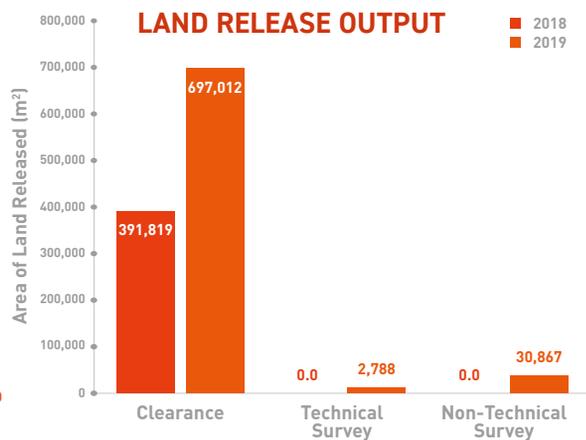
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

0.70KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

12

(INCLUDING & DESTROYED
DURING SPOT TASKS)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Despite very considerable international assistance, Ukraine's progress in demining remains extremely disappointing. Long-awaited mine action legislation, which was adopted in 2018, could ultimately not be implemented as it conflicts with the Ukrainian constitution. This has meant that new legislation has had to be drafted but, as at June 2020, this had not yet been adopted. This has further delayed the establishment of the infrastructure needed for an effective mine action programme. Ukraine is not on track to meet its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline and has submitted an extension request to 1 December 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ukraine should cease all use of landmines.
- Ukraine should adopt and implement mine action legislation.
- Ukraine should undertake a baseline survey of anti-personnel mine contamination in areas to which it has effective access.
- Ukraine should formally establish a national mine action authority and a functioning national mine action centre to manage clearance of anti-personnel mines.
- Ukraine should elaborate a national strategic plan for mine action.
- Ukraine should systematically collect data on contamination from mines, cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), as well as progress in survey and clearance, and establish a centralised database for planning purposes.
- Ukraine should consult with mine action stakeholders and elaborate standardised national criteria for the prioritisation of anti-personnel mine clearance.
- Ukraine should elaborate a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan for mine action.
- Ukraine should remove civil liability insurance claim for a period of 10 years after the end of mine action in a specific territory.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	3	3	The extent of anti-personnel mine contamination in Ukraine is not known and while some survey is being conducted it is not being systematically reported upon by Ukraine. Reports of new anti-personnel mine use persist.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	5	The Ministry of Defence (MoD) continues to have organisational control of operational mine action. It was expected that the adoption of mine action legislation would allow for improved management of mine action. However, it was deemed necessary to amend the law which is planned to be adopted in October 2020.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	2	2	Ukraine does not have a gender policy for mine action and does not report on whether gender is mainstreamed within its programmes. No reference was made to gender or diversity in Ukraine's Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2020.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	4	There are two Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) databases in Ukraine. In 2019, the databases were transitioned to IMSMA Core. Ukraine submitted its Article 5 deadline extension request in June 2020 and as with its latest Article 7 report it continues to report in a manner inconsistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	3	3	There is no national strategic plan for mine action or standardised criteria for prioritising tasks in Ukraine. In May 2019, Ukraine submitted its annual mine action work plan with a list of planned activities but has not reported on whether these were in fact achieved.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	5	National mine action standards were published in April 2019 but are voluntary until the legislation is passed. External quality management was introduced in 2019 allowing for an official handover of cleared land to take place for the first time.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	5	5	Ukraine is not on track to meet its Article 5 deadline and submitted a request in 2020 to extend its deadline to 1 December 2023, which it will not meet. It is not known how much anti-personnel mined area was cleared in 2019 as Ukraine does not report those figures and the Ukrainian government does not exercise effective control over all mined areas, impeding access for demining. In the area reported as cleared during the year, only 12 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.
Average Score	3.9	4.0	Overall Programme Performance: VERY POOR

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or mine action centre
- Ministry of Defence (MoD)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- State Emergency Services of Ukraine (SESU)
- Security Service
- State Special Transport Service (SSTS)
- State Border Service
- Demining Team of Ukraine
- Demining Solutions

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Demining Group (DDG)
- The HALO Trust
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) – Operations suspended in 2019

OTHER ACTORS

- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Project Coordinator in Ukraine (PCU)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Mine Action Sub-cluster chaired by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The extent of anti-personnel mined area in Ukraine is not known. The heaviest mine and ERW contamination is believed to be inside the 15km buffer zone on either side of the Line of Contact between the warring parties within the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, but access to this area for survey and clearance operations is severely limited.¹

In 2017, Ukraine estimated, highly improbably, that total contamination by mines and ERW could extend over 7,000km².² The Ukrainian Ministry of Defence (MoD) accepted that this is a "rough" estimate.³ In its statement at the May 2019 APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Ukraine estimated, also improbably, that more than 8% of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions have been contaminated by anti-personnel mines.⁴ These estimates were also reported in Ukraine's 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request⁵ and the claim of explosive contamination covering 7,000km² of national territory was repeated in the additional information it submitted in August 2020 in response to comments provided by the Article 5 Committee.⁶

In fact, Ukraine cannot reliably estimate the overall extent of mine contamination until surveys have been completed.⁷ While some survey has taken place in the government-controlled areas ongoing conflict means that survey is not possible in the "grey zone": the sliver of territory along both sides of the contact line that divides Ukrainian government-controlled land from separatist-run areas. Ukraine has indicated that nationwide non-technical and technical survey will only be possible once its sovereignty has been fully restored over all territory under its jurisdiction.⁸

Ukraine reported in its latest APMBC Article 7 transparency report (covering 2019) that non-technical survey was conducted between 2016 and 2018, with suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) identified in the Bakhmut, Sloviansk, Lyman, and Volnovakha districts of the Donetsk region, and in the Popasna and Stanichno-Luhansk districts of the Luhansk region.⁹ Information was not provided on the number or estimated area of these SHAs and, according to the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), there is currently no agreed definition for a SHA and confirmed hazardous area (CHA) in Ukraine owing to a lack of implementation of national mine action standards (NMAS).¹⁰

NEW CONTAMINATION

Over the last few years, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)'s Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine has frequently reported on the use of both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines.¹⁴ A December 2017 report from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), covering 16 August to 15 September 2017, stated that: "The parties to the conflict continued the practice of placement of IEDs [improvised explosive devices] and anti-personnel mines in populated areas and near objects of civilian infrastructure."¹⁵ In 2018, the OHCHR called on all parties involved in hostilities to "cease the use of victim-activated devices".¹⁶

At the May 2019 APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Ukraine claimed that it had not used, and is not planning to use, anti-personnel mines since it acceded to the APMBC in June 2006 but accused Russia of having used anti-personnel mines in its territory since 2014. According to Ukraine, these mines have been planted by Russia-backed illegal armed groups

As at April 2020, Danish Demining Group (DDG) was conducting non-technical survey as per tasking by the MoD and The HALO Trust had deployed three non-technical survey teams and three technical survey teams to determine the extent of mine contamination across the government-controlled area (GCA) in eastern Ukraine.¹¹ In 2019, The HALO Trust discovered 5.11km² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mined area, which was added to the database. According to information collected during the survey, the mines were laid during the peak of the conflict in 2014–15.¹²

Ukraine is contaminated by anti-personnel mines as a result of the ongoing conflict which broke out in 2014. In the first half of 2014, armed violence erupted between Ukrainian government forces and Russian-backed separatists in the Crimean peninsula and in the east of the country in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions (oblasts). Strong evidence indicates that mines were used in the resultant armed conflicts,¹³ including by Ukrainian armed forces, though the full nature and extent of contamination is likely to remain unclear until an effective cessation of hostilities. Prior to the current conflicts, Ukraine was affected by residual contamination of mines and other ordnance, mostly as a result of heavy fighting between German and Soviet forces in the Second World War, but also from combat in the First World War. MoD engineering units partially cleared affected areas in the mid-1970s, suggesting that a problem may remain, but the location and extent of any mine threat is not known.

Ukraine is also contaminated with CMR, the extent of which is not known, and by considerable quantities of other ERW used during the current conflict (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Ukraine for further information).

in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and Russia has also emplaced mines on the administrative border between Crimea and the rest of Ukraine.¹⁷ Ukraine stated that illegal armed groups had used different types of mines, including those banned by the APMBC and which Ukraine does not possess. The mines which Ukraine alleged have been used by the opposition groups include PMN-1, PMN-2, PMN-4, POM-2R, OZM-72, MES type mines, and MON-50 mines with tripwire.¹⁸

In the past, Ukraine has reiterated that its armed forces are authorised to use MON-series and OZM-72 mines only in command-detonated mode (through electrical initiation), which is not prohibited under the APMBC. According to Ukraine, all mines planted in command-detonated mode are recorded and secured, and access to the area is restricted.¹⁹ In 2019, Ukraine reported six registered cases of use of PMN-2 mines, which had been supplied by Russia to illegal armed groups. Eight members of the Ukrainian armed forces were wounded by these devices.²⁰

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

All areas of mine action in the Donetsk and Luhansk region, including humanitarian demining operations, are currently planned, coordinated, and controlled by the MoD which operates the Kamyanets-Podilsky Demining Centre.²¹ Other national bodies involved in the sector include the Ministry of Internal Affairs, under which sits the State Emergency Services of Ukraine (SESU); the Security Services; the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons; the State Special Transport Services (SSTS) of the MoD; the National Police; and the State Border Service.²²

The MoD has organisational control of operations, while SESU is generally responsible for conducting clearance. SESU established a "Special Humanitarian Demining Centre" in 2015 in Kiev. The centre's remit includes coordination of SESU pyrotechnical teams (akin to rapid-response explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams) involved in technical and non-technical survey, demining, internal quality control (QC) of SESU units, information management, and handover of land cleared by SESU to local authorities, as well as risk education.²³

Ukraine's national mine action legislation was adopted by parliament on 6 December 2018 and signed into law by the President on 22 January 2019.²⁴ However, the legislation could not be implemented as it was found to be incompatible with the Ukrainian constitution because it gave authority to Parliament to create mine action institutions such as the national mine action authority (NMAA), which as a "state body" is instead the responsibility of the Cabinet of Ministers (CoM). Following presidential and parliamentary elections in September 2019, a working group was set up comprised of representatives from relevant government ministries and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) NATO and the OSCE PCU to prepare amendments to the law. In June 2020, the "Law on the Amendments to the Law on Mine Action in Ukraine" passed its first reading. However, UNDP, OSCE PCU, The HALO Trust, and DDG came together to prepare an explanatory note with comments on the status of mine victims and their rights; training and insurance of deminers; import of the dual-use goods to allow international operators the possibility to use explosive in order to destroy items found during demining as currently only MoD and SESU can do that; and handover procedure and liability of actors after handover.

It is understood that adjustments will be made taking these comments into account before the second reading of the amendments to the Law. It is planned that the amendments to the Law will be adopted in October 2020, before the adoption of the budget for 2021.²⁵ It establishes a framework for humanitarian demining, divides responsibilities among state institutions, and envisages the creation of an NMAA and, strangely, two national mine action centres (NMACs). There will be one NMAC under the MoD Kamyanets-Podilsky Demining Centre and one under SESU's "Special Humanitarian Demining Centre" each of which will be accredited and have their own quality management capacity. Demining responsibility will be divided territorially between the two NMACs. The NMACs will be coordinated by the NMAA, an interagency body made up of the CoM which will be chaired by the MoD while "special conditions" exist in Ukraine and then during peacetime by the Ministry of Interior. The NMAA and the national mine action strategy will be adopted by the NMAA.²⁶

Operators participate in monthly mine action sub-cluster meetings, which are attended by representatives of the MoD, SESU, and MOFA and which is chaired by UNDP. There are also regular roundtable meetings organised by OSCE PCU on specific mine action topics and other sectorally relevant discussions.²⁷ However, exchange and dialogue among stakeholders (NGOs, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UN agencies, and government ministries) are said to focus on issues other than progress and challenges in completing clearance by the Article 5 deadline.²⁸

National funding is provided for clearance of mines and ERW and quality control.²⁹ Additionally, the MoD and the Civil-Military Cooperation Directorate (CIMIC) of the Armed Forces of Ukraine have supported operator survey and clearance on all matters related to security and in particular have supported the deployment of HALO's teams in the 15km buffer zone.³⁰ Ukraine also receives support from foreign partners (OSCE and NATO) for demining equipment.³¹

A working group on mine action legislation is attended by OSCE-PCU, UNDP, HALO Trust, and DDG.³² Government bodies do not currently assist operators in obtaining visas or to import equipment, and operators do not have permission to use explosives or remove explosive items. Operators are lobbying for amendments to the mine action legislation to clarify these issues.³³

The GICHD has been working with the OSCE PCU and the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) to help foster mine action institutions.³⁴ In 2019, GICHD supported the development of new mine action legislation and the NMAA; provided training in quality management and IMSMA Core; facilitated a regional roundtable on Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) communication approaches for different target audiences in affected communities organised by the OSCE PCU; developed training programmes with the national mine action training centres due to take place during 2020; organised a visit to the Lebanon Mine Action Centre for the head of the three training programmes; and sponsored participants from the Ukrainian national authorities to attend the Mine Action Technology Workshop.³⁵ The OSCE PCU has received funding until December 2021 to support Ukraine in establishing an NMAA and an NMAC, national standards and mine action legislation; to develop the IMSMA database in co-operation with the GICHD; to organise training for Ukrainian demining specialists in quality management, non-technical survey, and IMSMA; to procure demining equipment for the MoD and SESU; and to develop mine risk education materials.³⁶

DDG provided capacity development to SESU in 2019 and, as at April 2020, was supporting equipment procurement, the development of standard operating procedures, deployment/operational activity (mine clearance, non-technical survey), quality assurance and quality control. In addition, DDG provided training on non-technical survey, clearance, and data management.³⁷ In 2019, the HALO Trust provided information management support and quality management training to the MoD. In 2020, HALO Trust was providing training to SESU on non-technical survey, medical support, geographic information systems (GIS), risk education, clearance, and quality management. By the end of the year, at least 50 members of SESU staff are expected to have been trained.³⁸

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

As at June 2020, no information had been provided on whether there is a gender policy and associated implementation plan for mine action in Ukraine. No reference was made to gender or diversity in Ukraine's Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2020.³⁹

DDG has a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan. It ensures that all affected groups, including women and children, are consulted during survey and community liaison activities. However, as at April 2020, only 10% of operational roles were filled by women. With regard to managerial/supervisory positions the Head of Programme and the Information Management Officer are both women and DDG recently promoted a female deminer to a Team Leader position.⁴⁰

The HALO Trust uses mixed gender non-technical survey and community liaison teams. HALO Trust began recruiting women for clearance roles in 2017, employing the first female deminers in Ukraine.⁴¹ As at April 2020, 16% of operational survey and clearance staff were women along with 24% of managerial/supervisory staff.⁴²

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

There are two functioning IMSMA databases in Ukraine, one managed by SESU and the other by the MoD, both of which collect and analyse contamination and land release data from national operators and NGOs.⁴³ The databases are, though, claimed to be complementary, as they are separated based on region, thematic area, and operational purpose.⁴⁴ In 2019, the GICHD facilitated the transition of the databases to IMSMA Core.⁴⁵ As at July 2020, in order to ensure the two databases are compatible the GICHD was working with SESU and the MoD on a minimum data standard. Once the amendments to the Law are adopted, the databases will be coordinated by the NMAA's secretariat (the ministry of the chairman of NMAA).⁴⁶

An online map of anti-personnel mine and UXO contamination has been published by the MoD with technical support from The HALO Trust, using data from DDG, Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD), The HALO Trust, and a commercial company, Demining Solutions.⁴⁷ Operators submit survey and clearance data to the MoD on a monthly basis and each submitted a report at the end of 2019 on all survey and clearance data for the year.⁴⁸

Ukraine submits Article 7 transparency reports in a timely manner but does not report on its progress in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). According to its Article 7 obligation, Ukraine should report on "the types and quantities of all anti-personnel mines destroyed after ... entry into force ... in accordance with Articles 4 and 5" but no survey or clearance data was provided in its latest Article 7 report. Ukraine will not meet its APMBC Article 5 deadline of 1 June 2021 and submitted its extension request to 1 December 2023. As with its Article 7 reports the extension request is not consistent with IMAS and lacks sufficient detail to be meaningful.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Ukraine does not have a national mine action strategy and, as at May 2020, there were no plans to develop one.⁴⁹ It is expected that Ukraine will develop a strategy once the NMAA is in place. Ukraine submitted its "Annual Action Plan for humanitarian demining in liberated areas in Donetsk and Luhansk" for 2019 in May last year, as requested by the APMBC Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties.⁵⁰

Planned activities for 2019 included development of information management systems for mine action, the creation of an EOD call-out response, improvement in quality management processes, as well as non-technical survey, technical survey, and clearance of populated areas, transport routes, and infrastructure.⁵¹ In the plan, Ukraine also stated that the MoD intends to publish information on its website every six months that details newly identified SHAs, the progress of demining, and the handover of cleared land.⁵² In Ukraine's latest Article 7 report, however, no updates are provided on whether these activities were achieved.

According to the Article 7 report, in 2020 clearance was planned in the Bakhmut, Lyman, Sloviansk, and Volnovakha districts of the Donetsk region; and in the Stanichno-Luhansk district of the Luhansk region. In addition, technical survey is planned in the Popasna district of the Luhansk region.⁵³ In August 2020, Ukraine submitted an "Action Plan" for 2020,⁵⁴ although in truth it was a list of general mine action activities and not an action plan as such.

There are currently no standardised criteria at national level for task prioritisation.⁵⁵ Until an NMAC is established, all tasking of operators is managed by the MoD in line with its annual action plan.⁵⁶ Local government have been helping the MoD to prioritise tasks based on humanitarian criteria.⁵⁷ The MoD approves annual survey and clearance work plans submitted by operators. Operators prioritise clearance according to humanitarian impact and in discussion with the local community.⁵⁸

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

NMAS were finalised by the MoD in September 2018 after multi-year input and review from key stakeholders.⁵⁹ The NMAS were published in April 2019, but will only become compulsory once the new mine action legislation is passed and are not currently applied in practice.⁶⁰ In addition, The HALO Trust reported that the NMAS will require further development as many of the terms and definitions are not in line with IMAS.⁶¹ In April 2019, the Cabinet of Ministers approved Resolution 372 on “Regulations on marking mine and ERW hazards”, which are said to follow the provisions in the IMAS.⁶² The lack of an NMAS also means that operators’ standard operating procedures (SOPs) are not currently accredited. Operators are therefore working in line with IMAS and donor contractual obligations rather than NMAS.⁶³

In August 2020, Ukraine stated that its national standard on mine action management was “being tested” and that, based on the results of the testing, necessary amendments would be made in due course.⁶⁴

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The MoD and several other ministries continue to deploy units that undertake clearance and destruction of mines and ERW. This includes engineer-sapper units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine; the National Guard of Ukraine; the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which conducts clearance through SESU and also has an engineering department that conducts EOD; the Security Service; the State Special Transport Service, which is responsible for demining national infrastructure; and the State Border Service, which conducts demining in areas under its control on land and in the sea.⁶⁵ In its 2020 extension request, Ukraine reported that 60 “local administrations” are involved annually in demining in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (up to 300 people).⁶⁶

Three international demining organisations—DDG, FSD, and The HALO Trust—are operating in Ukraine.⁶⁷ FSD suspended demining operations in 2019 due to lack of funding, though they are actively looking for opportunities to extend their programme.⁶⁸ In addition, the Ukrainian organisations, Demining Team of Ukraine and Demining Solutions, are active in demining in eastern Ukraine.⁶⁹ In its 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request, Ukraine reported that 41 demining “groups” with a total of more than 500 people were involved in mine action from these organisations.⁷⁰

Table 1: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁷¹

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	Comments
HALO	23	276	0	3	Increased from 2018 by 7 manual demining teams (91 staff) and 2 mechanical support teams (remotely controlled vegetation cutters – 10 staff)
DDG	2	23	0	0	No change from 2018
Demining Solutions	1	7	0	0	
Totals	26	306	0	3	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

In 2019, the HALO Trust also deployed 12 non-technical survey personnel across three teams and 12 technical survey personnel across two teams. DDG did not deploy any survey personnel in 2019. The HALO Trust increased its clearance capacity in 2019 compared to the previous year thanks to increased funding and intended to maintain that capacity in 2020 while increasing the number of technical survey teams to three.⁷² All DDG’s deminers are trained to conduct technical survey and will do so “as and when required”. DDG also has three non-technical survey teams totalling six people who conduct non-technical survey during the winter stand-down. DDG was due to increase its clearance capacity in 2020 to five teams totalling 34 deminers, also the result of increased funding.⁷³

The HALO Trust deployed three mechanical clearance assets and, in 2019, introduced a new mechanical vegetation cutter. “Robocut” has quadrupled the productivity of manual clearance in areas that have only an anti-personnel tripwire-threat.⁷⁴ DDG does not use any mechanical assets.⁷⁵

Another step forward in 2019 saw the MoD establish quality control inspection teams. They began conducting post-clearance inspection visits, which enabled official handover of land to take place for the first time.⁷⁶ In its Article 7 report covering 2019, Ukraine reported that the MoD carried out quality control of mine clearance conducted by FSD in 2017 in Sloviansk district, and of mine clearance conducted by the HALO Trust in Stanichno-Luhansk district.⁷⁷ In August 2019, HALO Ukraine handed over its first 11 cleared areas to local administrations in Luhansk oblast after successfully passing an external quality inspection by the MoD’s Kamyanets-Podilsky Demining Centre.⁷⁸ HALO also handed over eight areas in Donetsk oblast, following external quality control.⁷⁹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

Ukraine did not report its survey or clearance output for 2019. Of the international operators, the HALO Trust cancelled 30,867m² through non-technical survey, reduced 2,788m² through technical survey, and cleared 697,012m². A total of 12 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed, including four destroyed during spot EOD tasks.

The HALO Trust also discovered 5.11km² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination, which was added to the MoD's database.

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, the HALO Trust cancelled 30,867m² through non-technical survey (see Table 2) and reduced 2,788m² through technical survey (see Table 3). In 2018, HALO did not release any mined area through survey.⁸⁰

DDG did not cancel or reduce any areas contaminated with anti-personnel mines in 2019. DDG cancelled 1,150,460m² through non-technical survey and reduced 61,263m² through technical survey of area suspected to be contaminated with anti-vehicle mines and ERW.⁸¹

Table 2: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁸²

District/village	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Bakhmutskiy/Riznykivka	HALO Trust	30,867
Total		30,867

Table 3: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁸³

District/village	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Stanichno-Luhansk/Shyrokyi	HALO Trust	40
Stanichno-Luhansk/Krasna Talivka	HALO Trust	2,317
Volnovaskiy/Volnovakha	HALO Trust	431
Total		2,788

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, The HALO Trust cleared 697,012m², destroying in the process eight anti-personnel mines, 27 anti-vehicle mines, and 164 items of other UXO. Of the eight anti-personnel mines found during clearance, three were of an improvised nature. In 2018, HALO Trust cleared 391,819m², destroying five anti-personnel mines. The increase in output from 2018 to 2019 is due to an increase in operational capacity.

The number of anti-personnel mines found during clearance continues to be very low and, in 2019, the HALO Trust cleared seven mined areas that proved to have no anti-personnel mines. According to HALO Trust, there have been incidents of local people removing the mines themselves, particularly in the case of above-ground threats such as directional fragmentation mines and tripwire-initiated hand grenades (which function as anti-personnel mines).⁸⁴ In addition, The HALO Trust cleared and reduced a combined total of 1,000,353m² of confirmed and suspected hazardous area containing anti-vehicle mines and UXO. The HALO Trust found and destroyed 45 anti-vehicle mines and 43 items of UXO and other ERW.⁸⁵

DDG did not conduct any clearance of anti-personnel mined area in 2019 but cleared 445,009m² of area that was suspected to contain anti-vehicle mines and UXO, destroying nine anti-vehicle mines and three items of UXO.⁸⁶

Table 4: Mine clearance in 2019⁸⁷

District/village	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Slovianskyi/Andriivka	HALO Trust	43,406	0	0	2
Volnovaskiy/Grafske	HALO Trust	108,460	0	0	1
Bakhmutskiy/Kodemka	HALO Trust	29,614	2	2	4
Stanichno Luhansk/Komyshne	HALO Trust	16,802	0	0	1
Stanichno Luhansk/Krasna Talivka	HALO Trust	172,270	0	0	0
Stanichno Luhansk/Krasnyi Derkul	HALO Trust	1,626	0	0	0
Lymanskyi/Kryva Luka	HALO Trust	42,083	0	0	0
Bakhmutskiy/Novoluhanske	HALO Trust	102,585	3	25	39
Lymanskyi/Ozerne	HALO Trust	16,886	0	0	4
Bitovodskiy/Pervomaisk	HALO Trust	15,177	2	0	8
Stanichno-Luhansk/Shyrokyi	HALO Trust	48,326	1	0	2
Svativskiy/Svatove	HALO Trust	68,230	0	0	103
Volnovaskiy/Volnovakha	HALO Trust	31,547	0	0	0
Totals		697,012	8	27	164

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

In addition, four anti-personnel mines during EOD spot tasks. These were reported by HALO and then removed and destroyed by the MOD and State Emergency Service, as operators are not authorised to conduct EOD in Ukraine.⁸⁸

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 5: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2019	697,012
2018	391,819
2017	220,887
2016	52,887
2015	N/R
Total	1,362,605

N/R = Not Reported

Ukraine is not on track to meet its extended Article 5 APMBC deadline of 1 June 2021 and, in June 2020, submitted an extension request for two years through to 1 December 2023, although this would actually be a two year and six month extension. It is highly unlikely that Ukraine will meet this request and Ukraine has stated that the fulfilment of this deadline is dependent upon “completion of hostilities, restoration of the constitutional order and gaining the full control over the occupied territories, including over the state border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation”.⁸⁹ The lack of control over the occupied territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and ongoing fighting pose significant challenges for the Ukraine to plan for fulfilment of Article 5. Even if Ukraine were to gain full control of all mined areas on its territory, it is highly improbable that it would be able to complete survey and clearance of all anti-personnel mined areas by December 2023. The extension request should therefore be viewed as an interim request. Ukraine continues to provide very little information on outstanding mine contamination or the outputs from ongoing survey and clearance activities. This makes it very difficult to know the true extent of mine contamination in Ukraine or track progress in survey and clearance efforts.

The area inside the 15km buffer zone is believed to be heavily contaminated with mines and ERW, but access to the buffer zone for humanitarian survey and clearance operations is severely limited on the government side, and there is no access for humanitarian demining in areas not controlled by the government.⁹⁰ Within government-controlled areas,

there is limited demining close to the contact line as mined areas are deemed to serve a tactical purpose and will not be demined until there is total de-escalation of the conflict. Despite the agreements between Ukraine and Russia to implement a “full and comprehensive” ceasefire in eastern Ukraine by the end of 2019, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine continued to record ceasefire violations in 2020.⁹¹

The amount of area cleared in 2019 was higher than the amount of clearance reported in 2018, though this data is only based on information provided by the HALO Trust and DDG as Ukraine did not report clearance data for 2019. Additionally, the number of anti-personnel mines found and destroyed during clearance is very small, just five in 2018 and eight in 2019, with The HALO Trust clearing large areas without finding any anti-personnel mines. In 2019, just 195,702m² of the 697,012m² cleared contained any anti-personnel mines at all. Clearance data is not available from areas outside of government control, though it is believed that, at least in earlier years, pro-Russian rebels conducted some ad hoc clearance.⁹² While Russia is not a State Party or signatory to the APMBC it has obligations under international human rights law to clear mines as soon as possible, in particular by virtue of its duty to protect the right to life of every person under its jurisdiction, in any areas of Ukraine over which it exercises effective control.

It was expected that the long-awaited adoption of national mine action legislation at the end of 2018 would provide a framework for humanitarian demining in Ukraine and lead to the establishment of the NMAA and the NMAC, the implementation of national standards, and development of a national strategy with concrete milestones in place for survey and clearance outside of the buffer zone in Ukraine. However, as the legislation was deemed to be in contravention with the Ukrainian constitution, following oral statement from government ministry representatives who were not satisfied with the mine action law and their position within it. It was decided that the law would need to be amended and the “Law on the Amendments to the Law on Mine Action in Ukraine” passed its first reading in June 2020. It is planned that the amendments to the Law would be adopted in October 2020, before the adoption of the budget for 2021.⁹³

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Ukraine has not provided information on whether it has a plan in place for dealing with residual risk post completion.

- 1 Email from Yuri Shahramanyan, Programme Manager, HALO Trust Ukraine, 5 July 2018.
- 2 "Measures to ensure compliance", Presentation by Col. Viktor Kuzmin, Deputy Chief, Engineer Troops, Armed Forces of Ukraine, to the APMBC Implementation Support Unit at the APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 9 June 2017, at: bit.ly/2Zk2MUj.
- 3 Interview with Maksym Komisarov, Chief of Mine Action Department, MoD, in Geneva, 8 June 2018.
- 4 Statement of Ukraine, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 5 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1.
- 6 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received on 27 August 2020, p. 97 (numbered page 2 in the document).
- 7 "Mine Action in Ukraine", Side-event presentation by Lt.-Col. Yevhenii Zubarevskiy, MoD, at the 19th International Meeting of National Directors, Geneva, 17 February 2016; and Statement of Ukraine, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19 May 2016.
- 8 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received on 27 August 2020, p. 98 (numbered page 3 in the document).
- 9 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 10 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 11 Emails from Almedina Musić, Head of Programme, DDG, 23 April 2020; and Toby Robinson, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 12 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 13 Human Rights Watch, "Landmines in Ukraine: Technical Briefing Note", 6 April 2015, at: bit.ly/2ym1k80; Protection Cluster Ukraine, "Eastern Ukraine: Brief on the need for humanitarian mine action activities", at: bit.ly/2Zh8uGA; "Minefields Kill 261, Wound 479", *Kyiv Post*, 21 January 2016, at: bit.ly/32WRBmE; and "Ukraine's desperate attempt to defuse landmines – as more are planted", *The Guardian*, 4 April 2016, at: bit.ly/2YezSbP.
- 14 See: "Daily and spot reports from the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine", at: bit.ly/2K4lFms.
- 15 OHCHR, "Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 16 August to 15 September 2017", December 2017, p. 5.
- 16 OHCHR, "Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 16 February to 15 May 2018", June 2018, p. 29.
- 17 Statement of Ukraine, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 18 Government of Ukraine, "Measures to ensure compliance", Geneva, 9 June 2017; Statement of Ukraine on Article 5, APMBC 15th Meeting of States Parties, Santiago, 29 November 2016; and Preliminary observations of the committee on cooperative compliance, "Ukraine", Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 8–9 June 2017.
- 19 Preliminary observations of the committee on cooperative compliance, "Ukraine", Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 8–9 June 2017.
- 20 Statement of Ukraine, Committee on Article 5 implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.
- 21 Email from Lt.-Col. Yevhenii Zubarevskiy, MoD, 27 June 2017.
- 22 Ibid.; and emails from Anton Shevchenko, OSCE, 14 June 2016; and Gianluca Maspoli, Country Focal Point for Ukraine, GICHD, 20 June 2017 and 5 July 2018.
- 23 Ibid.; National Security and Defence Council and the SESU, "Humanitarian demining in Ukraine: current issues and challenges", Side event, APMBC 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 2 December 2015; and National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, "Operations UNIFIER"; and "Humanitarian mine and UXO clearing of the territory of Ukraine conducted by the State Emergency Service of Ukraine", Side-event presentation by Col. Oleh Bondar, SESU, Geneva, 17 February 2016; and email from Lt.-Col. Yevhenii Zubarevskiy, MoD, 17 June 2016.
- 24 OSCE, "Ukrainian parliament adopts legal framework for mine action, with OSCE advice provided", 10 December 2018, at: bit.ly/2QdTa9o; interview with Miljenko Vahtavic, OSCE PCU, 7 February 2019; and email, 13 June 2019.
- 25 Email from Miljenko Vahtavic, OSCE PCU, 22 July 2020.
- 26 Interview with Miljenko Vahtavic, OSCE PCU, 13 February 2020.
- 27 Emails from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020; Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020; and GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 28 Email from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020.
- 29 Interview with Col. Oleksandr Shchebetiuk, Ukrainian Armed Forces, in Geneva, 26 June 2015.
- 30 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 31 Statement of Ukraine, Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Meeting of Experts, Geneva, April 2015.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Emails from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020; and Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020.
- 34 GICHD, "Conference on Ukraine's current security, humanitarian demining and ERW challenges", News release, Geneva, 24 April 2015.
- 35 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 36 "Mine Action Activities", Side-event presentation by Amb. Vaidotas Verba, Head of Mission, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, at the 19th International Meeting, 17 February 2016; and Interview with Miljenko Vahtavic, OSCE PCU, 13 February 2020 and email, 7 August 2020 .
- 37 Email from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020.
- 38 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 39 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request and Annex A.
- 40 Email from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020.
- 41 Emails from Yuri Shahramanyan, HALO Trust Ukraine, 24 May 2017 and 16 May 2019.
- 42 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 43 Emails from Lt.-Col. Yevhenii Zubarevskiy, MoD, 21 October 2016 and 27 June 2017; Gianluca Maspoli, GICHD, 20 June 2017; and Inna Cruz, Information Management Advisor, GICHD, 5 July 2018.
- 44 Email from Gianluca Maspoli, GICHD, 20 June 2017.
- 45 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 46 Email from Miljenko Vahtavic, OSCE PCU, 22 July 2020.
- 47 Emails from Yuri Shahramanyan, HALO Trust Ukraine, 16 May and 31 May 2019.
- 48 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 49 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 50 Decisions on the request submitted by Ukraine for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the APMBC, 17MSP, 30 November 2018.
- 51 Annual Action Plan for humanitarian demining in liberated areas in Donetsk and Luhansk, 6 May 2019.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 54 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received on 27 August 2020, pp. 1–96.
- 55 Emails from Henry Leach, DDG Ukraine, 2 May 2019; and Yuri Shahramanyan, HALO Trust Ukraine, 16 May 2019.
- 56 Analysis of the request submitted by Ukraine for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, 22 November 2018.
- 57 Interviews with Lt.-Col. Yevhenii Zubarevskiy, Ministry of Defence, in Geneva, 20 May 2016; and Maksym Komisarov, MoD, in Geneva, 8 June 2018.
- 58 Emails from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020; and Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 59 Emails from Gianluca Maspoli, GICHD, 25 September 2018; and Miljenko Vahtaric, OSCE PCU, 25 September 2018; and Interview with Miljenko Vahtavic, OSCE PCU, 7 February 2019.
- 60 Email from Miljenko Vahtaric, OSCE PCU, 31 May 2019.
- 61 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 13 August 2020.
- 62 Email from Miljenko Vahtaric, OSCE PCU, 13 June 2019; and Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons, "Danger! Mines! Cabinet of Ministers Of Ukraine Approved Regulations of Marking Mine and ERW Hazards, Developed By MTOT", 4 May 2019, at: bit.ly/2i06vCA.
- 63 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 64 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received on 27 August 2020, p. 99 (numbered page 4 in the document).
- 65 Interview with Col. Oleksandr Shchebetiuk, Ukrainian Armed Forces, in Geneva, 26 June 2015; email from Anton Shevchenko, OSCE, 23 June 2015; "Mine Action in Ukraine", Side-event presentation by Lt.-Col. Yevhenii Zubarevskiy, MoD, Geneva, 17 February 2016; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F.
- 66 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.
- 67 Ibid.; and Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F.

- 68 FSD Ukraine, Facebook post, 12 August 2019, at: bit.ly/2kVg1vJ.
- 69 Email from Gianluca Maspoli, GICHD, 20 June 2017; "Tightening with the process of mine clearance in the East of Ukraine can lead to a new crisis", *military-informant*, 25 July 2016, at: bit.ly/2Qf1jeg; and "Presentation of the Demining team of Ukraine", *SD Crisis*, 26 April 2017, at: bit.ly/2wb6DG7.
- 70 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.
- 71 Emails from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020; Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020; and Miljenko Vahtavic, OSCE PCU, 7 August 2020.
- 72 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 73 Emails from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April and 8 August 2020.
- 74 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 75 Email from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020.
- 76 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.
- 77 Article 7 report (covering 2019), Form C.
- 78 Email from Yuri Shahranyan, HALO Trust Ukraine, 15 August 2019.
- 79 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 13 August 2020.
- 80 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 81 Emails from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April and 14 August 2020.
- 82 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Emails from Yuri Shahranyan, HALO Trust Ukraine, 16 May 2019; and Toby Robinson, HALO, 27 April 2020.
- 85 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 13 August 2020.
- 86 Emails from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April and 14 August 2020.
- 87 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO Trust, 27 April 2020.
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5.
- 90 Emails from Yuri Shahranyan, HALO Trust, 24 May 2017; and Henry Leach, Head of Programme, DDG Ukraine, 29 May 2017.
- 91 See "Daily and spot reports from the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine", at: bit.ly/3gMgUPq.
- 92 Side-event presentation by Mark Hiznay, Human Rights Watch, in Geneva, February 2015; and interview, 18 February 2015.
- 93 Email from Miljenko Vahtavic, OSCE PCU, 22 July 2020.

UNITED KINGDOM (FALKLAND ISLANDS)



CLEARING THE MINES 2020

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2024
ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

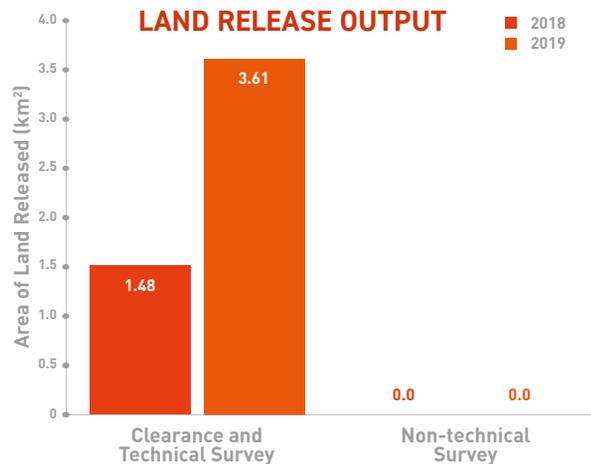
LIGHT, **0.23 km²**

AP MINE CLEARANCE
AND TECHNICAL
SURVEY IN 2019

3.61 km²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

319



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **HIGH**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The United Kingdom has again made good progress in 2019, releasing more than 3.6km² of mined area on the Falkland Islands¹ through clearance and technical survey. The United Kingdom has extended its latest phase of operations to address the four mined areas remaining as at April 2020. It has published a work plan through to fulfilment of Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), which it planned to achieve by the end of 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The United Kingdom should disaggregate data on mined area released through technical survey from mined area released through clearance, in line with international best practice.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	9	7	The United Kingdom has established an evidence-based, accurate baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination and has conducted technical survey of the four mined areas which remain.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	9	9	There is strong national ownership of mine action on the Falkland Islands, with oversight from a National Mine Action Authority and a Demining Project Office, and 100% national funding for all survey and clearance. The United Kingdom is now making very good progress in implementing its obligations under APMBC Article 5.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	Good gender policies and procedures are in place to cover mine action in the Falkland Islands, including at the level of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the National Mine Action Authority; the land release contractor (SafeLane Global); and the Demining Project Office (Fenix Insight). While one third of management positions in SafeLane Global in the Falkland Islands are held by women, none of the survey or clearance personnel is female. This is despite equal employment opportunities.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	6	The United Kingdom has a well-functioning information management system that records progress in land release operations on the Islands. That said, land released through technical survey is not disaggregated from release through clearance in the United Kingdom's reporting, as best practice demands.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	9	8	The United Kingdom has a clear work plan in place to address the remaining four mined areas on the Islands, as well as measures in place to address residual risk, post completion.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	6	The United Kingdom does not have its own national mine action standards, but survey and clearance operations on the Islands are said to meet or exceed the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). While the land release methodology could potentially be viewed as overly risk-adverse, based on full clearance of three uncontaminated areas, despite the reported conduct of technical survey prior to clearance, the United Kingdom maintains clearance was necessary for full assurance and to ensure all reasonable effort, given the lack of minefield records.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	9	8	The United Kingdom released over 3.6km ² of mined area in 2019 and has conducted technical survey of the four mined areas which remained as at the end of March 2020. The United Kingdom plans to complete clearance and fulfil its Article 5 obligations by the end of 2020, well ahead of its 2024 deadline.
Average Score	7.9	7.1	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Mine Action Authority (chaired by the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and comprising representatives from the Ministry of Defence, the Falkland Islands government, and a strategic advisor)
- Fenix Insight (Demining Project Office)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- SafeLane Global (formerly Dynasafe BACTEC, and land release contractor)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The only mined areas under the jurisdiction or control of the United Kingdom are on the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic, the result of armed conflict with Argentina in 1982.²

At the end of 2019, contamination had been reduced to six mined areas totalling 391,825m²,³ compared to 22 mined areas totalling 3,917,839m² as at the end of 2018.⁴ Contamination had been further reduced to four mined areas totalling an estimated 226,958m² by the end of March 2020 (see Table 1).⁵

Table 1: Contamination by province (at end March 2020)⁶

Area	Mined area	Estimated area (m ²)
Yorke Bay (in the Stanley area)	SA005A	67,910
	SA014	102,211
	SA015	49,480
	SA017	7,357
Total		226,958

Some clearance was undertaken in the early 1980s immediately following the Falklands conflict, during which 1,855 mines were removed and destroyed from mined areas.⁷ However, between the date the United Kingdom became a State Party to the APMBC (1 March 1999) and the submission of its first Article 5 deadline extension request in 2008, no clearance took place.⁸

In its 2008 Article 5 extension request, the United Kingdom reported that 117 mined areas remained over an estimated total area of 13km², and containing some 20,000 anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines.⁹ On the basis of

additional information obtained during demining operations, the estimate for the total contaminated area was increased to 13.5km².¹⁰ The total number of mined areas was subsequently revised upwards, from 117 to 122, as the earlier feasibility study had combined a small number of separately numbered mined areas.¹¹

During the first four phases of clearance (from October 2009 to March 2016), 35 mined areas were released, totalling just over 2km², with the destruction of 4,083 anti-personnel mines, 927 anti-vehicle mines, and 74 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO), including 21 submunitions. A further 52 mined areas, totalling over 2km², were cleared during Phase 5(a) clearance (from November 2016 to March 2018, with operations stood down for the Austral winter), during which a further 4,223 anti-personnel mines, 245 anti-vehicle mines, and 43 items of UXO were cleared.¹²

Phase 5(b) began in April 2018 and proceeded according to schedule up to the end of March 2020. This phase of demining was subsequently extended to include clearance of four remaining mined areas. The last four mined areas, which have already been technically surveyed, are all in Yorke Bay and total an estimated 226,958m².¹³

In addition, two areas, Don Carlos Bay and Beatrice Cove, which were fenced off, were released after neither was confirmed to contain mines. These areas had never formally been considered as mined and were not included in the 122 mined areas established in the feasibility study in 2007.¹⁴

The United Kingdom has reported that no civilian has ever been killed or injured by mines on the islands.¹⁵ Over the years, very few civilians have deliberately or inadvertently entered a minefield. It is a criminal offence on the Falkland Islands to enter a minefield.¹⁶

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

A National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) was established in 2009 to regulate, manage, and coordinate mine action on the Falkland Islands. The NMAA is chaired by United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and comprises representatives from the Ministry of Defence, the Falkland Islands government, and the programme's strategic advisor. The NMAA ensures mine action is conducted in accordance with United Kingdom and Falkland Islands' legislation, and its approval is required before cleared areas are declared completed. It meets at least once every six months, and the land release contractors (SafeLane Global; formerly, Dynasafe BACTEC) and the Demining Project Office (Fenix Insight), are invited to brief the NMAA "as appropriate".¹⁷

In addition, there is a Suspect Hazardous Area Land Release Committee (SHALARC), which is a non-decision-making body based in the Falkland Islands, composed of local officials and a representative of the British military. SHALARC provides a forum for the contractors to discuss issues of concern or interest to the committee, and includes explanation of the land release process, including when land has been released for public use.¹⁸

Survey and clearance operations in the Falkland Islands are entirely funded by the UK Government.¹⁹ The first four stages of demining (2009 to March 2016) cost £11 million (approx. US\$14.5 million at the time),²⁰ and an additional £27 million (approx. US\$35.5 million at current exchange rates) was committed on Phase 5 through to March 2020.²¹ Since 2018, the United Kingdom has sought additional financing to ensure the Programme will be fully funded through to completion, which will bring the total investment in demining of the Falklands from £38 million to £44 million (approx. US\$54 million).²² The United Kingdom is, "confident that the necessary funding will be in place to allow us to complete clearance by 30 December 2020",²³ and will work to ensure that resourcing for the Programme remains a priority, even in the current climate.²⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The UK reported that it makes every effort to ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys, and men are considered in planning and implementation of mine clearance activities on the Falkland Islands.²⁵

The UK government and its contractors adhere to an equal opportunities approach to recruitment for the demining programme in the Falkland Islands.²⁶

The NMAA requires its contractors, SafeLane Global and Fenix Insight, to meet contractual conditions to prevent unlawful discrimination, either directly or indirectly, on the basis of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, sex or sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. The provisions also stipulate that the Contractor must adhere to the current relevant codes of practice or recommendations published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.²⁷

Fenix Insight has an organisational gender policy which it applies to its demining, though there is limited opportunity to pursue it on the Falklands given the deployed "team" is composed of only one (male) person. SafeLane Global has an equal opportunities policy and selects employees based on qualification and experience, without gender restrictions. Of management level positions employed by SafeLane Global in the Falkland Islands, women occupy one third, but none of the survey or clearance staff is female.²⁸ According to SafeLane Global no female deminers presented themselves during the recruitment phases for the Falkland Islands operations and only one female applicant applied for a surveyor position, but was unsuccessful as she not the most qualified candidate for the role.²⁹

At the FCO, the national authority, women are involved in the programme in key positions such as Senior Responsible Officer, Deputy Senior Responsible Officer, and Project Manager.³⁰

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The information management system is managed at two levels. The Strategic Advisor maintains the public statement of progress through a "Cumulative Totals" spreadsheet (as demonstrated in the attached annex to the United Kingdom's 2018 Article 5 deadline extension request). This forms the basis of the declarations to the APMB Meetings of States Parties. Also, the Demining Project Office and the Land Release Contractor use an operational-level planning and information management tool which guides the work and ultimately leads to the Handover Certificate at the conclusion of each task.³¹

Historically, the United Kingdom has not collated data on area cancelled and on area reduced,³² and does not disaggregate land released through technical survey from land released through clearance in its reporting.³³

The United Kingdom submits annual Article 7 transparency reports and reports on its progress in Article 5 implementation at the APMB intersessional meetings and meetings of States Parties.

PLANNING AND TASKING

The United Kingdom is currently in its fifth and final phase of demining operations in the Falkland Islands.

In early 2016, the Ministry of Defence and the FCO commissioned the United Kingdom's Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory to carry out a study to help prioritise clearance of the remaining minefields in a Phase 5 of demining. The resultant priority list formed the basis of the UK Government's invitation to tender for the contract for Phase 5 demining.³⁴

A land release contract sets out a task list (the work plan),³⁵ and the Demining Project Office (Fenix Insight) monitors the Land Release Contractor (SafeLane Global) to ensure that it completes the task list according to the contract standards and completion date. Fenix Insight reports regularly to the FCO, and both Fenix Insight and SafeLane Global report to the National Mine Action Authority on progress made against timescales.³⁶

Phase 5(b), which began in April 2018, proceeded according to schedule up to the end of March 2020.³⁷ As noted above, this phase has been extended with a view to completing clearance of the four remaining mined areas.³⁸ In April 2020, the United Kingdom published a costed work plan for the clearance of the last four mined areas and additional funding has been sought to ensure the Programme will be fully funded through to completion.³⁹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The United Kingdom does not have its own national mine action standards, but survey and clearance operations on the Falkland Islands are reported to meet or exceed IMAS, by adapting IMAS to meet the specifics of the situation on the Falkland Islands.⁴⁰ Each project's Statement of Requirement contains the standards specific to the tasks being addressed.⁴¹

The United Kingdom reported that it has "followed the principles set out in IMAS 09.10 (Clearance Requirements) and is very conscious of the statement that "The beneficiaries of humanitarian demining programmes must be confident that cleared and released land is safe for their use. This requires management systems and clearance procedures which are appropriate, effective, efficient and safe." The UK and its contractors have used all reasonable effort to achieve the best practicable outcome. On the issue of post clearance safety, the UK continues to use the principles set out in UK Health and Safety legislation to reduce the residual risk to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP) which is similar to the IMAS concept of "all reasonable effort".⁴²

However, it is possible that the land release methodology adopted in the Falkland Islands might be overly risk adverse, based on the fact that four mined areas in 2019 were technically surveyed, but three of which were then fully cleared, and found to contain no anti-personnel mines and just one item of UXO.⁴³ According to the United Kingdom, full clearance is undertaken of mined areas (which were included in the original 122 fenced and marked areas) for "full assurance", because of the lack of minefield records, and to ensure all reasonable effort was taken.⁴⁴ Of the four areas released in which no mines were discovered, one task (MP5) was released without clearance, following technical survey. The remaining three tasks (PH3, FB6 and SA004)

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The Land Release Contractor in the Falkland Islands is selected by international competitive tender prior to each phase, as required by the European Union. SafeLane Global (formerly Dynasafe BACTEC), was awarded the land release contract for the current and final phase of demining operations in the Falkland Islands, as for the previous four phases.⁵⁰

SafeLane Global's operational capacity in the Falkland Islands in 2019 remained constant at seven manual clearance teams totalling 56 manual deminers (excluding team leaders and medics) and 16 mechanical assets, including sifters which are critical to the project.⁵¹

The United Kingdom has noted previously that the Falkland Islands has limited capacity in terms of accommodation and medical/aerial casevac facilities. Current staffing levels have reached the maximum that can be safely deployed on the Islands, but work was claimed to be progressing "very well" with the current capacity.⁵²

The Demining Project Office, which implements the policies of the NMAA and monitors the land release operations on the Falkland Islands, is also awarded through competitive tender. Fenix Insight has been awarded responsibility for the Demining Project Office for all five stages of demining.⁵³

SafeLane Global undertakes its own internal Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC). Fenix Insight

were cleared, despite no mines being found during technical survey. On PH3 and FB6, no Argentine mine records existed and in addition there was uncertainty regarding the quality of the action taken by the British Armed Forces after the ceasefire in 1982. On SA004, the Argentine record stated that 23 anti-personnel mines and 46 anti-vehicle mines had been laid but technical survey did not find any direct evidence of mine contamination. This task had not been cleared previously, so clearance was undertaken to be absolutely certain the mines had not moved under the sand dunes.⁴⁵

Applicable environmental standards are agreed upon in coordination with the Falkland Islands Government Environmental Planning Department to minimise damage to the fragile environment and to aid remediation.⁴⁶ The United Kingdom conducted an environmental impact assessment (EIA) in 2017, which was discussed with the Falkland Islands Government. The EIA identified two particular issues: a) the penguins on the islands; and b) the area at Yorke Bay, which will be addressed in such a way as to ensure impact to the existing environment is limited to the minimum practically possible.⁴⁷

The UK Government commissioned a mine exploitation study in May 2019 to evaluate the effects of ageing on some of the anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mine types recovered. The United Kingdom has planned to share the results at the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2020.⁴⁸

SafeLane Global, with input from Fenix Insight, had to devise innovative procedural solutions to deal with the mechanical processing of very large volumes of sand to ensure that there was no cross-contamination and to minimise the loss of sand due to wind action. Recommendations were drawn from the technical survey and applied to the planning for clearance.⁴⁹

monitors this quality management and can also conduct its external QA and QC.⁵⁴ The size of the sampled areas at each task is decided by the quality contractor based on the guidance set out in IMAS 09.20.⁵⁵

Drones have been used for reconnaissance over large areas not accessible behind minefield fences and for aerial mapping. Use of drones to overfly suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) helped to identify mine "dump" locations, row markers, and other evidence that might have otherwise taken a manual team several days to locate. The United Kingdom deems the use of drones to be an excellent addition to the demining toolbox and continues to use them when appropriate.⁵⁶ Yorke Bay, where the remaining mined areas are located, is a very large sandy area with dunes up to 10 metres in height. Aerial drones provide a viewpoint that is not otherwise available.⁵⁷

Technical survey during phase 5(b) helped determine the most effective clearance methods given the unique conditions of the four remaining minefields at Yorke Bay and have informed the clearance plan. Technical survey identified where block excavation down to the rock or clay layer could take place, suggesting a combination of techniques (mechanical and manual clearance where necessary) and types of equipment to use, including sifting buckets, dump trucks, and screening machines.⁵⁸

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 3.61km² of mined area, across 15 SHAs, was released through clearance and technical survey, with the destruction of 319 anti-personnel mines, 108 anti-vehicle mines, and 6 items of UXO. No mined area was cancelled through non-technical survey.

NON-TECHNICAL SURVEY IN 2019

No areas were cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019.

TECHNICAL SURVEY AND CLEARANCE IN 2019

The United Kingdom does not disaggregate land released through technical survey from land released through clearance, and instead reports technical survey and clearance combined as "land release".

In 2019, a total of 3.61km² was released through clearance and technical survey, across 15 SHAs. During clearance operations completed in 2019, a total of 319 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in situ (298 P4B mines and 21 SB33 mines), along with 108 anti-vehicle mines, and 6 other items of UXO (see Table 2).⁵⁹

The United Kingdom does not disaggregate land released through clearance from land released through technical survey, preventing comparison of clearance output between years. However, the United Kingdom reported that it conducted less clearance and more technical survey in 2019 compared to 2018, when 1.48km² of mined area had been released with the destruction of 588 anti-personnel mines, 31 anti-vehicle mines, and 26 items of UXO.⁶⁰

Table 2: Phase 5(b) mine clearance and technical survey (January to December 2019)⁶¹

Time period	Geographic area	Mined area	Areas 'released'	Area 'released'(m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
January to March 2019	Fox Bay	Cluster 2: (FB2, FB5)	2	368,340	19	13	0
	Murrel Peninsula	Cluster 5: (MP3)	1	69,016	12	0	0
April to December 2019 (including three-month stand-down during Austral winter)	Port Howard and Fox Bay	Cluster 2: (PH3, FB3, FB4, FB6, FB7)	5	2,699,505	114	0	0
	Stanley Area 2	Cluster 3: (011)	1	89,861	33	30	0
	Stanley Area 1	Cluster 4: (004, 005, 018)	3	40,218	55	65	1
	Murrel Peninsula	Cluster 5: (MP1, MP2, MP5)	3	346,437	86	0	5
Totals			15	3,613,377	319	108	6

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

In addition, technical survey of a task in Beatrice cove in January–March 2019, released an area of 32,436m² and "resulted in its cancellation as a clearance task".⁶² However, Beatrice Cove had never been formally considered as mined and was not included in the 122 mined areas established in the feasibility study in 2007, but it had been fenced off⁶³ and so required investigation before being released.

PROGRESS IN 2020

Phase 5(b) continued in 2020 and a further 0.16km² was released across two mined areas in the first quarter of the year, during which 191 anti-personnel mines and 2 items of UXO were discovered and destroyed (see Table 3).⁶⁴ This left a total of four mined areas remaining to be cleared as at April 2020.

Table 3: Phase 5(b) mine clearance and technical survey (January to March 2020)⁶⁵

Time period	Geographic area	Areas released	Area released (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
January to March 2020	Cluster 4: (007)	1	49,254	175	0	1
	Cluster 5: (MP4)	1	115,613	16	0	1
Totals		2	164,867	191	0	2

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the second extension (of five years) granted by States Parties in 2018), the United Kingdom is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2024. The United Kingdom is on track to meet this deadline.

The United Kingdom stated at the Fourth Review Conference in Oslo in November 2019 that it remains committed to meeting its obligations.⁶⁶ It plans to complete clearance by the end of 2020, well ahead of its deadline, but has said that this remained under review due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions.⁶⁷ The Demining Programme was stood down on 26 March 2020 as part of temporary lockdown measures imposed by the Falkland Islands Government.⁶⁸ Operations subsequently recommenced on 19 May⁶⁹ and the United Kingdom plans to complete clearance by 30 December 2020.⁷⁰

The United Kingdom is in the fifth and final phase of clearance, which includes tackling the most technically challenging and environmentally sensitive minefields.⁷¹ The United Kingdom had expected that eight mined areas would remain upon completion of Phase 5(b) in March 2020, covering an estimated 163,460m².⁷² In April 2020, the United Kingdom reported that only four mined areas in fact remained, totalling an estimated 226,958m², all of which are located in Yorke Bay.⁷³

In April 2020, the United Kingdom confirmed that it had sought additional financing to ensure the Programme will be fully funded through to completion and was “confident that all necessary funding will be in place to allow us to complete clearance, and will work to ensure that resourcing for the Programme remains a priority, even in the current climate.”⁷⁴

Challenges to clearance in the Islands have previously included the remote location of mined areas; incomplete Argentine minefield records; concerns about the environmental impact of demining; and limits on the capacity of the Falkland Islands to provide certain facilities for demining, such as accommodation for deminers and medical facilities, including for the evacuation of any casualties.⁷⁵

Additional challenges potentially posed to clearance of the last four minefields include the nature of the terrain and the potential for water logging or flooding after rainfall, which will be mitigated through the use of draining and pumps. Due to challenging supply lines to the Falkland Islands, there is also a potential risk if key components of equipment break down. To mitigate against this, stocks are regularly replenished. Finally, the impact of COVID-19 poses potential challenges to the planned completion by December 2020.⁷⁶

Demining on the Falkland Islands is conducted in phases, which cut across calendar years, though, based on the year in which demining tasks were completed, a total of 7.67km² of mined area has been released in the last five years (see Table 4).

Table 4: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance/technical survey

Year	Area released (km ²)*
2019	3.61
2018	1.48
2017	1.05
2016	0.94
2015	0.59
Total	7.67

* Based on the year in which clearance was completed

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Full and accessible records of all survey and clearance undertaken will be retained by national authorities in the Falkland Islands and the United Kingdom.⁷⁷ The United Kingdom believes there is a very low risk of previously unknown mine contamination being discovered post completion, but that it remains a possibility as there is no complete record of mines laid on the Falkland Islands. According to the United Kingdom, all known and suspected minefields will have been cleared and the contractors have carried out thorough gap analysis work for further assurance.⁷⁸ If a mine or other item of explosive ordnance is found following the conclusion of the demining programme, it will be addressed by the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team from the UK's Royal Air Force Armament Engineering Flight on the Falkland Islands, which has a long-term military presence there.⁷⁹

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| <p>1 There is a sovereignty dispute over the Falkland Islands/Malvinas with Argentina, which claims jurisdiction over the Malvinas. Argentina has been granted an extension to its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 clearance deadline until March 2023.</p> <p>2 2008 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.</p> <p>3 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, pp. 3-4; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.</p> <p>4 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 6 August 2018; and corrected Annex B.</p> <p>5 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, pp. 3-4; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.</p> <p>6 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.</p> <p>7 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 6.</p> <p>8 Analysis of 2008 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 18 November 2008.</p> <p>9 2008 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 2.</p> <p>10 Ibid.; and "Preliminary observations of the committee on Article 5 implementation – observations on the implementation of Article 5 by the United Kingdom", 23 June 2015.</p> <p>11 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5.</p> <p>12 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 26 June 2018.</p> | <p>13 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, pp. 3-4; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.</p> <p>14 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13; FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 3.; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.</p> <p>15 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 4.</p> <p>16 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 10.</p> <p>17 Ibid., p. 8; and FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 7.</p> <p>18 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9; and FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 7.</p> <p>19 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.</p> <p>20 Ibid., pp. 3 and 10.</p> <p>21 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 24 April 2019.</p> <p>22 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 4.</p> <p>23 United Kingdom, "Submission of information for the Convention's website", Intersessional Meetings, 30 June–2 July 2020.</p> <p>24 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 5.</p> |
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- 26 Statement of the United Kingdom, APMBC Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 27 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), "Additional Reporting for 2019".
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- 30 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), "Additional Reporting for 2019".
- 31 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 21 August 2018.
- 32 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Annex A.
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- 34 Emails from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 21 September 2016 and 28 July 2017.
- 35 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre of the FCO, 24 April 2019.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 38 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, pp. 3–4.
- 39 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 40 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 26 June 2018; 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 3 and 7; Article 7 Report (covering 2016), Form F; and FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 5.
- 41 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 15 July 2016.
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- 43 Emails from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May and 10 July 2020.
- 44 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, 24 April 2019.
- 45 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 10 July 2020.
- 46 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 47 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 28 July 2017; 2018 Extension Request, pp. 3 and 11; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.
- 48 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.
- 51 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 52 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 28 July 2017; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.
- 53 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.
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- 55 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 1 July 2016.
- 56 Emails from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 15 July 2016, 28 July 2018, 24 April 2019, and 10 July 2020; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.
- 57 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 10 July 2020.
- 58 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 3; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 59 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 60 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F; and emails from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May and 10 July 2020.
- 63 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 13; and FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 3.
- 64 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 65 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
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- 67 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 3; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 19 May 2020.
- 68 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 4.
- 69 Email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre, FCO, 10 July 2020.
- 70 United Kingdom, "Submission of information for the Convention's website", Intersessional Meetings, 30 June–2 July 2020.
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- 74 Ibid., pp. 4–5.
- 75 2018 Extension Request, p. 3; and Statement of the United Kingdom, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 76 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 5.
- 77 APMBC 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 6 August 2018; and email from an official in the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre of the FCO, 24 April 2019.
- 78 FCO, Falklands Demining Programme Work Plan under Article (5), 30 April 2020, p. 5.
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ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2023

(INTERIM DEADLINE FOR SURVEY; UNLIKELY TO BE CONDUCTED)

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

HEAVY

(NO CREDIBLE ESTIMATE)

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

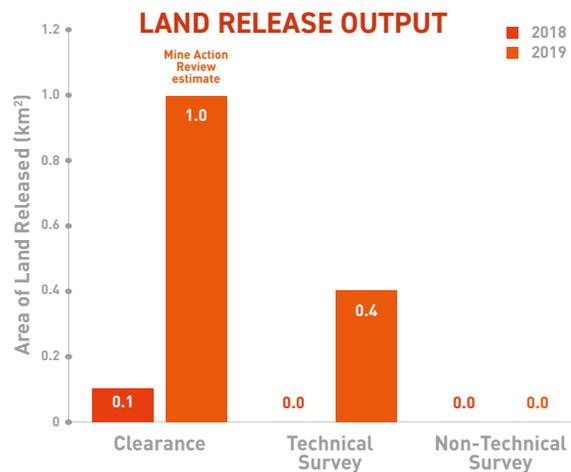
1 KM²

(MINE ACTION
REVIEW ESTIMATE)

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

1,536

(UNDP REPORTED FIGURE)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Yemen submitted an Article 5 deadline extension request in 2019, calling for three years in which to conduct nationwide survey and produce a new baseline estimate of anti-personnel mine contamination. HALO Trust started a programme in Yemen, opening an office in Aden, and the Yemen Executive Mine Action Centre (YEMAC) opened a coordination centre in Aden in April 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- YEMAC should report on developments in mine action to meet its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) transparency obligations, at a minimum providing annual reports detailing the location of contamination and the results of land release disaggregated by survey and clearance.
- YEMAC should start systematic nationwide survey to establish a baseline estimate of contamination.
- Yemen should step up support to international demining organisations to expedite deployment of survey and clearance capacity and enhance training of YEMAC deminers.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	3	4	YEMAC has declared that the extent of anti-personnel mined area is unknown and in 2019 it was unable to conduct non-technical survey as a result of conflict. Armed conflict continued to add explosive hazard contamination, with extensive use of anti-personnel mines, in particular mines of an improvised nature.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	3	3	Mine action in Yemen, one of the world's poorest countries, is entirely dependent on international donor funding. Conflict between Sana'a-based and Aden-based authorities has de facto split YEMAC weakening its role managing nationwide mine action. YEMAC has, though, opened a coordination centre (in 2020) and is expanding partnerships with international organisations as part of UN-supported moves to strengthen the programme in areas controlled by the internationally recognised government. Sanaa-based authorities have expressed interest in a coordination office but taken no further action.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	3	No reference was made to gender or diversity in Yemen's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request and efforts by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other international organisations to widen the participation of women in mine action face cultural barriers.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	3	3	YEMAC, with support from UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), is preparing to install IMSMA Core and thereby upgrade reporting. The existing system, described by YEMAC as unfit for purpose, is not reliably receiving or delivering results of survey and clearance. Yemen submitted an Article 7 report covering 2019.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	5	5	Yemen does not have a national strategy or plan, but continued operations on an emergency basis focused on life-saving interventions and civilian infrastructure hit hard in the conflict.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	4	4	Yemen's national mine action standards were once IMAS-compliant but are now long out of date and YEMAC says its deminers do not observe them.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	5	YEMAC's emergency response targets all forms of explosive hazard and although the total area released dropped sharply in 2019, the number of mines cleared by YEMAC teams increased. Conflict and insecurity, however, prevented YEMAC from conducting non-technical survey to establish a baseline estimate of contamination, the main goal of its three-year Article 5 deadline extension plan.
Average Score	4.0	4.0	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Yemen Executive Mine Action Centre (YEMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- YEMAC
- Yemen Army Engineers

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Demining Group (DDG)
- The HALO Trust
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- SafeLane/Dynasafe

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

YEMAC stated in 2019 and again in 2020 that “the level of contamination and the subsequent impact by AP mines in Yemen is not known.”¹¹

A Landmine Impact Survey in 2000 found mine contamination in 18 of Yemen's 21 governorates resulting from conflicts in 1962–69 and 1970–83, as well as mines laid in border areas between North and South Yemen before they unified in 1990, and mines from successive conflicts that erupted since 1994. Yemen's second Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in 2014, identified 107 confirmed minefields covering a total of 8.1km² but also an additional 438 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) covering 338km². By 2017, YEMAC said it had 569 suspected mined areas remaining, which were affecting 323.5km².² YEMAC believed a significant proportion of this might be released or reduced through survey. However, the United Nations has observed that the conflict which erupted in March 2015 “changed the extent and complexity of contamination dramatically.”³ It also largely halted systematic survey preventing a determination of contamination in any part of the country.

Houthi officials have acknowledged using landmines⁴ and their forces reportedly laid mines in at least six governorates in 2016.⁵ Since 2017, Houthi and associated forces have reportedly laid large numbers of anti-personnel mines and anti-vehicle mines, including mines of an improvised nature, in particular along Yemen's west coast in a bid to stall the advance of pro-government Yemeni and Saudi coalition forces towards the strategic port of Hodeida. Houthi-laid mines continued to inflict heavy civilian casualties and have hampered deliveries of humanitarian aid.⁶ A mine attack on a convoy carrying the internationally-recognized government's defence minister west of Marib city in February 2020 suggested Houthi forces continue to lay mines.⁷

Current conflicts have also resulted in increased contamination from improvised mines, which have proved a particular threat, inflicting heavy deminer and civilian casualties. Use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) is attributed mainly to Houthi-aligned forces, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Islamic State-Yemen, and criminal gangs.⁸ YEMAC reported over 4,000 incidents involving improvised devices in 2019.⁹ Analysis of 2,440 improvised devices encountered since 2017 found that 70% were anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature.¹⁰

Some anti-vehicle mines were reportedly modified to detonate with the weight of a person,¹¹ making them anti-personnel mines falling within the APMBC. Other improvised mines include devices initiated by a pressure plate or crushed necklace. Operators also encountered improvised devices activated remotely or by photo-electric cells. Improvised mines, as well as other IEDs, have been produced in Yemen “on an industrial scale” and laid along roads, inside buildings, and built into house walls, posing a serious hazard to displaced families returning to their property.¹²

Independent investigators have documented three types of mine of an improvised nature used by Houthi forces on Yemen's west coast that are identical to, or closely resemble, conventional mines. They include a Claymore-type mine almost identical to a Chinese-made directional mine (Type 150-A GLD), a larger directional mine similar to an Iranian-made mine (M18A2), and an anti-vehicle mine similar to Russian-made TM46 mines. Some of the mines of an improvised nature have serial numbers, indicating mass production.¹³ Operators have also found PMN mines attached to remote-control firing devices for use as additional charges for detonating larger IEDs.¹⁴

The UN reported the appearance of improvised sea mines in the Red Sea since 2017. These mines, which were probably deployed by Houthi forces, pose an obvious threat to shipping.¹⁵ Sea mines struck 57 vessels, mainly fishing boats, in 2017–19, including nine in 2019, and although placed along Yemen's Red Sea coast some have been found drifted as far east as the coast of Hadramout governorate.¹⁶

A panel of international experts reported to the UN Human Rights Council in August 2019 that it had confirmed civilian casualties caused by anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines emplaced by Houthi fighters in Aden, Hudayda, Lahej, and Taiz governorates.¹⁷

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Management of mine action in Yemen is divided along the lines of the conflict that erupted in March 2015 between the Houthi (Ansar Allah) movement controlling the capital Sana'a and much of the north and west, and the internationally recognised government (IRG), operationally based in Aden and the south. The Sana'a-based inter-ministerial National Mine Action Committee (NMAC), which previously formulated national mine action policy, is no longer recognised by the IRG, which reported it had disbanded in 2019. In the south, YEMAC has fulfilled the double role of regulator responsible for policy and planning while also serving as the sole national operator.¹⁸

YEMAC was established in Sana'a in January 1999 as a national mine action agency and nominally maintains a national role today, with more than 1,000 staff working in 20 of Yemen's 21 governorates as at late 2019.¹⁹ In practice, however, YEMAC has split into two, centred round Sana'a and Aden. The Sana'a office employed around 500 staff, working in northern governorates controlled by the Houthi forces. From Aden, YEMAC operated with some 550 staff mainly active in 2019 in Abyan, Aden, Amran, Lahej, and Taiz governorates.²⁰

In April 2020, YEMAC opened a coordination centre in Aden intended to strengthen programme management in areas controlled by the IRG. The centre is intended to facilitate cooperation with international organisations and will have responsibility for accrediting them. It will also have departments for planning, information management, and quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC).²¹ The centre convened its first coordination meeting on 9 April 2020, but is expected to take up to 18 months to become fully operational as staff undergo training.²²

YEMAC is supported by Regional Executive Mine Action Branches (REMABs) in Aden, set up in 1999; al-Mukalla (Hadramout governorate), which opened in March 2004; and Saada (April 2016).²³ The extent to which they are still operational is not clear. YEMAC also has an office in Mokha and in 2019 opened offices in Taiz to support operations around Hodeida and in Marib for operations in al-Jawf governorate.²⁴ YEMAC said it had set up "skeleton" offices using its own resources pending receipt of financial support for them from UNDP.²⁵

UNDP provides technical and administrative support to YEMAC through a project carried out by three international and ten national staff working from a number of different offices. The UN supported mine action in Yemen from 1999 to 2003 through a programme implemented by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS). From 2003, the programme came under full national management. UNDP deployed an international adviser to YEMAC at the end of 2014 to support planning and programme management. By the end of 2019, its Sanaa office comprised two international staff, including a chief technical adviser, and three national staff; in Aden it had four international and two national staff. UNDP also had national field staff in Hodaydah, Mokha and Mukalla.²⁶

Yemen's mine action is funded by international donors. UNDP estimated Yemen's annual funding needs at some US\$16 million. At the end of 2019, donor funds that had been provided or pledged amounted to \$20.8 million up to the end of June 2021.²⁷ Additionally, Saudi Arabia's King Salman Fund agreed with Dynasafe Middle East Project Management in 2018 to finance a US\$40 million demining project.²⁸ The fund provided a further US\$30.5 million for the project for the year from 1 June 2019 to 30 May 2020²⁹ and in June 2020 said it would fund the operation for a third year.³⁰

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Yemen made no reference to gender and diversity in the mine action plans and priorities set out in the its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request.

UNDP reported placing emphasis on mainstreaming gender principles into plans aiming for equal participation as beneficiaries, employees, and decision-makers in mine action. UNDP's goals included ensuring survey information is collected by organisations representing women and girls as well as men and boys; that data are disaggregated by gender and age; and that risk education materials address the risks associated with all gender roles.³¹

The extent to which YEMAC has embraced these ideas is unclear. In 2019, it rejected a suggestion that women might be included in training for demining teams. Employment of women in mine action, however, faces significant obstacles, in part due to their position as responsible for family care. Danish Demining Group (DDG) was unable to accept some women candidates for recruitment in the face of resistance from family members. Women in management positions often face bullying and disrespect from male subordinates.³²

Among international operators, DDG employed a female international as head of programme and six women nationals among its 25 staff in 2019. Women employees included a risk education/non-technical survey officer and four risk education staff, three of whom were also trained as surveyors. DDG also employed a woman medic.³³

Risk education is conducted separately for women, often by women staff to encourage women's participation. DDG has found that including women in non-technical survey/community liaison activities is difficult as men often take the lead in field activities and tend to overlook including women.³⁴

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

YEMAC submitted an Article 5 deadline extension request covering 2019. Improved reporting will require not only timely submission but also significant improvement in the quality of data on which they are based.

YEMAC with support from UNDP and the GICHD was preparing a major upgrade of its information management in 2020. YEMAC has operated an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database but its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request described it as "outdated" and "not usable".³⁵ The GICHD prepared to install IMSMA Core funded by the United States and UNDP, which added an information specialist to its Aden staff in 2019, expecting a soft launch of the system in mid 2020.³⁶ In the meantime, UNDP also worked with YEMAC on developing data collection forms.³⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

Yemen does not have a current strategic plan or annual work plans for tackling mines, IEDs, or ERW. Mine action in 2019 and 2020 continued to be conducted on an emergency basis. Yemen's recent conflicts "have changed the extent and complexity of contamination dramatically and in many cases, YEMAC is neither trained nor equipped to deal."³⁸ In April 2019, UNDP started to develop a counter-IED programme focused on building YEMAC capacity in threat assessment, IED identification, and render-safe procedures using semi-remote measures.³⁹

The priority set out in Yemen's Article 5 deadline extension request in 2019 was to conduct nationwide survey to generate a baseline of contamination that would provide a basis for long-term planning. Other goals include developing a system of planning and prioritisation, updating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and national mine action standards, strengthening information management, procuring new equipment, and establishing a coordination office. YEMAC reportedly intended to assign its planned coordination office the task of drawing up a new planning system. The request also calls for developing training and capacity for YEMAC staff, increased partnerships with international organisations, and the opening of additional YEMAC offices in Marib and Taiz.⁴⁰

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Yemen's national mine action standards were based on the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) when they were drawn up in 2007 but they were only available in Arabic in hard copy. YEMAC acknowledged that the standards were obsolete and said SOPs based on the standards were not consistently applied by its deminers.⁴¹ YEMAC was in contact with the GICHD on developing national standards and the new coordination centre, as one of its first acts, started reviewing a draft of interim national standards.⁴² UNDP also reported preparation of national standards and technical operating procedures for humanitarian operators clearing IEDs, including improvised mines.⁴³

YEMAC has said its deminers' efficiency was lowered by lack of training, particularly for coping with mines of an improvised nature, and by old or obsolete equipment.⁴⁴ UNDP observed that productivity would be increased by developing survey and land-release methodologies.⁴⁵ UNDP provided training to 25 YEMAC personnel working in Shabwah and Hadramout in January 2020, focusing on use of pulling kits for remote render-safe procedures and on IED threat assessment, which led to a decline in deminer casualties.⁴⁶

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

YEMAC remained Yemen's biggest operator, with the number of personnel reportedly rising to more than 1,000 in 2019, slightly more than in 2018, although it seconded many of these to other international operators. It also had the biggest geographic reach with teams conducting risk education, survey, or clearance in 95 of Yemen's 333 districts, up from 81 districts in 2018.⁴⁷ In addition to manual demining teams, YEMAC started to revive a mine detection dog (MDD) programme and had active teams working under its Sana'a-run programme and preparations to develop kennels and MDD operations in the south. However, YEMAC has faced acute lack of resources and training.

SafeLane/Dynasafe, given US\$40 million a year by Saudi Arabia's government through the King Salman Relief and Rehabilitation Fund, reported employing 19 internationals in 2019 along with some 304 national staff, mainly seconded from YEMAC.⁴⁸ It expected the number of personnel to rise to around 400 in the course of 2019 and reported operating 32 multi-task teams working on the west coast and in the Lahej, Marib, and Shabwah governorates.⁴⁹ SafeLane's operating results are not recorded in YEMAC's database and it did not respond to Mine Action Review's request for information.

DDG, the longest established international demining organisation in Yemen, expanded its programme employing 26 staff, including four internationals based in Aden, including the head of programme, two staff with EOD specialisation, and a medical trainer. It also had seven staff trained in risk education and non-technical survey and two medics in Mokha city covering the west coast, with two risk education staff in Ataq, Shabwah governorate. DDG was not able to conduct

EOD in 2019 but delivered training to YEMAC in January and February, though the scope was limited by lack of access to explosives or a safe location for demolitions.⁵⁰

The HALO Trust established a presence in Yemen in July 2019 when it signed an agreement with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC). Its programme manager arrived in November with two more international staff on site by the end of the year. HALO opened an office in Aden in January 2020. It then trained 42 YEMAC staff in EOD, conducting two courses up to EOD level 3 in Amman and one in Aden, but which was also limited by lack of explosives. YEMAC seconded 17 of those trained to work with HALO Trust in 2020. It expected to deploy two more international staff in 2020 and to hire additional national staff for administration and information management as well as at least two more EOD/survey teams and a community liaison team.⁵¹

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)'s plan to establish a presence in Yemen in 2019 to support development of YEMAC's MDD programme was held up by security developments. NPA expected the project to go ahead in 2020 with the deployment of a technical adviser in Aden around September or October 2020. NPA conducted an MDD handler assessment in Aden in June 2019, selecting 14 candidates for training due to take place at NPA's Global Training Centre in Bosnia in June 2020. As at May 2020, NPA had 12 long-leash MDDs under training in Bosnia which would be transferred to Yemen after the handlers' training. NPA had planned to visit Sana'a for discussions on MDD support in June 2019 and February 2020 but the visits were postponed for administrative and security reasons.⁵²

YEMAC is acutely short of all forms of equipment. UNDP concluded it would be incapable of fulfilling its APMBC obligations even in the event of peace. Plans for a wide-ranging upgrade of equipment in 2019 were delayed by cumbersome regulations and procedures. In 2019, YEMAC took delivery of 40 pick-up trucks, 16 ambulances, 16 trucks, two back-hoe loaders, and two truck-mounted cranes. Vehicles were divided equally between the Sana'a and Aden programmes.⁵³

Delivery of 300 Italian CEIA mine detectors planned for 2019 finally occurred in May 2020. UNDP concluded it would not be possible to deliver the detectors to the north and that they would all be used by deminers working in the Aden-led programme.⁵⁴

UNDP reported that YEMAC's Sanaa-centred operation deployed MDDs in the field more frequently in 2019 and had asked for an assessment of its MDD operations.⁵⁵ YEMAC's Aden-based operation expected development of an MDD programme to accelerate in 2020.⁵⁶ YEMAC has been developing new facilities in Aden with technical advice from NPA, including three kennel buildings, a dormitory for handlers, and outdoor facilities, including a 12,000m² search training area.⁵⁷

DEMINER SAFETY

YEMAC has not reported deminer casualties in 2019 but a total of 20 deminers are believed to have been killed or injured in the course of the year, mainly as a result of detonations of improvised devices, including mines of an improvised nature.⁵⁸

The Saudi-financed Project Masam implemented by SafeLane reported a team leader was killed by an anti-personnel mine in western Taiz governorate in April 2020. The project's managing director, Ousama Algosaibi, said the project, which started operating in May 2018, had "offered until now 21 martyrs and more than 16 wounded, most of whom lost their limbs."⁵⁹ Nearly all of the more than 37 recorded casualties are believed to have occurred in 2019. They include five international staff killed in a single incident in January 2019.⁶⁰ Seven SafeLane deminers were killed in April by an explosion in a storage area holding mines and ERW for destruction in the port city of Mokha.⁶¹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Against the background of Yemen's continuing conflict, YEMAC gives priority to delivering an emergency response to mitigate the threat to civilians posed by all forms of explosive hazard rather than focusing on anti-personnel mined areas and Yemen's obligations under the APMBC.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

UNDP reported that YEMAC released 3.5km² of ERW contamination through survey and clearance in 2019, a little more than half the 6.7km² released in 2018.⁶²

SURVEY IN 2019

Large-scale non-technical survey to develop a baseline estimate of contamination was not possible in 2019, due to Yemen's continuing conflict and widespread insecurity. UNDP reported that YEMAC released 371,833m² through technical survey and that "numerous survey operations" in 2019 covered a total area of 355,976m².⁶³

CLEARANCE IN 2019

YEMAC did not release details of any area cleared of anti-personnel mines in 2019, reflecting the emergency firefighting character of operating against a background of continuing conflict. Clearance operations are focused on high-impact spot tasks giving priority to civilian infrastructure that has suffered heavy damage in Yemen's conflict aggravating the world's most acute humanitarian crisis in 2019. The data available showed wide variations in results.

Yemen's Article 7 report covering 2019 did not record any area clearance, but noted the destruction of 1,414 anti-personnel mines, 34,408 anti-vehicle mines, 2,228 IEDs, and 73,739 items of UXO.⁶⁴ Data provided by UNDP showed YEMAC cleared a total of 3.12km² affected by all types of ERW in 2019. Although this was less than half the 6.66km² cleared in 2018, it said YEMAC destroyed 1,536 AP mines in 2019, compared with 680 the previous year, together with 786 improvised devices, and more than 53,000 other items of ERW.⁶⁵

Tasks undertaken by YEMAC included clearance of the Red Sea Mills near the port of Hodeida holding some 51,000 tons of grain that could not be reached because of the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance. Three YEMAC teams restored access, clearing more than 1,200 ERW items. UNDP observed that "YEMAC does not implement International Mine Action Standards but with given restraints and under constant threat of artillery attack, has demonstrated a high-level of diligence, adaptability and resourcefulness."⁶⁶

Table 1: YEMAC clearance of mines and ERW in 2019⁶⁷

Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed	IEDs destroyed
3,115,830	1,536	10,091	41,687	786

YEMAC did not receive disaggregated details of operating results from SafeLane/Project Masam. In May 2020, Project Masam reported that since June 2018 it had cleared 10.3km², destroying in the process 164,205 landmines and 105,492 items of UXO.⁶⁸ A SafeLane press release in June 2020 said that since the start of the project it had cleared more than 10km² and destroyed 54,332 landmines, 108,126 items of UXO, and 4,901 IEDs.⁶⁹

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Yemen's five-year conflict has created conditions that prevent it from taking the action required to fulfil its obligations under the APMBC. The main aim of the three-year extension to Yemen's Article 5 deadline agreed in 2019 is to conduct a nationwide survey to establish a baseline estimate of contamination that would then provide a basis for assessing the time and resources needed for anti-personnel mine clearance. Instead, continued hostilities have added new contamination, prevented significant survey to establish a baseline estimate, and kept clearance of anti-personnel mines subordinated to emergency clearance of all explosive hazards.

Expanding engagement with international organisations is slowly building the capacity of YEMAC management and field teams but mainly in areas under the IRG. There appeared to be few immediate benefits for areas under Houthi control, where lack of reporting also obscured what activity is being undertaken. Moreover, productivity in 2020 will be negatively affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. YEMAC continued to work in the north and south, but non-technical survey and IMSMA training was halted or postponed. The closure of Aden airport delayed deployments of international staff and also prevented casualty evacuation, requiring international organisations to suspend clearance.⁷⁰

The five-year data in Table 2 below should be treated with caution.

Table 2: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	*1.0
2018	*0.1
2017	*1.0
2016	*3.0
2015	0
Total	*5.1

* Mine Action Review estimates.

- 1 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, March 2019, p. 19; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 2 Article 7 Report (covering 1 April 2016 to 30 March 2017), Form D.
- 3 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
- 4 J. Gambrell and M. Harb, "Landmines will be hidden killer decades after war", *Associated Press*, 24 December 2018.
- 5 Human Rights Watch, "Yemen: Houthi-Saleh forces using landmines", 20 April 2017. The affected governorates included Abyan, Aden, Lahej, Marib, Sana'a, and Taiz.
- 6 Civilian Impact Monitoring Project, "2019 Annual Report", undated but 2020, p. 2; Human Rights Watch, "Yemen: Houthi landmines kill civilians, block aid", 22 April 2019.
- 7 "Yemen land mine kills six in convoy carrying defence minister, who is unharmed", *Reuters*, 19 February 2020.
- 8 UNDP submission to the UN Secretary-General on countering the threat posed by IEDs, 4 April 2020.
- 9 G. Collett, "Countering the Improvised Explosive Device in Yemen (C-IED Yemen)", Concept Note 2021-22", UNDP, 30 June 2020.
- 10 Email from Gareth Collett, Chief Technical Adviser – Counter IED, UNDP, 20 July 2020.
- 11 Human Rights Watch, "Yemen: Houthi landmines kill civilians, block aid", 22 April 2019.
- 12 Minutes of Yemen Mine Action Technical Working Group meeting, Amman, 24 July 2018.
- 13 Conflict Armament Research, "Mines and IEDs Employed by Houthis on Yemen's West Coast", September 2018, pp. 5-6, 11.
- 14 Email from Gareth Collett, UNDP, 24 July 2020.
- 15 UN Security Council, Final Report of the Panel of Experts, UN doc. S/2018/68, 26 January 2018, Annexes 40 and 41, pp. 166-171.
- 16 Telephone interview with Gareth Collett, UNDP, 22 July 2020, citing interview with Col. Alim al-Namouri, Head of Hadramout Coast Guard, 16 January 2020.
- 17 "Situation of human rights in Yemen, including violations and abuses since September 2014", Report of the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts, UN doc. A/HRC/42/17, 9 August 2019, pp. 8-9.
- 18 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form A.
- 19 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, pp. 7,14.
- 20 Interview with Ameen Saleh Alaqili, Director, YEMAC, in Geneva, 13 February 2020.
- 21 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 12.
- 22 Email from Stephen Robinson, Senior Technical Adviser, UNDP, 27 May 2020.
- 23 Email from Stephen Bryant, Chief Technical Advisor, UNDP, 22 July 2018.
- 24 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 5, 22; email from Stephen Robinson, UNDP, 21 July 2020.
- 25 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 26 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 9; interview with Stephen Robinson, UNDP, in Geneva, 20 July 2020.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 27; UNDP, Phase V, "Emergency Mine Action Project", Project Document, p. 1.
- 28 Email from Chris Clark, Global Operations Director, Dynasafe MineTech, 6 August 2018.
- 29 "Report of the Assistance Provided by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center to the Republic of Yemen", undated but 2020, p. 89.
- 30 Press release, SafeLane Global, 3 June 2020.
- 31 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 21.
- 32 Email from Marie-Josée Hamel, Regional Programme Advisor – Middle East, DDG, 16 April 2020.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 10.
- 36 Email from Stephen Robinson, UNDP, 27 May 2020.
- 37 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 12.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 39 Telephone interview with Gareth Collett, UNDP, 22 July 2020.
- 40 Interview with Ameen Saleh Alaqili, Director, NMAP/YEMAC, in Geneva, 23 May 2019.
- 41 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 17; 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.
- 42 Email from Stephen Robinson, UNDP, 27 May 2020.
- 43 UNDP submission to the UN Secretary-General on countering the threat posed by IEDs, 4 April 2020.
- 44 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 16.
- 45 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 9.
- 46 Telephone interview with Gareth Collett, UNDP, 22 July 2020. UNDP reported YEMAC had cleared more than 160 IEDs in Hadramout and Shabwah governorates, mostly improvised mines, in the first half of 2020, all without incident.
- 47 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 7.
- 48 Email from Chris Clark, SafeLane Global, 17 April 2019.
- 49 Information from SafeLane Global website, accessed at bit.ly/2Xcc8mp.
- 50 Email from Marie-Josée Hamel, DDG, 16 April 2020.
- 51 Email from Nick Torbert, Deputy Head of Region, Middle East, North Africa and Afghanistan, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020.
- 52 Email from Kenan Muftic, Head of Global Training Centre for MDDs/EDDs, NPA, 18 May 2020.
- 53 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 15.
- 54 *Ibid.*; and email from Stephen Robinson, UNDP, 27 May 2020.
- 55 Interview with Stephen Robinson, UNDP, in Geneva, 20 July 2020.
- 56 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 7.
- 57 Email from Kenan Muftic, NPA, 18 May 2020.
- 58 Information provided by mine action sector stakeholders during research in 2020.
- 59 "The martyrdom of one of Masam's heroes in the fields of human generosity", Project Masam website, 21 April 2020, at: bit.ly/2ZGrxtg.
- 60 KSrelief, "KSrelief mourns loss of life following explosion related to Masam demining project in Yemen", Statement, 21 January 2019.
- 61 Agence France-Presse, "Six deminers killed in Yemen blast", 26 April 2019.
- 62 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 14, Annex A.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 64 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 65 UNDP, "Emergency Mine Action Project, Annual Progress Report 2019", 20 January 2020, p. 14, Annex A.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 14, Annex A.
- 68 "Masam's teams cleared 164,205 mines and UXO", Project Masam website, 11 May 2020, at: bit.ly/3ertuRZ.
- 69 SafeLane Global, "Clearing explosive remnants of war in Yemen", 3 June 2020.
- 70 Email from Stephen Robinson, UNDP, 27 May 2020.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2025
JUST ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

MEDIUM, 11 KM²
(NATIONAL ESTIMATE)

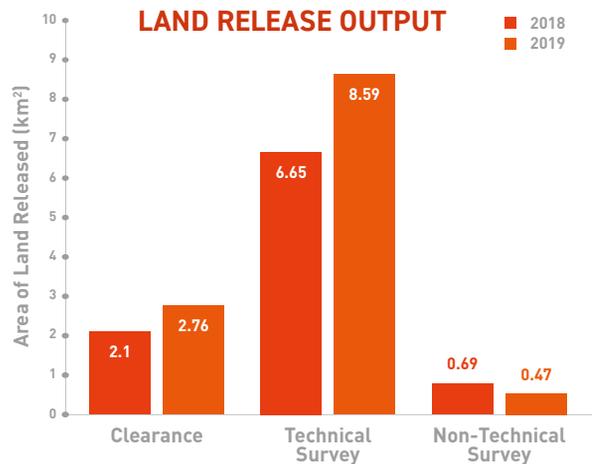
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2019

2.76 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2019

39,031

(INCLUDING 84 DESTROYED
DURING EOD SPOT TASKS)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Oslo Political Plan commitment): **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Zimbabwe exceeded its land release target for 2019 and increased its clearance output by 30% from the previous year due to increased capacity across all operators. All contaminated areas remaining in Zimbabwe are now confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). There is strong national ownership and the mine action programme is effectively coordinated by the Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC). The challenge for Zimbabwe in meeting its Article 5 deadline will be securing the requisite funding from donors in a country with significant competing social and economic hardships.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- ZIMAC should increase efforts to secure additional national and international funding to meet its 2025 clearance completion deadline. Greater links between mine action and development, along with enhanced cooperation among government ministries, would assist this endeavour.
- Increased resources should be allocated to ZIMAC to enable it to effectively manage a fast-growing national mine action programme.
- Zimbabwe should elaborate a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan for mine action.
- Zimbabwe should review “missed mine drills” (MMDs) to establish a more efficient method of clearance and decrease the time spent on MMDs.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2019)	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	8	8	Zimbabwe has a good understanding of remaining mine contamination with only confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) remaining. ZIMAC estimates that only about 11km ² is actually contaminated with anti-personnel mines and that the rest can be released by survey.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	8	The mine action programme is managed effectively by ZIMAC, with good consultation and collaboration with operators. In 2019, ZIMAC's offices relocated outside of military facilities, which allows civilian access for the first time. There is a high degree of national ownership with the government continuing to provide US\$500,000 annually to the mine action programme despite increasing financial hardship in the country.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	6	6	ZIMAC does not have a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan but the importance of gender is acknowledged in the National Mine Action Strategy. Survey and community liaison teams are reportedly inclusive and gender-balanced both in their make-up and during community consultations. Operators report varying proportions of women employed. The Zimbabwean Armed Forces' National Mine Clearance Unit (NMCU) has no women in operational roles.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	8	8	ZIMAC, with the support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), continued to make improvements to information management in 2019 with monthly meetings to cross reference data with operators. ZIMAC has improved its information management capabilities in the past few years and submits Article 7 reports annually.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	8	8	Zimbabwe has a National Mine Action Strategy for 2018–25, and a subsequent revised work plan published in 2019, which accompanies Zimbabwe's Article 5 extension through to expected completion in 2025. This presented a realistic estimate of remaining contamination and annual milestones for land release, identifying the resources, time, and funding needed to complete clearance. However, Zimbabwe may need to elaborate revised annual land release targets in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	8	8	There was a significant increase in capacity across all operators in 2019, although, as at August 2020, APOPO had still not become operational (for want of funding). Greater use of mechanical assets and mine detection dogs (MDDs) has increased efficiency in recent years. However, an ongoing challenge for operators is the extraneous time spent on "missed mine drills", when gaps in the mine pattern are found. Despite this, operators continue to clear tens of thousands of anti-personnel mines annually with among the world's highest number of mines cleared per square metre.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	9	8	Zimbabwe released 11.8km ² of mined area in 2019, exceeding its land release target for the year. While the majority of this was due to reduction through technical survey, Zimbabwe's clearance output also rose significantly from 2018. The challenge will be for Zimbabwe to maintain land release output as expected land released by survey decreases. With limited additional funding and capacity, Zimbabwe can meet its Article 5 deadline of end 2025, which will be a considerable achievement for one of the world's most heavily mined countries in a particularly challenging political and economic context.
Average Score	8.0	7.8	Overall Programme Performance: VERY GOOD

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Mine Action Authority of Zimbabwe (NAMAAZ)
- Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Zimbabwean Armed Forces' National Mine Clearance Unit (NMCU)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- APOPO (not operational as at August 2020)
- The HALO Trust
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at the end of 2019, Zimbabwe reported a total of just under 42.7km² of confirmed mined area remaining (see Table 1).¹ This is a decrease from the just over 52.6km² reported at the end of 2018.² According to ZIMAC, the baseline of contamination is complete following the completion of significant re-survey in 2016. The baseline was established through inclusive consultation including with women and children.³ All contaminated areas remaining in Zimbabwe are CHAs. According to operators, Zimbabwe has a good understanding of the problem, with some re-survey of tasks before clearance expected.⁴ In fact, as ZIMAC explained to Mine Action Review in October 2019, of the total confirmed mined area, only about one quarter (some 11km²) is thought to be actually contaminated, with considerable area between mine lines that can be released through survey.⁵

In 2019, a total of 1,869,473m² of previously unrecorded legacy contamination was added to the database. These were not new polygons per se but the expansion of existing CHAs as a result of pre-clearance re-survey.⁶

Zimbabwe's mine contamination, the overwhelming majority of which is of anti-personnel mines, originates from the laying of minefields in the late 1970s during a decolonisation war. At the time of its independence in 1980, Zimbabwe was left with seven major mined areas along its borders with Mozambique

and Zambia, and one inland minefield laid by the Rhodesian Army.⁷ Initially, anti-personnel mines were laid in very dense belts (on average 2,500 mines per kilometre of frontage) to form a so-called "cordon sanitaire", with up to 5,500 mines per kilometre in some places. Over time, this cordon sanitaire was breached or subject to erosion. In response, in many sections, a second belt of "ploughshare" directional fragmentation mines protected by anti-personnel mines was laid behind the cordon sanitaire.⁸ Anti-vehicle mines were used extensively by armed groups but most were detonated by vehicles or have since been cleared.⁹

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area (at end 2019)¹⁰

Location	Area of CHA (m ²)
Mwenezi to Sango Border Post	15,298,782
Rusitu to Muzite	6,145,600
Sheba Forest to Leacon Hill	3,252,871
Musengezi to Mazowe Stretch	6,955,116
Mazoe to Rwenya	10,134,760
Lusulu	905,537
Total	42,692,666

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The National Mine Action Authority of Zimbabwe (NMAAZ) is a policy and regulatory body on all issues relating to mine action in Zimbabwe. ZIMAC was established in 2000 within the Ministry of Defence as the focal point and coordination centre of all mine action in the country. ZIMAC is mandated to report to NMAAZ.¹¹ In August 2019, ZIMAC's office relocated outside of a military cantonment allowing access to civilian operators.¹²

ZIMAC holds quarterly coordination meetings with all stakeholders; operators report being closely involved in the decision-making process. Communication between ZIMAC and NMAAZ, operators, and other Zimbabwean government ministries was reported as being good with regular bilateral meetings and visits from the director of ZIMAC.¹³ Operators reported that approval processes for international visas for staff and visitors is very slow, normally requiring a minimum of three months, but ZIMAC has provided long-term memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and does its best to assist.¹⁴ There have been some specific challenges related to taxation of vehicles but it is understood that this is a broader issue and not specific to ZIMAC.¹⁵

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has been providing information management support to ZIMAC with an advisor working with the ZIMAC information management team and operators on the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) and data handling improvements. The GICHD has also provided continued remote support.¹⁶ In addition, in 2019, NPA provided new IT equipment to the national authority to enhance data security in the mine action programme.¹⁷

According to ZIMAC's revised mine action work plan for 2020–2025, a total of \$65.6 million is required by the mine action programme to meet its extended Article 5 deadline

by 2025.¹⁸ In 2019, the Government of Zimbabwe provided US\$500,000 towards the operational and administrative costs of both the National Mine Clearance Unit (NMCU) and ZIMAC. The salaries and allowances and transport expenses of staff were covered by the army.¹⁹ ZIMAC informed Mine Action Review that the economic downturn in 2018 was likely to limit the government's potential to increase any funding for mine action, though it expected existing funding levels to be maintained.²⁰ According to ZIMAC, the Government of Zimbabwe has committed US\$500,000 to the NMCU and for the operational costs of ZIMAC every year since 2010.²¹

With assistance from the GICHD and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), ZIMAC developed a Communication and Resource Mobilisation Strategy in 2018, which was finalised in the first half of 2019 and due to be officially launched in May 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic this has been delayed until there is more clarity on how the situation will develop.²² ZIMAC informed Mine Action Review that top priorities for which it hoped to procure additional resources included funding for a planned national mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) victim survey, website hosting, the relocation of the office outside of the military cantonment, replacement detectors and more deminers at the NMCU, and additional funding for the international demining operators to expand.²³

ZIMAC reported that in 2019, as part of its resource mobilization efforts, a joint African Union/United Nations assessment team visited Zimbabwe. Meetings were held with the relevant government ministries and as a result the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) has declared that it will assist with the mobilisation of demining equipment for the NMCU.²⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

ZIMAC does not have a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan. Zimbabwe's National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 refers to the importance of addressing gender and diversity considerations.²⁵ While there is not a specific standard on gender mainstreaming in the National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), reference to gender is contained within the standards, such as NMAS 07 (Management of Demining Operations) which requires that "special efforts should be made to ensure gender balance and diversity of background for Community Liaison Officers".²⁶

ZIMAC confirmed that all community groups are routinely consulted in survey and community liaison activities, with efforts undertaken to ensure that all age and gender groups are consulted. Survey and community liaison teams are gender-balanced and diverse, with personnel recruited locally from affected areas to incorporate ethnic and minority groups. Operators also make use of schoolteachers and children to further their outreach. All mine action data is disaggregated by sex and age.²⁷

ZIMAC reported that gender is taken into account during the planning and prioritisation of minefields for clearance, such as consideration of the risks taken usually by women and girls to cross minefields to fetch water and that of men and boys who often heard cattle or plough near to mined areas.²⁸ However, given the nature of the minefields, which are essentially one long and continuous line, operational access constraints often dictate clearance priorities as much as other factors.²⁹ At the same time, according to The HALO Trust, post-clearance surveys reflect the gendered impact of clearance, such as women and children who often are reportedly the major beneficiaries of clearance, as they are responsible for more than 80% of water collection, with clearance providing safer and more direct access to water sources.³⁰

According to ZIMAC, women are specifically encouraged to apply for operational positions in job advertisements, and in 2019 31% of managerial and administrative roles were held by women. Yet ZIMAC stated that this fell short of "required" levels and noted that Zimbabwean women were somewhat reluctant to work in mine action. More effort is to be placed on raising awareness among women and ensuring equal opportunities to employment, regardless of gender. There are no women employed in operational roles in the NMCU because staff are recruited from the corps of military engineers, where very few women are engaged.³¹

International operators confirmed that each organisation had gender policies in place for their programme staff, with a focus on achieving equal access to employment, gender-balanced survey and clearance teams, gender-focused community liaison outreach, disaggregated data collection, and a gender focus to be employed during pre- and post-clearance assessments.³² All operational organisations reported increasing efforts to encourage women to apply for operational, as well as managerial positions, and noted positive trends in the increasing number of women employed in programmes as a result.³³

In 2019, approximately 25% of MAG's operational staff were female and 50% of staff at managerial level.³⁴ In NPA, 29% of operational staff and 20% of supervisory/managerial staff are female.³⁵ In The HALO Trust, 24% of operational staff and 11% of supervisory/managerial staff are female.³⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

In 2018, ZIMAC fully transitioned to the use of the IMSMA database. ZIMAC noted that workshops, trainings, and international expert support for information management had produced significant results and remained important to ensure the ZIMAC database is up to date and accurate.³⁷ In 2019, a GICHD information management advisor worked with ZIMAC to improve the IMSMA database and ZIMAC noted that a large amount of effort has been expended to clean the database and improve data quality.³⁸

ZIMAC holds monthly meetings with operators to cross-reference data, which according to operators has improved the accuracy and reliability of the database.³⁹ The HALO Trust have suggested that a live shared database that could be accessed by all operators would be beneficial, for example, by enabling more accurate country-wide mapping.⁴⁰ Operators reported that data collection forms are consistent and enable collection of the necessary data.⁴¹

Over the past few years, ZIMAC's information management capabilities have increased significantly, with clear evidence of improvement in the quality and accuracy of its reporting, including in its most recent Article 5 deadline extension request, which established an accurate picture of remaining contamination and set, for the first time, a date for the completion of mine clearance. ZIMAC's National Mine Action Strategy and its revised Article 5 work plan demonstrated consistently high quality reporting, something that was once a weak point in the national mine action programme. ZIMAC's latest Article 7 transparency report covering 2019, is comprehensive and of generally good quality. However, there were some discrepancies in the land release figures reported by operators and by ZIMAC for 2019 (see section on Land release outputs and Article 5 compliance).

PLANNING AND TASKING

In 2018, Zimbabwe launched its first ever national mine action strategy, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, developed by ZIMAC with support from the GICHD and input from government ministries, the NMCU, and international mine action organisations.⁴² The strategic plan complements Zimbabwe's Article 5 deadline extension request to 2025, which was approved by APMBC States Parties in December 2017. Operators have lauded the Strategy for its detail and its realistic outlook on delivery, which it is hoped will encourage donor funding.⁴³

In April 2019, Zimbabwe published an updated work plan to support compliance with its Article 5 deadline of 31 December 2025. The work plan was based on revised estimates of remaining contamination and, accounting for progress during 2018, updated annual targets for the remainder of the extension period. These included 8.2km² to be addressed in 2019; 8.3km² to be addressed in 2020; 8.1km² to be addressed in 2021; 8.3km² to be addressed in 2022; 8.3km² to be addressed in 2023; 6.9km² to be addressed in 2024; and the remaining 4.6km² to be addressed in 2025.⁴⁴ Zimbabwe exceeded its land release target for 2019 with 11.8km² released. The Zimbabwean government introduced a mandatory lockdown in April 2020 due to COVID-19 which meant that operators stood down for that month, then in May operators were able to deploy at 90% capacity and in June they were back to full capacity. It is unclear whether operators will be able to meet their land release targets for the year: as at July 2020, ZIMAC felt it was unlikely that Zimbabwe would meet its projected land release targets for 2020 but that operators were working hard to meet them.⁴⁵

Clearance is prioritised according to impact, with contaminated areas closest to highly populated areas prioritised first.⁴⁶ NPA reported that it uses an impact assessment to prioritise areas for release once they have been allocated by ZIMAC.⁴⁷ The HALO Trust also prioritises minefields which are in closest proximity to impacted populations, and which have had a high number of accidents. However, for reasons of efficiency operations tend to proceed linearly west-east or east-west (which allows for concentrated logistical support and command and control), rather than opening tasks all over the frontage of the border.⁴⁸

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

There is no national legislation specific to mine action in Zimbabwe. ZIMAC reported that Zimbabwe conducts a review of its national mine action standards (NMAS) every three years in line with updates to international mine action standards (IMAS).⁴⁹ An ongoing challenge for operators and ZIMAC alike continued to be the search for technical solutions to decrease the time spent on missed mine drills (MMDs), when gaps in the mine pattern are found.⁵⁰ According to operators, MMDs should be reviewed to establish a more efficient method of clearance as they are time consuming and seemingly ineffective: to date, no missing mines have been found.⁵¹

ZIMAC conducts regular quality assurance (QA), and an independent quality control (QC) team was dispatched to conduct QC by sampling a minimum of 10% of completed tasks.⁵² Operators confirmed that the ZIMAC QA/QC process was rigorous, with well trained and experienced staff. The HALO Trust noted that the combination of a separate sampling team and a highly accessible monitoring team worked especially well, with the former providing thorough external oversight and the latter helping teams to work through any problems.⁵³ Although the handover process can be time-consuming, delaying the return of land to communities, this is a logistical challenge and not a problem with the NMAS.⁵⁴

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The Zimbabwean Armed Forces' NMCU and, since 2013, The HALO Trust and NPA, all conduct land release in Zimbabwe. MAG became operational in December 2017, and APOPO, while accredited in 2017, was yet to commence operations as at August 2020.⁵⁵

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019⁵⁶

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	Comments
NPA	8	84	2 handlers/2 dogs	0	60% increase from 2018
MAG	3	35	0	0	Number of deminers unchanged
NMCU	15	150	0	1	2% increase from 2018
HALO Trust	31	236	0	2	24% increase from 2018
Totals	57	505	2	3	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

There was a 10% increase overall in manual capacity across all operators from 457 deminers in 2018 to 505 in 2019. This was the result of an increase in donor funding. In 2020, the NMCU was expected to add three new teams of deminers to clear the Lusulu minefield after re-survey in 2019 lead to the discovery of an additional 849,573m² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination.⁵⁷ NPA does not expect to increase capacity in 2020 and the HALO Trust expected a modest increase in clearance personnel in the latter half of 2020. However, this may not be possible due to concerns over the impact of COVID-19.⁵⁸

Despite its accreditation to start mine action operations in 2017, as at August 2020, APOPO still had not managed to secure the funding required to start operations. APOPO reported it is tasked to survey and clear a 7km² area on a 37km-long stretch of minefield along the border with Mozambique. The minefield begins in Chiredzi district, Masvingo province, in south-eastern Zimbabwe, in a conservation area just outside Gonarezhou national park in an area known as the Sengwe Wildlife Corridor. In August 2020, APOPO informed Mine Action Review that they were expecting to secure funding in the near future and that they would be able to mobilise by the end of 2020.⁵⁹

In 2019, NPA used its two MDDs to conduct technical survey.⁶⁰ The NCMU has one mechanical asset and the HALO TRUST has two machines, which are mainly used on tasks where mines are found at deeper levels, or in patches where soil mineralisation makes use of detectors difficult. As at July 2020, the HALO Trust was trialling a new mechanical asset: a mobile sizer/crushing unit, which processes minefield spoil without the need for subsequent physical inspection. It hopes this will increase the efficiency of mechanical operations and it is expected that the results of the trial will be shared later in 2020.⁶¹ MAG does not currently use any mechanical assets or MDDs in its operations but, as at July 2020, MAG was seeking a mechanical asset to support the programme.⁶²

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 11.8km² of mined area was released in 2019, of which more than 2.7km² was cleared, almost 8.6km² was reduced through technical survey, and almost 0.5km² was cancelled through non-technical survey. A total of 39,031 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed. In addition, 1.87km² of previously unrecorded legacy contamination was added to the database in 2019. Total land release in 2019 was more than 20% up on the previous year.

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 9.06km² was released by survey, of which 0.47km² was cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 3) and 8.59km² was reduced through technical survey (see Table 4).⁶³ There was a 31% decrease in non-technical survey output from 0.69km² in 2018 and a 30% increase in the amount of technical survey, up from 6.65km² the previous year.⁶⁴

A large amount of land was reduced in 2019 as operators began working on ploughshare tasks which had been relatively undisturbed, and so were able to conduct extremely tight and delineated clearance only on the mine rows. No reduction is possible on cordon sanitaire tasks, and going forward, as operators near completion of ploughshare tasks, release through survey is expected to decline.⁶⁵ Despite this operators are confident that they can meet their land release targets to 2025 providing that additional funding can be secured and they can maintain sufficient operational capacity.⁶⁶

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 2.76km² of mined area was released through clearance and 39,031 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.⁶⁷ This is a 30% increase from the 2.11km² cleared in 2018 and a 77% increase in the number of anti-personnel mines found.⁶⁸ In 2019, on average 70m² was cleared for each mine found, while in 2018 it was 96m². The increase in the amount of clearance was due to increased capacity across all operators.⁶⁹

Table 3: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁷⁰

Area	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Risutu–Muzite	NPA	112,287
Mazowe–Rwenya	MAG	333,963
Musengezi–Mazowe	HALO Trust	20,169
Total		466,419

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2019⁷¹

Area	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Musengezi–Mazowe	HALO Trust	1,861,457
Mazowe–Rwenya	MAG	707,236
Mwenezi–Sango Border Post	NMCU	4,117,215
Risutu–Muzite	NPA	576,770
Sheba–Leacon Hill	NPA	1,327,769
Total		8,590,447

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019⁷²

Area	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	Anti-personnel mines destroyed
Musengezi–Mazowe	HALO Trust	1,458,877	29,218
Mazowe–Rwenya	MAG	258,047	259
Mwenezi–Sango Border Post	NMCU	111,363	5,047
Risutu–Muzite	NPA	431,635	439
Sheba–Leacon Hill	NPA	499,554	4,068
Totals		2,759,476	39,031

In 2019, 84 mines were destroyed during spot tasks by the HALO Trust, which are included in the figures reported in Table 5 above.⁷³

MAG cleared two minefields which were phoney and contained no mines.⁷⁴ The HALO Trust cleared four small areas which contained no mines. These were verification tasks on suspected "gaps" in previous commercial clearance which local community members thought might still contain a threat as they did not believe that mechanical assets had cleared the areas thoroughly.⁷⁵

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	2.76
2018	2.11
2017	1.66
2016	1.67
2015	0.71
Total	8.91

Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the eight-year extension granted in 2017), Zimbabwe is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025. It is just on track to meet this deadline, although progress in Article 5 implementation may be impacted by the political and economic instability internally and will require sustained international funding through to completion.

ZIMAC confirmed in May 2020 that it is confident that if current capacity is maintained or increased then the 2025 deadline is achievable. All operators increased their clearance capacity in 2019 and Zimbabwe exceeded its land release targets and cleared an additional 30% compared to 2018 even though APOPO is yet to start operations. As the

revised work plan and budget includes projections for APOPO as an implementing partner, if APOPO are unable to secure funding and become operational, then other operators will either need to increase their land release output or Zimbabwe risks falling short of its targets.

In 2019, operators were able to reduce a large amount of land through technical survey on ploughshare tasks, but as operators near completion of these types of tasks these numbers are likely to decline.⁷⁶ In 2019, around a quarter of total land released was through clearance. Going forward, if proportionately more land is released through clearance, to meet its land release targets Zimbabwe will need to further significantly increase clearance output.

The Government of Zimbabwe continues to provide half a million dollars in funding annually to ZIMAC but close to US\$16.2 million per year is projected to be needed to finish clearance by the 2025 deadline.⁷⁷ In 2019, the World Bank predicted that Zimbabwe's economy would contract by 7.5%, with inflation running at more than 500% by the end of last year. Zimbabwe's 2020 budget includes a significant increase in social spending to meet the needs of a population where extreme poverty rose by 34% over the previous twelve months. However, without a significant scale up of donor support the likelihood of a humanitarian crisis in the country was deemed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to be high.⁷⁸

Despite these competing challenges, operators managed to secure an increase in funding in 2019 and were expected to maintain or increase their capacity in 2020. ZIMAC has developed a Communication and Resource Mobilisation Strategy to support its fundraising efforts which was due to be launched in May 2020 but this has been postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.⁷⁹ Zimbabwe was on track to meet its land release targets for the year but with the country in lockdown from 30 March 2020 the full impact of the global pandemic on mine clearance in Zimbabwe was unknown as of writing.

The HALO Trust emphasised that the more teams that can be put on the ground now will save additional costs and expenditure on equipment needed in the future. As at July 2020, The HALO Trust had managed to obtain some demining equipment from Mozambique which it had been holding for four and a half years after declaring its completion of Article 5 obligations. This should aid productivity once the equipment has been restored to full working order. The HALO Trust hopes to bring over the rest of the demining equipment in the coming months.⁸⁰

At the same time, there are many, clearly positive aspects of Zimbabwe's mine action programme, such as having a strong, nationally-owned mine action centre led by experienced and dedicated staff members; a realistic estimate of the remaining problem and national mine action strategy; and a collaborative working environment in which operators can quickly ramp up capacity and output, putting additional funds immediately to use towards an achievable goal.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

On the matter of potential "residual" contamination that might be found after completion of major clearance operations, ZIMAC informed Mine Action Review that plans are in place. It will fall to ZIMAC, the NMCU, and the army engineers, who are stationed in all provinces, to deal with any new explosive devices discovered.⁸¹ In the National Mine Action Strategy 2018–25, Zimbabwe has stated that it will develop a strategy on the management of residual contamination by 2022.

- 1 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, Director, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 2 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019.
- 3 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 4 Emails from Chimwemwe Tembo, Programme Manager, NPA, 25 March 2020; Sam Fricker, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020; and Peter Avenell, Country Director, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 5 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 4 October 2019.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Executive Summary, p. 1; and email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 10 October 2017.
- 8 HALO Trust, "Zimbabwe, History of Minelaying", accessed 10 February 2014; 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Executive Summary; and Analysis of Zimbabwe's 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, submitted by the President of the 13th Meeting of States Parties on behalf of the States Parties mandated to analyse requests for extensions, 18 June 2014, p. 3.
- 9 HALO Trust, "Zimbabwe, History of Minelaying", undated but accessed 10 February 2014.
- 10 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 11 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.
- 12 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 13 Emails from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020; Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020; Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 14 Emails from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 15 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Email from Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020.
- 18 Article 7 report (for 2019), Annex A.
- 19 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 20 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019.
- 21 Article 7 Report (covering 2017), Form D.
- 22 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 23 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019.
- 24 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 25 Email from Tom Dibb, HALO Trust, 22 February 2018.
- 26 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 20 July 2019.
- 27 Emails from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019 and 6 April 2020.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Emails from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 20 July 2019; and Adam Komorowski, Regional Director West Africa & Latin America, MAG, 1 August 2019.
- 30 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 20 July 2019.
- 31 Emails from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019 and 6 April 2020.
- 32 Ibid.; and emails from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 20 July 2019; Adam Komorowski, MAG, 1 August 2019; and Chimwemwe Tembo, Programme Manager, NPA, 15 July 2019.
- 33 Emails from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019; Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 20 July 2019; Adam Komorowski, MAG, 1 August 2019; and Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 15 July 2019.
- 34 Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 35 Email from Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020.
- 36 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 37 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 12 June 2018.
- 38 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 39 Emails from Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020; Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 40 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 41 Emails from Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020; Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 42 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 12 June 2018.
- 43 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 20 July 2019.
- 44 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), p. 36.
- 45 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 28 July 2020.
- 46 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 47 Email from Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020.
- 48 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 49 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 50 Emails from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 20 July 2019; and Adam Komorowski, MAG, 1 August 2019.
- 51 Emails from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 52 Emails from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019 and 12 June 2018.
- 53 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 20 July 2019.
- 54 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 55 Emails from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020, 31 July 2019 and 4 September 2018; and Ashley Fitzpatrick, Program Manager, APOPO, 9 August 2020.
- 56 Emails from Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020; Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 57 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 58 Emails from Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020; Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 59 Emails from Ashley Fitzpatrick, APOPO Zimbabwe, 27 July 2019 and 9 August 2020.
- 60 Email from Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 25 March 2020.
- 61 Emails from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020; and from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 62 Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 July 2020.
- 63 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 64 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019.
- 65 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 66 Emails from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 24 July 2020; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 July 2020; and Chimwemwe Tembo, NPA, 26 July 2020.
- 67 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 68 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019.
- 69 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020; Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
- 70 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020. MAG did not report cancelling any land though non-technical survey in 2019.
- 71 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020. The HALO Trust reported reducing 1,859,782m² in Musengezi-Mazowe; NPA reported cancelling 599,091m² in Risutu-Muzite.
- 72 Ibid.; NPA reported clearing 433,211m² in Risutu-Muzite and 501,129m² in Sheba-Leacon Hill.
- 73 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 74 Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.
- 75 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 76 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 17 April 2020.
- 77 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 78 CNBC, "Zimbabwe in 'economic and humanitarian crisis' as IMF sounds alarm", 3 March 2020, at: cnb.cx/2yAlqy4.
- 79 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.
- 80 Email from Sam Fricker, HALO Trust, 24 July 2020.
- 81 Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.

STATES NOT PARTY

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Armenia should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Armenia has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Armenia should clarify the extent of remaining mine contamination, including in military restricted zones.
- Armenia should mobilise the necessary resources to finish mine clearance and set a deadline for the completion of operations.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2019, Armenia had more than 5.69km² of confirmed mined area and a further 3.8km² of suspected mined area, as set out in Table 1.¹ The mined areas contained anti-personnel mines, anti-vehicle mines, or a combination of both, as well as unexploded ordnance (UXO).² Of 94 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), 55 contain anti-personnel mines, totalling just under 2.9km². Three of the six suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), totalling just over 0.1km², may also be contaminated by anti-personnel mines.³ Territory occupied by Armenia during the conflict with Azerbaijan is believed to be significantly contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), including unexploded submunitions.⁴ However, the precise extent of contamination in those districts is unknown.

Table 1: Mined area (at end 2019)⁵

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
AP mines	41	2,176,085	3	105,500
AV mines	39	2,791,608	3	3,728,442
AP and AV mines	11	706,046	0	0
AP mines and UXO	2	12,769	0	0
AP and AV mines and UXO	1	4,842	0	0
Totals	94	5,691,350	6	3,833,942

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

Four of Armenia's eleven provinces still contain mined areas. Three are contaminated with both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, while the fourth – Vayots Dzor – is contaminated solely with anti-vehicle mines, as set out in Table 2.⁶ The difference in the total estimate for mine contamination between the end of 2018 and end of 2019 cannot be explained or reconciled by the total area released during the intervening 12 months.

Table 2: Mined area by province (at end 2019)⁷

Province	Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Gegharkunik	AP mines	3	584,022	2	105,123
	AV mines	5	2,428,128	3	3,728,442
Syunik	AP mines	32	1,424,512	1	377
	AV mines	21	280,425	0	0
	AP and AV mines	8	676,617	0	0
	AP mines and UXO	2	12,769	0	0
	AP and AV mines and UXO	1	4,842	0	0
Tavush	AP mines	6	167,551	0	0
	AV mines	10	15,603	0	0
	AP and AV mines	3	29,429	0	0
Vayots Dzor	AV mines	3	67,452	0	0
Totals		94	5,691,350	6	3,833,942

A Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) was conducted in Armenia in 2005, followed by partial survey of 17 sites by The HALO Trust in 2012, and then again, in 2012–13, by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD). FSD found 17 SHAs estimated to cover 26km² and 114 CHAs that covered 21km² in four districts bordering Azerbaijan. Thirteen of these areas, totalling 1.8km², contained only UXO and not mines.⁸ In 2019, the Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise (CHDE) conducted non-technical survey in Syunik province but military-restricted zones continued to be off limits for survey and clearance.⁹

Mine and ERW contamination in Armenia is primarily the consequence of armed conflict with Azerbaijan in 1988–94, in which both sides used mines. The heaviest contamination is along the borders and confrontation lines with Azerbaijan, including the area in and around Nagorno-Karabakh and other territories controlled by the Nagorno-Karabakh Defence Forces. Armenia's border with Georgia has been cleared of mines, whereas the border with Turkey, also mined during the Soviet era, is still contaminated.¹⁰ While non-technical survey in 2012–13 by the FSD did not find evidence of mines outside the buffer zones in Ararat province, which borders Turkey, certain areas on that border remain unsurveyed because they are controlled by Russian border troops.¹¹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The CHDE was established by the Armenian government in 2011 as a civilian, non-commercial state body responsible for conducting survey and clearance and identifying contaminated areas. In 2014, the CHDE was made Armenia's national mine action authority.¹² The CHDE can negotiate with international demining organisations, accept international funding, sign contracts, and receive international assistance.¹³ The CHDE has an advisory board, composed of representatives from the Ministries of Defence, Emergency Situations, Territorial Administration, Education, and Justice.¹⁴

In 2013, in conformity with a government decree, the CHDE began developing national mine action legislation. The CHDE began drafting the law in 2015¹⁵ with the support of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) office in Yerevan.¹⁶ In 2019, the CHDE expected to submit the draft mine action law to the new Parliament of Armenia for discussion before the end of the year following which it will need to receive government approval and be adopted by parliament.¹⁷ As at June 2020, there has not been any further progress in the adoption of the mine action law.¹⁸

In 2019, the government allocated AMD229 million (approx. \$475,000) to cover the costs of the CHDE and AMD110 million (approx. \$228,000) for survey and clearance operations. Armenia does not receive any donor funding for mine action.¹⁹

The CHDE receives capacity development support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). CHDE staff have been trained in land release and information management.²⁰

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The CHDE does not have a gender policy and implementation plan but has reported that gender has been mainstreamed in Armenia's draft national mine action strategy. During community liaison activities, all groups affected by mine contamination are consulted, including women and children. The CHDE is said to offer equal employment opportunities for both men and women. Two of the department heads within the CHDE are female and out of a total of 47 employees, 16 are women (34%), most of whom occupy senior or specialist roles. In addition, two women work in the non-technical survey teams, but there are no women deminers.²¹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

With FSD's support, the CHDE set up and manages the national Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.²² The CHDE had been planning to install IMSMA Core in 2019 but as at June 2020, this had been delayed for an unspecified amount of time due to the outbreak of COVID-19. In 2019, the CHDE elaborated forms using KoboCollect Software to improve data collection in the field. Once IMSMA Core is installed, it will be possible to import the data into the database using KoboCollect forms.²³

PLANNING AND TASKING

The draft National Strategic Plan on Mine Action was presented for the approval to the Armenian Government in 2018, however, as at August 2020, it had still to be approved and adopted.²⁴ The main objectives of the draft Plan are to address, as a priority, anti-personnel mines in CHAs that have a humanitarian impact, increasing community safety in support of the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.²⁵

Priority for clearance is based on CHDE criteria. Priority is given first to contaminated areas that are up to 1km away from a population centre, then to those near agricultural land, and finally to contaminated areas that negatively affect the environment. These are mostly located in the mountains. To optimise efficient deployment of resources, clearance plans are typically drawn up on a community-by-community basis.²⁶

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In 2013, with the assistance of FSD, the CHDE developed the Armenian National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) and submitted them for government approval. The NMAS were approved by the government in April 2014.²⁷ In 2018, amendments were made to the NMAS for mine risk education, accreditation of demining organisations, and mine detection dogs (MDDs). No amendments were made to the NMAS in 2019. According to CHDE, reviews of the NMAS are conducted following the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and international best practice.²⁸

The CHDE is currently developing its standard operating procedures (SOPs).²⁹ SOPs on manual mine clearance and battle area clearance (BAC) have already been elaborated.³⁰ In 2019, the CHDE elaborated SOPs on BAC, the marking of hazardous areas, and medical support.³¹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2019 demining in Armenia was conducted by two operators, the Foundation for Demining and Demolition and the HALO Trust. The CHDE deployed one non-technical survey team of three personnel while in 2018 they deployed one technical survey team. The Foundation for Demining and Demolition deployed two clearance teams totalling six deminers for mine clearance operations and The HALO Trust deployed one team of seven deminers for BAC operations. In 2020, there was a planned increase in capacity of one manual clearance team, one mechanical demining team, and one non-technical survey team. Currently all clearance is conducted manually following the failure of six MDDs to obtain accreditation in 2017 following which they were "demobilised".³²

Quality management is conducted in accordance with IMAS and the NMAS. Quality assurance (QA) is conducted by dedicated officers who make regular field visits to inspect cleared land.³³ Quality control (QC) is conducted once clearance of the land has been completed, but prior to handover.³⁴ In 2019, the CHDE conducted QA/QC of demining activities and handed over the released land to the community. QA is conducted by CHDE QA officers through regular field visits who ensure that demining operations are conducted in accordance with SOPs and the Task Order.³⁵

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

No anti-personnel mined area was cancelled or reduced through survey in 2019 as in the previous year. A total of 16,271m² of anti-vehicle mine contaminated area was cancelled in Syunik province through non-technical survey in 2019; no technical survey was conducted.³⁶

A total of 16,180m² of anti-personnel mined area was cleared in 2019, with two anti-personnel mines found and destroyed. The clearance was conducted by the Foundation for Demining and Demolition from the Davit Bek CHA in Syunik province.³⁷ This was the remainder of the Davit Bek CHA where clearance began in 2018 (9,237m² of anti-personnel mined area had been cleared by the end of that year). Clearance of the Davit Bek CHA has now been completed and the land has been handed over to the community. In addition, The HALO Trust conducted BAC operations in Syunik province, clearing 40,400m².³⁸

No target date has been set for the completion of mine clearance in Armenia, due to the uncertainty over future capacity and funding.³⁹ Moreover, over the past five years, demining in Armenia has been slow and productivity rates paltry, as Table 3 illustrates. In 2019, very little demining took place. Armenia claims that challenges in its mine and

ERW clearance include the low level of contamination and the random distribution of mines, which creates obstacles for the effective and efficient implementation of technical survey and clearance activities, and the absence of donor funding.⁴⁰ Operational capacity was expected to increase in 2020, with mechanical capacity being introduced for the first time, which hopefully will increase clearance output.⁴¹ Going forward, Armenia will not complete clearance without a significant increase in funding and capacity.

Table 3: Mine clearance in 2015-19

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	*0.02
2018	*0.01
2017	0
2016	0.02
2015	0.07
Total	*0.12

* Area rounded up

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

According to the CHDE, Armenia has included provisions for addressing previously unknown mined areas following completion in national strategies. Currently the only national survey and clearance capacity in place to address previously unknown mined areas discovered following completion is the team at the CHDE.⁴²

- 1 Email from Margaret Lazyan, Head of Mine Risk Education and Victim Assistance, Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise (CHDE), 25 June 2020.
- 2 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 8 August 2018.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA), "ANAMA 2017"; and Council of Foreign Relations, "Nagorno-Karabakh conflict", at: <https://on.cfr.org/3brZF3k>.
- 5 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 25 June 2020.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 CHDE, "FSD non-technical mine action survey", Yerevan, 2013, p. 12.
- 9 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019 and 25 June 2020.
- 10 Emails from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 19 March 2014 and 28 April 2017, and interview in Geneva, 1 April 2014.
- 11 CHDE, "FSD non-technical mine action survey", CHDE, Yerevan, 2013, p. 9; and emails from Varsine Miskaryan, CHDE, 8 August 2016; and Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 28 April 2017.
- 12 Emails from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 8 June 2015; and Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 10 August 2020.
- 13 Armenian Ministry of Defence, "The New Legal Status of the Humanitarian De-Mining Center", 13 February 2014; and email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 26 September 2018.
- 14 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 27 September 2018.
- 15 Email from Varsine Miskaryan, CHDE, 8 August 2016.
- 16 Email from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 28 April 2017.
- 17 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019.
- 18 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 25 June 2020.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Email from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 19 March 2014.
- 23 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 25 June 2020.
- 24 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 10 August 2020.
- 25 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019.
- 26 Email from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 28 April 2017.
- 27 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Email from Varsine Miskaryan, CHDE, 8 August 2016.
- 30 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 8 August 2018.
- 31 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 25 June 2020.
- 32 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019 and 25 June 2020.
- 33 Email from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 8 June 2015.
- 34 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 8 August 2018.
- 35 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 10 August 2020.
- 36 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 25 June 2020.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019.
- 40 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 10 August 2020; and Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 28 April 2017.
- 41 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 25 June 2020.
- 42 Ibid.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Azerbaijan should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Azerbaijan has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Azerbaijan should complete its countrywide re-survey of anti-personnel mine contamination as soon as the situation allows.
- Azerbaijan should ensure that clearance is only conducted in areas where there is firm evidence of contamination.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The precise extent of contamination from anti-personnel mines in Azerbaijan is unknown, as Armenian forces currently occupy a significant area of the country where considerable contamination exists. The Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) has suggested that contamination in areas occupied by Armenia may cover between 350km² and 830km², and contain between 50,000 and 100,000 mines.¹

At the end of 2019, Azerbaijan reported 59 mined areas in regions under its control totalling 9.4km² (see Table 1). A more precise estimate of contamination will only be known after completion of a countrywide re-survey which, as at July 2020, had been delayed due to the outbreak of COVID-19.²

Table 1: Mined area by type (at end 2019)³

Contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Estimated area (m ²)	Total SHAs/CHAs	Total area (m ²)
Anti-personnel mines	8	1,012,469	14	3,000,000	22	4,012,469
Anti-vehicle mines	17	1,430,226	20	4,000,000	37	5,430,226
Totals	25	2,442,695	34	7,000,000	59	9,442,695

CHAs = Confirmed hazardous areas SHAs = Suspected hazardous areas

As at the end of 2019, Azerbaijan estimated that it had 8 confirmed anti-personnel mined areas covering a total of more than 1km² (see Table 2).⁴

Table 2: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end 2019)⁵

Region	CHAs	Area(m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Garadagh	1	17,744	1	-
Jabrail	3	833,907	2	-
Fizuli	2	147,694	3	-
Aghdam	2	11,574	0	-
Aghstafa	0	550	0	-
Ganja	0	600	0	-
Gazakh	0	400	0	-
Totals	8	1,012,469	6	est. 1,000,000

Mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in Azerbaijan is the consequence of the 1988–94 armed conflict with Armenia – which saw landmines laid by both sides – and ammunition abandoned by the Soviet army in 1991. The most heavily contaminated areas are along the borders and confrontation lines between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the area in and around Nagorno-Karabakh (see the Mine Action Review report on Nagorno-Karabakh for further information). The adjoining districts of Gubadly, Jabrayil, Kelbajar, Lachin, and Zangilan, as well as parts of Aghdam, Fizuli, and Tartar, are under the control of Armenian forces, and are suspected to contain both mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO).⁶

Azerbaijan is also suspected to be contaminated with cluster munition remnants and other ERW: both UXO and abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO), the extent of which is not known (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Azerbaijan for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

ANAMA, the national mine action authority and mine action centre, was established by Presidential Decree No. 854 to plan, coordinate, manage, and monitor mine action in the country. It also conducts demining operations, along with two national operators it contracts: Dayag-Relief Azerbaijan (RA) and the International Eurasia Press Fund (IEPF). No commercial company is active in mine action in Azerbaijan.⁷ In March 2020, the mine action programme was restructured and RA's field personnel were incorporated within ANAMA while RA as an organisation will continue to provide logistical support to ANAMA.⁸

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides capacity development to ANAMA and was planning to do so until December 2020. The five main project activities were: maximising the socio-economic impact of clearance; supporting the institutional capacity of ANAMA for mine/UXO clearance according to international and national mine action standards; promoting ANAMA as an international mine action centre; procurement and upgrading of equipment; and introducing a gender-sensitive approach to mine action to Azerbaijan.⁹ According to ANAMA, as at June 2020, project outputs included improvements to ANAMA's regional structure, enhanced international training services, better training equipment, and support for the training centre.¹⁰ As at July 2020, ANAMA and UNDP were discussing the possibility of extending the project until 2023.¹¹

As at June 2020, Azerbaijan was still in the process of adopting a national mine action law, with draft legislation under review by the Cabinet of Ministers.¹² The process has been ongoing for six years already. Once adopted, it will regulate mine action in Azerbaijan, governing issues such as licensing, accreditation, quality assurance (QA), and tender procedures.¹³

The Azerbaijani government funds 90% of ANAMA's operating costs and 90% of all survey and clearance in Azerbaijan.¹⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

ANAMA does not have a gender policy. No women are working in any operational roles in survey and clearance in Azerbaijan. In 2019, however, women made up 11% of mine action programme staff, mainly through administrative roles in ANAMA. They also participate in mine risk education sessions and are consulted during survey.¹⁵

One of the goals of the UNDP-ANAMA capacity strengthening project is to introduce a gender-sensitive approach to mine action to Azerbaijan.¹⁶ This is defined as delivering train-the-trainer sessions to mine action staff on a gender-sensitive approach to working with affected populations and the development of an accompanying training manual. No information on progress towards this goal has been provided by ANAMA or UNDP.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

ANAMA uses an old version of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, and has been working with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to upgrade this to the latest IMSMA Core in 2019–20.¹⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

The existing mine action strategy was for 2013–18.¹⁸ Its main aims were said to be to continue mine and ERW clearance in support of government development projects and to provide safe conditions for the local population in affected regions.¹⁹ The strategy expired at the end of 2018 and has not yet been replaced. As at June 2020, ANAMA reported that a new strategy was in the process of being developed.²⁰

ANAMA is integrated into the State Social and Economic Development programme and mine action is reported to be an integral part of the new state socio-economic development plan developed for 2019–22.²¹ ANAMA had annual work plans for 2019 and 2020. In 2019, ANAMA was intending to continue mine clearance in Aghdam and Aghjabedi, Fizuli, Heybet, Jabrayil, and Terter regions. In the absence of a new multiyear strategic plan, tasks are prioritised according to the state development plan and instructions from the government.²²

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Azerbaijan has its own National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), which were adopted in 2001 and subsequently revised in 2003, 2004, and 2010 in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and best practice.²³ No major modifications to the standards were made in 2019.²⁴

ANAMA periodically conducts meetings with stakeholders to discuss and make relevant changes to NMAS and standing operating procedures (SOPs).²⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2019, the Azerbaijan mine action programme had more than 300 deminers/explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel (see Table 3).

Table 3: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019²⁶

Operator	Manual teams	Deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**
ANAMA	2 (ACT-1; ACT-2)	115	32 dogs and 34 handlers	18-strong team with 6 machines
	EOD Team	79		
	Special Mobile Operation Team (SMOT)	37		
IEPF	1	40		
RA	1	40		
Totals		311	32/34	18/6

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

In addition, to its clearance capacities ANAMA deployed five technical survey teams in 2019 totalling 45 personnel.²⁷ Mine detection dogs (MDDs) and mechanical assets are used to support reduction through technical survey and manual clearance operations.²⁸

The Training, Survey and Quality Assurance Division continued its quality management (QM)-related activities during 2019. There were both quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) sampling inspections. QA and QC were carried out on both ANAMA's operations and the operations by the two national non-governmental organisations (NGOs).²⁹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of 2.01km² of mined area was released in 2019, of which 1.01km² was cleared and 0.99km² was reduced through technical survey.

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, nearly 1km² of anti-personnel mined area was reduced through technical survey across three regions (see Table 4). There was no cancellation through non-technical survey.³⁰ This is an increase from 2018 when no anti-personnel mined area was cancelled or reduced through survey.³¹

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2019³²

Region	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Garadagh	ANAMA (SMOT)	17,744
Jabrail	ANAMA (ACT-1)	833,907
Fizuli	ANAMA (ACT-1)	147,694
Total		999,345

CLEARANCE IN 2019

More than 1km² of anti-personnel mine contaminated area was cleared in 2019 with 32 anti-personnel mines found and destroyed (see Table 5).³³ This is an increase from the 353,258m² of mined area that was cleared in 2018 when 29 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.³⁴ The reason for the increased output was additional tasks assigned by the government.³⁵

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019³⁶

Region	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Garadagh	ANAMA (SMOT)	17,744	12	0	517
Jabrayil	ANAMA (ACT-1)	833,907	4	0	0
Fizuli	ANAMA (ACT-1)	147,694	3	1	1
Aghdam	ANAMA (ACT-2)	11,574	1	0	0
Aghstafa	ANAMA (EOD)	550	1	0	0
Ganja	ANAMA (EOD)	600	3	0	0
Gazakh	ANAMA (EOD)	400	8	0	0
Totals		1,012,469	32	1	518

ANAMA reported that in 2019 12 mined areas were cleared that proved to contain no anti-personnel mines.³⁷

Azerbaijan submitted voluntary APMBC Article 7 transparency reports in 2008 and 2009 but has not submitted an Article 7 report in the last ten years. Over the last five years, 7.68km² of mined area has been reported cleared in Azerbaijan. Mine clearance output nearly tripled in 2019 from a five-year low of 0.35km² in 2018 (see Table 6). Accuracy of reporting of contamination, survey, and clearance data, though, continues to be an issue in Azerbaijan. So too are the effectiveness and efficiency of land release methodology, with many areas being cleared that prove to have little or no mine contamination. As at June 2020, no target date had been set for the completion of anti-personnel mine clearance in Azerbaijan. ANAMA has stated that mine clearance can only be completed once it has access to territories currently occupied by Armenia.³⁸

Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	1.01
2018	0.35
2017	*4.00
2016	0.83
2015	1.49
Total	7.68

* A further 3.7km² was cleared but was found not to contain mines.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Azerbaijan has a national capacity which could be deployed to deal with residual risk post-completion but, as at June 2020, no plan in place for the management of residual risk.³⁹ ANAMA reported that the elaboration of a plan for the management of residual risk is contingent upon the liberation of contaminated areas that are currently occupied by Armenia.⁴⁰

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- 1 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2018", p. 5.
- 2 Emails from Sabina Sarkarova, Public Relations Officer, ANAMA, 8 June 2020; and Nijat Karimov, Senior Planning and Development Officer, 30 July 2020.
- 3 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, Public Relations Officer, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 ANAMA "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2018", p. 5.
- 7 Emails from Tural Mammadov, Operations Officer, ANAMA, 19 October 2016; and Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 8 Email from Nijat Karimov, Senior Planning and Development Officer, ANAMA, 28 July 2020.
- 9 UNDP, "Review & Recommendation to Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) in Support of its Transformation into International Centre for Demining assessment 2018", 17 July 2018.
- 10 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 11 Email from Nijat Karimov, ANAMA, 28 July 2020.
- 12 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 13 Email from Parviz Gidayev, ANAMA, 20 May 2015; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2014".
- 14 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
- 15 Emails from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019; and 8 June 2020.
- 16 UNDP, "Review & Recommendation to Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) in Support of its Transformation into International Centre for Demining assessment 2018", 17 July 2018.
- 17 Email from Maria Gurova, Programme Officer, GICHD, 22 August 2019.
- 18 Email from Parviz Gidayev, Planning & Development Manager, ANAMA, 20 May 2015; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017", p. 10.
- 19 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA 2 May 2018.
- 20 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 21 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
- 22 Emails from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019; and 8 June 2020.
- 23 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.
- 24 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Ibid.; and email from Nijat Karimov, ANAMA, 28 July 2020.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
- 29 ANAMA, 2018 report, undated.
- 30 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 31 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
- 32 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
- 35 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 8 June 2020.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Email from Nijat Karimov, ANAMA, 30 July 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- China should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, China has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

The extent of mine contamination remaining in China is not known. In the 1990s, the United States reported that China had emplaced mines along its borders with India, the Russian Federation, and Vietnam.¹ China's military estimated that around two million mines of a wide variety of types were emplaced on the Vietnam border alone.² China has not reported on mine contamination along its borders with Russia and India or on operations to clear them.

China conducted clearance operations along its border with Vietnam between 1992 and 1999,³ between 2005 and 2009,⁴ and between 2015 and 2018.⁵ In 2009, China said it had completed demining along the Yunnan section of its border with Vietnam and that this “represents the completion of mine clearance of mine-affected areas within China's territory.”⁶ This was followed by a statement in 2011 when a Foreign Ministry official reported that China maintains a small number of minefields “for national defence.”⁷ Two months later, at the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties, China said that large-scale demining activities had “on the whole eliminated the scourge of landmines in our territories.”⁸

At the Third Review Conference in 2014, China said it had “basically eradicated landmines on its own territory.”⁹ At the Fourth Review Conference in 2019, China said that, since the 1990s, it has carried out large-scale demining operations on the border many times. In the past three years, China has cleared approximately 58km² of mined area on its borders with Vietnam and Myanmar and “enclosed” 25km² of minefields (permanently perimeter-marking, fencing, and closing down mined areas).¹⁰ China began demining its border with Myanmar at the end of 2018 with a team of more than 300 deminers.¹¹

Demining of the Vietnam border was conducted in three “campaigns” in Yunnan province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The first was in 1992–94 and the second in 1997–99.¹² However, these two campaigns did not deal with minefields located in disputed areas of the border, where 500,000 mines covered an estimated 40km². After a technical survey of mined areas, China embarked on a third clearance campaign in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and Yunnan province in 2005. China stated in 2009 that it had completed clearance of this border after clearing a total of 5.15km².¹³

In early November 2015, however, China embarked on a further demining operation along the border with Vietnam.¹⁴ In its Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 transparency report submitted in March 2017, China reported that in November 2015–February 2017, the Chinese army cleared 18.4km² of minefields on the Yunnan border.¹⁵ As noted above, in November 2019, China announced that in the past three years, it had cleared some 58km² of mined area on its borders with Vietnam and Myanmar, destroying in the process 170,000 items of explosive ordnance, including mines.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is no formal mine action programme in China. Any mine clearance is conducted by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) as a military activity.

According to China, the military is building international humanitarian mine clearance professional classrooms and conducting research on the application of virtual reality technology in humanitarian mine clearance training. China also reported that it had carried out technical research related to mine clearance and destruction, and completed research on mine detection dog training, operational procedures, and on the impact of post-war mine clearance methods on the environment.¹⁶ In 2019, China said that it has continuously improved its demining capabilities and has developed a complete set of mine clearance equipment and technologies that meet international mine action standards and high cost-efficiency. It claimed to have achieved breakthroughs in research and development, including in unmanned mine detection and laser demining (use of directed energy weapons to destroy landmines).¹⁷

LAND RELEASE

Media accounts reported that mine clearance resumed in November 2017 in the Yunnan border area and in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.¹⁸ Clearance was reportedly completed in November 2018, with 2,300 explosive items found and destroyed across 1.5km² in Guangxi province.¹⁹ In Yunnan province an estimated 200,000 explosive items were found and destroyed in over 50km² of mined area between November 2015 and November 2018.²⁰

In its latest CCW Amended Protocol II report, China reported that Chinese military and public security departments cooperated closely to dispose of 600 mines in 2019.²¹

- 1 US Department of State, "Hidden Killers 1994", Washington, DC, September 1998, p. 18, and Table A-1.
- 2 "Landmine sweeping on Sino-Vietnam border nearly completed", Xinhua, 31 December 2008, at: on.china.cn/31F8D7u.
- 3 Ministry of Defence, "Post-war Demining Operations in China", December 1999, p. 11. Before the clearance operations, there were said to be more than 560 minefields covering a total area of more than 300km².
- 4 Interview with Shen Jian, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing, 1 April 2008; and Huizi and Yun, "Chinese soldiers nearly done with landmine sweeping on the Sino-Vietnam border", Xinhua, 31 December 2008.
- 5 "Yunnan completes de-mining mission along Sino-Vietnamese border", Xinhua, 16 November 2018, at: bit.ly/2yYXXnL.
- 6 Statement of China, Second Review Conference, Cartagena, 4 December 2009.
- 7 Email from Lai Haiyang, Attaché, Department of Arms Control & Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7 September 2011.
- 8 Statement of China, APMBC 11th Meeting of States Parties, Phnom Penh, 29 November 2011.
- 9 Statement of China, Third APMBC Review Conference, Maputo, 26 June 2014.
- 10 Statement of China, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 11 J. Li, "Minesweeping operations along China-Myanmar border kick off", China Military Online, 28 December 2019, at: bit.ly/3f7P3qy.
- 12 "Landmine sweeping on Sino-Vietnam border nearly completed", Xinhua, 31 December 2008.
- 13 Statement of China, Second APMBC Review Conference, Cartagena, 4 December 2009.
- 14 P. Scally, "Huge land mine clearance underway in Wenshan, Honghe", Blog post, Gokunming, 5 November 2015, at: bit.ly/20WbdVe.
- 15 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2016), Form B. Unofficial translation.
- 16 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.
- 17 Statement of China, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
- 18 "Land mine removal resumes on border", China Daily, 29 November 2017, at: bit.ly/2ZXUwtr; and "China's Guangxi completes de-mining mission along Sino-Vietnam border", China Daily, 26 November 2018, at: bit.ly/33xCdNT.
- 19 "China's Guangxi completes de-mining mission along Sino-Vietnam border", China Daily, 26 November 2018.
- 20 "Yunnan completes de-mining mission along Sino-Vietnamese border", Xinhua, 16 November 2018, at: bit.ly/2yYXXnL.
- 21 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Cuba should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Cuba has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

Cuba's mine contamination remains unchanged from previous years. Cuban authorities maintain minefields around the United States (US) naval base at Guantánamo in the south-east of Cuba. In 2007, Cuba said it carries out "a strict policy with regard to guaranteeing a responsible use of anti-personnel mines with an exclusively defensive character and for [Cuba's] national security."¹ According to an earlier statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, existing minefields are duly "marked, fenced and guarded" in accordance with Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Meeting of Experts.²

According to a book published in 2008, mines laid around the naval base detonate "at least once a month",³ but it has not been possible to independently confirm this claim. In February 2018, a fire broke out in the 17-mile strip of land separating the Guantánamo base from Cuban territory which reportedly detonated 1,000 landmines and burned 1,700 acres over three days before being extinguished.⁴

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is no mine action programme in Cuba.

LAND RELEASE

Cuba has not conducted clearance in its minefields around the US naval base at Guantánamo over the last ten years.

1 Statement by Rebeca Hernández Toledano, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Cuba to the UN, "Item 29: Assistance in mine action", UN General Assembly, Fourth Committee, New York, 6 November 2007.

2 Statement of the Directorate of Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 19 June 2000.

3 "The Cuban mines detonate at least once a month, sometimes starting fires that sweep across the fence line. [Staff Sergeant Kaveh Wooley of the US Marines]... described a fire that started the previous summer and turned into a giant cook-off, with about 30 mines exploding...." D. P. Erikson, *Cuba Wars: Fidel Castro, the United States, and the Next Revolution*, Bloomsbury, United States, October 2008, pp. 196–97.

4 "U.S. and Cuban forces unite to fight a common foe: wildfire at Guantanamo", *USA Today*, 1 March 2018, at: bit.ly/2KytDH9.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Egypt should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Egypt has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

The precise extent of anti-personnel mine contamination in Egypt remains unknown and past estimates have been unreliable. Egypt is contaminated with mines in the Western Desert, which date from the Second World War, and in the Sinai Peninsula and Eastern Desert, which are a legacy of wars with Israel between 1956 and 1973. Some recent mine incidents in Sinai may have been caused by mines emplaced by anti-government jihadist groups.¹ It was reported in August 2016 that Islamic State had been digging up Second World War-era landmines and re-using them.²

Most of the Western Desert contamination occurred around the location of Second World War battles that took place between the Quattara depression and Alamein on the Mediterranean coast. Other affected areas lie around the city of Marsa Matrouh and at Sallum near the Libyan border. In November 2016, during a ceremony to mark the opening of a new prosthetic limb centre, the United Kingdom's Ambassador to Egypt announced that all the maps of minefields laid by British and Allied forces during World War II had been handed over.³ According to the head of the military engineering department, though, the British minefield maps were "sketch maps" and most of the mines were buried randomly.⁴ Major General Mahrous Kilani, Head of the General Secretariat for Mine Clearance, reported that while the mine maps are an indication of possible mine locations many mines have been found in areas that are unmarked by the maps.⁵

In January 2018, the British MP Daniel Kawczynski put a written question to the UK Secretary of State for International Development asking whether her Department was taking steps to assist with the mapping and disposal of Second World War mines in the Tobruk and El Alamein regions. The United Kingdom reiterated that maps of minefield locations had been provided to the Egyptian authorities and that, since 2006, through multilateral funding along with other donors (including Germany, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States), it had funded clearance of 130,446 acres (some 520km²) of land around El Alamein.⁶

The Egyptian government has claimed that some 17 million mines remained in the Western Desert and another 5.5 million in Sinai and the Eastern Desert.⁷ In an April 2009 assessment, though, the United Nations (UN) Mine Action Team cautioned that data needed careful analysis to avoid reporting areas that had already been cleared and thereby misrepresenting the problem.⁸ In this regard, in October 2017, it was reported by the European Union (EU)'s ambassador to Egypt that 2,680km² of land in the North West Coast was claimed to still be contaminated.⁹

In August 2010, the Executive Secretariat for the Demining and Development of the North West Coast (Executive Secretariat) reported to donors that the army had destroyed 2.9 million mines while clearing 38km² in five areas, leaving "more than 16 million mines" covering an estimated area of 248km².¹⁰ Details of items cleared are not consistent with other available information.

In 2013, the army handed over to the Ministries of Housing and of Planning and International Cooperation an area of some 105km² in the Western Desert, which it had reportedly cleared of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). Details of clearance operations were not reported. Minister of Housing Tarek Wafiq was quoted as saying that with completion of the project one-fifth of the Western Desert had been cleared.¹¹

In August 2016, it was reported that Islamic State had been harvesting the explosives from Second World War mines still uncleared in Egypt. According to Ambassador Fathy el-Shazly, formerly the head of Egypt's Executive Secretariat for Mine Clearance, "We've had at least 10 reports from the military of terrorists using old mines. Even now, these things trouble us in different ways."¹² These findings were reiterated in June 2017 at a UN Security Council briefing when Egypt's permanent representative to the UN Amr Abdel-Latif Abul Atta stated that "abandoned mines and explosive remnants of wars have become a source of access for armed movements and terrorists to find materials for manufacturing improvised explosive devices".¹³ It was reported in January 2018 that Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM), which pledged allegiance to Islamic State in 2014, has been using old mines and caches of explosives left in Sinai to produce different types of explosive devices. There were at least five major attacks by terrorist groups using such devices in Egypt in 2017.¹⁴ This should serve as a wake-up call to Egypt to pursue mine clearance with far greater vigour than it has done so thus far.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In 2019 as in previous years, the mine action programme in Egypt was not functioning effectively.

A joint project between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Egypt, entitled, "Support the North West Coast Development Plan and Mine Action Programme: Mine Action" was conducted in two phases from 2007 to 2014 and from 2015 to 2017.¹⁵ In August 2017, it was reported that negotiations had begun on a third phase of the project to allocate \$5 million to clear the rest of the northern coast and the Sinai peninsula.¹⁶

The project provided for the creation of an "Executive Secretariat for Mine Clearance and the Development of the North West Coast", which is mandated with coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the development plan and humanitarian mine action activities in the North West Coast.¹⁷

The army is the only entity authorised to demine in Egypt. However, the Executive Secretariat supports clearance operations through demining requests received from concerned ministries. It was reported that a total area of 2,182km² of land has been demined from 5,100 km² of contaminated land since the beginning of the project in 2009.¹⁸

Trained deminers from the Corps of Military Engineers conduct manual and mechanical demining. The Executive Secretariat is said to have procured 461 mine detectors, 355 demining suits and protective helmets, one Casspir armoured vehicle with the "Mine Lab" detecting device, and five Amtrak vehicles.¹⁹

According to its website, "the Executive Secretariat's Quality Management Unit proactively guarantees quality in all key processes, makes sure that quality requirements are fulfilled in accordance with IMAS, measures process performance, develops procedures, and provides the right equipment".²⁰ Funding was also used for capacity building, establishing a quality management unit, and supporting the creation of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.

In November 2019, Egypt's Minister of Investment and International Cooperation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) on mine clearance and development of Egypt's North West coast. The MoU provides a cooperation framework to enhance capacity building for the Egyptian mine action programme.²¹

In May 2017, Kuwait granted Egypt an aid package of almost US\$1 million through the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, for mine clearance in the North-West Coast area.²² In January 2019, Egypt called for renewed international support for mine clearance, especially around El Alamein. Parliament member Mohamed el-Ghoul resubmitted a 2017 motion demanding financial compensation from the countries that laid mines in Egypt, mainly Germany and the United Kingdom.²³

LAND RELEASE

Egypt has not reported on its release of mined areas in recent years and no target date has been set for the completion of mine clearance.

- 1 "Sinai landmine kills three soldiers", News24, 9 March 2015, at: bit.ly/31LTzVp.
- 2 P. Schwartzstein, "ISIS Is Digging Up Nazi Land Mines in Egypt", Newsweek, 10 August 2016, at: bit.ly/2KBMTgz.
- 3 A. Nayder, "Helping Landmine Victims in Marsa Matrouh-And Preventing More", Because, 3 November 2016, at: bit.ly/2Hbsl2V.
- 4 Egypt and Libya: Land Mines: Written question - 122961, 16 January 2018, at: bit.ly/2Z4gJSB.
- 5 "MG: We cleared 130,000 acres of mines in El Alamein and there was no single incident", Times of Egypt, 26 February 2018, Unofficial translation at: bit.ly/33EQrMO.
- 6 Egypt and Libya: Land Mines: Written question - 122961, 16 January 2018.
- 7 State Information Services, "Landmines in Egypt", 20 July 2009; M. Abdel Salam, "First phase of demining in Egypt complete", Bikyamasr (blog), 18 April 2010.
- 8 UN Mine Action Team, "Egypt Mine Action Inter-agency Assessment", 14-18 April 2009, p. 11.
- 9 "Egypt battles landmines 75 years after El Alamein", Agence France-Presse, 28 October 2017, at: bit.ly/2H92GYA.
- 10 "Egypt Mine Action Project Northwest Coast: Phase I Accomplishments", Presentation by Amb. Fathy El Shazly, Director, Executive Secretariat, Cairo, August 2010.
- 11 N. al Behairy, "20% of the Sahara in West Egypt cleared of landmines", Daily News, 20 March 2013.
- 12 P. Schwartzstein, "ISIS Is Digging Up Nazi Landmines From World War 2 As Explosives", Newsweek, 10 August 2016.
- 13 UN Security Council meeting, UN doc. SC/12866, 13 June 2017, at: bit.ly/2YSmjPL.
- 14 "How Egyptian security dealt with IEDs threat?", Egypt Today, 1 January 2018, at: bit.ly/2HbRwCe.
- 15 UNDP, "Support to the North West Coast Development and Mine Action Plan", undated.
- 16 "Egypt to invest \$17.5M in Anti-Mines Action Project", APA News, 11 August 2017, at: bit.ly/2z1ChYn.
- 17 The Executive Secretariat for the Demining and Development of the North West Coast website, accessed 5 July 2020, at: bit.ly/3ivjTwl.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 "Egypt, Switzerland sign agreement on demining North West Coast", State Information Service, 14 November 2019, available at: bit.ly/2CcF0mj.
- 22 "Kuwait provides KWD 300,000 to help clear landmines from Egypt's north coast", Ahram Online, 8 May 2017, at: bit.ly/33Grilg.
- 23 "Cairo seeks international help to clear millions of land mines", Al-Monitor, 11 February 2019, at: bit.ly/2Z9k18K.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Georgia should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Georgia has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Georgia should continue to engage in political dialogue with Azerbaijan, to enable full clearance of the Red Bridge border minefield.
- Georgia should grant access to The HALO Trust to complete survey and clearance of the remaining mined areas.
- Georgia should develop a resource mobilisation strategy and engage with donors to secure the resources needed to complete clearance.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The full extent of mine contamination in Georgia is not known due to access restrictions and lack of survey. According to estimates, as set out in Table 1, Georgia has more than 2.7km² of contamination across six mined areas in the Tbilisi Administered Territory (TAT),¹ although the size of four areas is not reported. Contamination comprises both anti-personnel and, in one area, also anti-vehicle mines.²

Table 1: Mined area in the TAT (at end 2019)³

Region	District/ Municipality	Village	Contamination	Mined areas	Area (m ²)
Kvemo Kartli	Marneuli	Kirach-Muganlo (Red Bridge)	AP/ AV mines	1	2,738,730
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Dusheti	Barisakho	AP mines	2	28,058
Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Dusheti	Kadoeti	AP mines	1	N/K
Shida Kartli	Kashuri	Osiauri (Military zone)	AP mines	1	N/K
Samegrelo Zemo Svaneti	Mestia	Khojali	AP mines	1	N/K
Totals				6	2,766,788

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle N/K = Not known

In 2019, The HALO Trust was given permission to conduct survey and clearance in the Kadoeti and Khojali minefields but it does not currently have the funding to do so. In Barisakho, two mined areas are close to a police station on the Russian border, which were laid to prevent entry from Ingushetia during the Second Chechen War. In Osiauri, a military base, mines were laid around the perimeter of an ammunition depot.

The Red Bridge minefield is an unfenced 7km-long minefield consisting of densely packed lines of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines at the "Red Bridge" border crossing between Azerbaijan and Georgia. Laid in 1991 by Azerbaijan during the Nagorno-Karabakh war, it is Georgia's largest minefield and the last major minefield not in the vicinity of a functioning military establishment. As at May 2020, there had been 88 incidents: 22 involving humans and 66 involving livestock.⁴

There may also be mined areas in South Ossetia as a result of the 1990–92 Georgian-Ossetian war, and the more recent 2008 conflict with Russia. The HALO Trust has planned to conduct non-technical survey in South Ossetia, but, to date, has not been granted access. South Ossetia is effectively subject to Russian control and is inaccessible to both Georgian authorities and international non-governmental organisation (NGO) demining operators.

There are four suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) and one confirmed hazardous area (CHA) totalling 9,600m² in Abkhazia which came to HALO Trust's attention in 2019. It is expected that these tasks will each require deployment of a four-person demining team and will take, on average, two months to complete. However, the HALO Trust does not currently have sufficient funding to carry out this clearance.⁵

Georgia is believed to be free of cluster munition remnants (CMR), with the possible exception of South Ossetia, which is occupied by Russia and inaccessible to both the Georgian authorities and international mine action NGOs (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Georgia for further information).⁶ Georgia remains contaminated by other unexploded ordnance (UXO), likely in South Ossetia and also within Georgia in former firing ranges.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Humanitarian Demining Control Division (HDCD), renamed after a reorganisation in January 2019, sits under the State Military Scientific Technical Centre, known as DELTA, within the Ministry of Defence (MoD).⁷ The primary task of the HDCD is to coordinate mine action in Georgia, including overseeing the national mine action strategy and quality assurance (QA)/quality control (QC), and facilitating the development and implementation of Georgian National Mine Action Standards, in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).⁸

For all mine action-related issues, The HALO Trust communicates with DELTA.⁹ The Georgian authorities are supportive of the granting of visas for international staff and the importation of demining equipment. The HALO Trust submitted several requests to the MoD seeking access to the remaining minefields, the last of which was submitted in April 2018. As at May 2020, the HALO Trust had received permission to begin clearing two of the six remaining minefields, at Khojali and Kadoeti, respectively, but does not have sufficient funding to complete these tasks. Permissions for the remaining three minefields have not yet been granted and the HALO Trust has reported that it may be forced to permanently close its programme in the TAT if permissions is not granted by 2021.¹⁰

The Georgian government funds the running costs of the HDCD as well as the Engineering Brigade, which carries out some survey and battle area clearance (BAC).¹¹ The HALO Trust is funded by international donors.

The national authority has received capacity development support from HALO Trust and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). The HALO Trust has provided training on IMAS, geographic information systems (GIS), clearance and survey techniques, and, in 2018, donated a mine action vehicle to the HDCD.¹² The GICHD has provided training for HDCD staff on the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core database, ammunition storage, and technical survey.¹³

In 2019, the Georgian government joined the Landmine Free South Caucasus Campaign (LMFSC), which brings together governments and civil society from all three states in the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) on an annual basis to encourage cooperation and dialogue on the clearance of mines and UXO in the region.¹⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

DELTA and The HALO Trust each has gender and diversity policies in place. HALO Trust supports use of mixed-gender teams to conduct survey, which allows for greater engagement with women and children.¹⁵ If HALO Trust is given permission to work in the remaining minefields in the TAT, community liaison and survey teams will be mixed gender and inclusive of ethnic minorities.¹⁶ HALO Trust's EOD teams in Abkhazia are mixed ethnic Georgian and ethnic Abkhaz.¹⁷

There is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in survey and clearance teams in Georgia, including for managerial level/supervisory positions although proportionately the number of women remains low. In Abkhazia, The HALO Trust works with local women's organisations to increase the visibility of its work to a female audience. As at May 2020, 30% of its operational and management staff were female and at the end of 2019 the HALO Trust employed its first female BAC team leader.¹⁸

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The HDCD uses the IMSMA database and, according to The HALO Trust, the data is accurate. Data archives go back to 2009 and are regularly updated, based on HALO Trust's operations reports and on work by the Engineering Brigade. The IMSMA database is updated regularly and is administered by a certified specialist within the HDCD, trained by the GICHD, who receives regular refresher training in the latest procedures.¹⁹ In 2019, HDCD personnel attended an IMSMA Core workshop, hosted by the GICHD and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Kiev (Ukraine).²⁰

The data in the national information management system is accessible to the HALO Trust.²¹ HALO Trust uses its own IMSMA-compatible data collection forms that DELTA has approved while the HDCD QA/QC team also have its own forms.²²

PLANNING AND TASKING

Georgia has a national mine action strategy. Its main aims and targets are focused on clearing the remaining mined areas and other areas contaminated with explosive remnants of war (ERW).²³ The annual work plans for 2019 centred on BAC within the TAT.²⁴

In 2019, due to access not being granted to the remaining minefields, The HALO Trust had suspended all operations in TAT, apart from one two-month task clearing abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) at Chonto, near the Administrative Boundary Line with South Ossetia, which it completed in July. The Abkhazia programme continued operations at Primorsky and HALO also responded to explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) call-outs.²⁵

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

As at May 2020, Georgian National Mine Action Standards and National Technical Standards and Guidelines were still under development. The IMAS and International Ammunition Technical Guidelines are being translated into Georgian.²⁶

The HALO Trust has standing operating procedures (SOPs) in place for all its activities, including survey, mine clearance, and EOD. No modifications or enhancements were made to these SOPs in 2019.²⁷

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The HALO Trust, which is the only international operator working in the country, conducts survey and both BAC and mine clearance.²⁸ In 2019, the HALO Trust did not conduct and survey or clearance of anti-personnel mined areas in TAT. In Abkhazia, the HALO Trust re-tasked two EOD teams to conduct non-technical survey of five mined areas for four weeks. As at July 2020, The HALO Trust was seeking funding for clearance of four of these tasks. In 2019, the HALO Trust deployed 33 personnel to conduct clearance at Primorsky.²⁹

DELTA retains a small demining and EOD capacity in TAT. In 2019, the Engineering Brigade carried out technical survey and BAC of a former military base in the Adjara region. The Engineering Brigade and the State Security Service of Georgia have capacity to carry out EOD spot tasks. In Abkhazia, the emergency services (EMERCOM) have a small EOD capacity, though HALO Trust is generally relied upon to deal with all items of UXO.³⁰

In 2019, the HALO Trust had two mechanical assets deployed at the explosion site around the Primorsky ammunition storage area in Abkhazia. The HALO Trust developed and deployed bespoke operational methods to clear heavy rubble and UXO. Innovations such as reinforced armouring of mechanical assets and the use of drones to map and identify hazardous items increased the programme's effectiveness and efficiency.³¹

The Engineering Brigade deployed four mechanical assets and 47 personnel for BAC in the Adjara region in 2019.³² The State Security Service of Georgia has several mine detection dog teams, which it uses for EOD spot tasks.³³

In TAT, quality management (QM) is conducted by DELTA. In Abkhazia, The HALO Trust is responsible for its own QM.³⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

No mined areas were released through survey or clearance in 2019, but 37 anti-personnel mines were destroyed by HALO Trust during EOD spot tasks in Abkhazia. A further 332 unemplaced anti-personnel mines were destroyed by HALO Trust in Abkhazia during clearance of an unplanned ammunition storage area explosion.

The Engineering Brigade also released UXO-contaminated area in 2019, through survey and clearance in Tbilisi Administered Territory.

SURVEY IN 2019

No mined area was released through survey in 2019, but some UXO-contaminated area was. The Engineering Brigade reduced 160,823m² of UXO-contaminated area through technical survey in the Batumi village, Adjara region in Tbilisi Administered Territory.³⁵ In Abkhazia, the HALO Trust conducted initial non-technical survey of four SHAs and one CHA, totalling 9,600m².³⁶ This is an increase from the 37,758m² of UXO-contaminated area that was reduced through technical survey in 2018 by the HALO Trust in TAT.³⁷

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, the HALO Trust cleared 394,004m² of hazardous area in Primorsky, Abkhazia, destroying in the process 332 anti-personnel mines and 30,943 items of UXO. The anti-personnel mines destroyed in Primorsky were the result of BAC and mechanical clearance of an unplanned ammunition storage area explosion that occurred in August 2017; the mines were scattered across the landscape as a result of the explosion and had not been emplaced.³⁸ In addition, the HALO Trust destroyed 37 anti-personnel mines in Abkhazia during EOD spot tasks in 2019.³⁹

The Engineering Brigade conducted BAC and cleared 13,772m² destroyed 31 items of UXO from the Batumi village in the Adjara region in Tbilisi Administered Territory. In 2018, 389,204m² was cleared and 556 anti-personnel mines were destroyed.⁴⁰

No target date has been set for completion of anti-personnel mine clearance in Georgia. The Red Bridge minefield is Georgia's largest, clearance of which has been identified as one of its key strategic mine action priorities.⁴¹ Georgia previously reported plans to start clearing the Red Bridge minefield in 2015 but after discussions between Georgian and Azerbaijani representatives only survey was permitted.⁴² The HALO Trust conducted non-technical survey between 1 and 3 July, and then began technical survey on 4 July 2015. The following month, however, the Azerbaijani military demanded that technical survey operations be halted.⁴³

During 2018, Georgia reported further discussions with Azerbaijan regarding the clearance of Red Bridge minefield.⁴⁴ As at May 2020, however, The HALO Trust had not been granted permission to restart clearance there.⁴⁵ HALO has temporarily shut down operations in TAT as, while permissions have been granted to conduct clearance in Kadoeti and Khojali, the programme does not have the funding in place. If funding is not forthcoming, HALO may be forced to exit the TAT in 2021. If the HALO Trust leaves, it is unclear when the remaining anti-personnel mined areas will be cleared as there are no other operators with Georgia's Engineering Brigade having only limited resources and in need of training.⁴⁶

For The HALO Trust, the main priority in Abkhazia is the clearance of the site at Primorsky, where an explosion in 2017 contaminated the surrounding territory with mines and UXO. In 2019, HALO received additional funding from the European Union and Switzerland. Previously funding came from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Kingdom, and the United States. With adequate funding, HALO Trust hopes to finish the clearance of Primorsky by 2021.⁴⁷

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Georgia does not have a sustainable capacity in place to address previously unknown mined areas following completion.⁴⁸

- 1 The Tbilisi Administered Territory (TAT) does not include the autonomous republics of Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, which are outside of Georgia's effective control.
- 2 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, Head of Division, DELTA, 12 May 2020
- 3 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020; and from Michael Montañ, Programme Officer, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 4 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020; and from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 7 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, Head of Division, DELTA, 28 March 2019; and Matthew Walker, Programme Officer, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019; Decree 897 issued by the Minister of Defence, 30 December 2010; and email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 20 June 2016 and 10 June 2019; Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 21 March 2017 to 31 March 2018), Form A.
- 8 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 6 July 2015.
- 9 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 21 June 2019.
- 10 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 11 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
- 12 Emails from Matthew Walker, 8 April 2019, and Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020; and Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 10 June 2019.
- 13 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 2020
- 14 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 15 Email from Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
- 21 Email from Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
- 22 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019; and from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 23 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019.
- 24 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March and 10 June 2019; and Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
- 25 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 26 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
- 27 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 28 Email from Irakli Chitanava, HALO Trust, 2 May 2017.
- 29 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 20 July 2020.
- 30 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019 and 12 May 2020; and Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
- 31 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 32 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
- 33 Email from Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
- 34 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019.
- 35 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
- 36 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 37 Email from Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
- 38 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 39 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020; and Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 40 Email from Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
- 41 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 3 April 2017.
- 42 Interview with George Dolidze, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Geneva, 28 May 2009; and response to Mine Action Review questionnaire by Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 3 June 2015.
- 43 Emails from Andrew Moore, HALO Trust, 18 October 2016; Irakli Chitanava, HALO Trust, 2 May 2017; and Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 3 April 2017.
- 44 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019.
- 45 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 46 Ibid.; and email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
- 47 Email from Michael Montañ, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 48 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.

- India should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, India has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

The extent of anti-personnel mine contamination is not known. Large-scale mine-laying was conducted by government forces on and near the Line of Control (LoC) separating India and Pakistan during the 1971 war and the 2001–02 stand-off between the two states. Anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines were laid on cultivated land and pasture, as well as around infrastructure and a number of villages.

Despite occasional official claims that all the mines laid were subsequently cleared, reports of contamination and casualties have persisted. A media report in 2013 cited a government statement that about 20km² of irrigated land was still mined in the Akhnoor sector of the LoC alone.¹ In June 2016, India's *NDTV* news reported that the Indian army was demining areas of the LoC in Rajouri district, Kashmir, in order to return land to communities for agricultural use as it vacated fields near the border that were reportedly taken over and mined during the Kargil Conflict in 1999 and Operation Parakaram in 2001.²

Landmine incidents continue to be reported, primarily involving Indian army personnel, but also civilians.

Security forces have also reported extensive use of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by Maoist fighters in the north-eastern states of Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand causing civilian and military casualties. In July 2018, it was reported that 15 anti-vehicle mines placed by Maoist rebels were neutralised by security forces in Garhwa district, Jharkhand state.³ However, mine types are usually not specified and may include command-detonated explosive devices as well as mines (i.e. victim-activated explosive devices).⁴

Furthermore, if India proceeds with the purchase of 1 million landmines, following reports of it inviting manufacturers to bid in late 2019, it would be a clear indication that India is not seeking to clear anti-personnel mine contamination on areas under its territory or control, but rather, that it plans to add to the already existing contamination.⁵

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

India has no civilian mine action programme. The Director-General of Military Operations decides on mine clearance after receiving assessment reports from the command headquarters of the respective districts where mine clearance is needed.

LAND RELEASE

There is no publicly available official information on land release in 2019. The Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for clearing mines placed by non-state armed groups.⁶ In July 2017, for instance, according to a media account, the Indian Army was manually clearing mines in the border districts of Jammu and Kashmir and was procuring more advanced demining equipment with a view to improving safety and decreasing the number of deminer casualties.⁷ Media reports have indicated the police also play an active part in clearing mines and other explosive hazards on an ad hoc basis in states dealing with insurgency.⁸

India has not reported that any mine clearance has occurred in its Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II (AP II) Article 13 transparency reports since 2006.⁹

In a statement delivered at Fourth Review Conference of the APMBC in November 2019, India said: "Mines that are used for defensive military operations are laid within fenced perimeters and marked, in accordance with the requirements specified in AP II. Post operations, these mines are cleared by trained troops".¹⁰

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- 1 "Heavy rainfall worsening landmine peril for Kashmiri farmers", Thomson Reuters Foundation, 5 November 2013, at: [tmsnrt.rs/33xqBun](https://www.refworld.org/docid/5d4b1b1d.html).
 - 2 "Farmers Hope to Return to Fields as Army Clears Landmines on Line of Control", NDTV, 27 June 2016, at: [bit.ly/2Z1AJJL](https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/farmers-hope-to-return-to-fields-as-army-clears-landmines-on-line-of-control-1.2948448).
 - 3 "Jawans unearth 15 landmines on rebel turf", The Telegraph India, 6 July 2018, at: [bit.ly/33ycUeu](https://www.telegraphindia.com/180706/jw/india-jawans-unearth-15-landmines-on-rebel-turf/story.html)
 - 4 See, e.g., "15 police, driver killed by suspected Maoist landmine in western India", Daily Sabah, 1 May 2019, at: [bit.ly/2yZgobW](https://www.dailysabah.com/india/15-police-driver-killed-by-suspected-maoist-landmine-in-western-india); "Jharkhand: Six Jaguar Force jawans killed in Maoist landmine blast", The Indian Express, 27 June 2018, at: [bit.ly/2Z1R6st](https://www.indianexpress.com/article/india/jharkhand-six-jaguar-force-jawans-killed-in-maoist-landmine-blast-5648448); "Farmer hurt in blast", The Telegraph India, 3 May 2018, at: [bit.ly/303gBqv](https://www.telegraphindia.com/180503/jw/india-farmer-hurt-in-landmine-blast/story.html); and "Three killed in landmine blast triggered by Maoists in Chhattisgarh", Hindustan Times, 19 January 2017, at: [bit.ly/301Cvuk](https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/three-killed-in-landmine-blast-triggered-by-maoists-in-chhattisgarh/story.html).
 - 5 "Indian Army Plans To Lay One Million Land-Mines On India-Pakistan Border", The Eurasian Times, 4 October 2019, at: [bit.ly/2ZmJmA6](https://www.eurasiantimes.com/india/indian-army-plans-to-lay-one-million-land-mines-on-india-pakistan-border).
 - 6 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2006), Form B.
 - 7 "Advanced tech to help soldiers map minefields", The Times of India, 10 July 2017, at: [bit.ly/2KyoVt7](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/advanced-tech-to-help-soldiers-map-minefields/articleshow/6648448.cms).
 - 8 "IEDs pose huge challenge in efforts to counter Naxals: Police", The Indian Express, 24 July 2017, at: [bit.ly/2MgNRrb](https://www.indianexpress.com/article/india/ieds-pose-huge-challenge-in-efforts-to-counter-naxals-police-5648448).
 - 9 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (for 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020), Form B.
 - 10 Statement of India, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Iran should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Iran has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Iran should report publicly on the extent and location of mined areas and prepare a plan for their clearance and destruction.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

Iran is contaminated by anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, mainly as a result of the 1980–88 war with Iraq. The extent of the remaining mined areas is unknown, but mine contamination is concentrated in five western provinces bordering Iraq.

According to the Iran Mine Action Center (IRMAC), the initial estimation of “contamination” in Iran was 42,000km² (Ilam Province, 17,000km²; Kermanshah Province, 7,000km²; Khuzestan Province, 15,000km²; Kurdistan Province, 1,500km²; and West Azerbaijan, 1,500km²); which by February 2020 had reportedly been reduced by 90%,¹ which would put contamination at approximately 4,200km². However, this is not in line with previous estimates of mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination, which were reported to be far lower.

For example, the Minister of Defence Hossein Dehghan said in 2014 that the 4,500km² of mine and ERW contamination left by the Iran-Iraq war in the five western provinces had been reduced to 280km².² In February 2014, IRMAC reported that the five Western provinces had remaining contamination totalling 250km².³

According to online media sources, flooding that hit large parts of Iran in March and April 2019 exposed mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) remaining in western provinces of Iran.⁴ Sources report that security forces continue to emplace mines in areas close to Iran’s borders in order to deter cross-border smugglers and infiltration by anti-regime groups. There are also mined areas around military bases.

A further complication for contamination estimates pertains to reports of continuing casualties in areas that were supposed to have been cleared, calling into question whether mine clearance has been conducted to international standards.

Iran is also believed to have cluster munition remnant contamination (see Mine Action Review’s *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2019* report on Iran for further information).

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

IRMAC was established as the national mine action centre in 2005, taking the place of a Mine Action Committee within the Ministry of Defence. IRMAC is responsible for planning, data, managing survey, procurement, and the accreditation of demining operators. It also sets standards, provides training for clearance operators, concludes contracts with demining operators, and ensures quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) of their operations. It coordinates mine action with the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Interior, the Management and Planning Organisation of Iran, and other relevant ministries and organisations, and handles international relations.⁵ Several IRMAC staff are believed to be serving or former military personnel, including its Director, while others are civilians employed by the Ministry of Defence.

IRMAC is said to have a branch in every affected province. Available demining assets, such as mechanical assets, vary from province to province.

In March 2019, Iran hosted a three-day international roundtable on “humanitarian mine action: challenges and best practices”, attended by representatives from other states, national and international demining organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). The aim of the roundtable was to share knowledge and experience on mine action, challenges, and best practices.⁶

In November 2019, Iran opened its first international humanitarian demining training centre in Tehran.⁷

Iran is believed to have dedicated significant resources and effort to clearing areas on its territory contaminated by mines, CMR and other ERW, but the results of survey and clearance have not been made publicly available.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

IRMAC actively maintains a national mine action database but it is not known to what extent it is comprehensive, up-to-date, and able to disaggregate anti-personnel mine contamination and clearance output from that of other explosive ordnance.

IRMAC reported that it has a GIS web-based, integrated information management system, which integrates information on quality, safety, and the environment.⁸

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

IRMAC combines the roles of regulator and operator, with demining teams and support staff deployed in five affected provinces. In Kurdistan province, IRMAC is conducting verification, mainly through mechanical clearance. IRMAC also responds to calls from the local community reporting landmines or items of UXO. Demining capacity in Kurdistan province is believed to stand at around 12 personnel, a reduction on earlier capacity.⁷

Commercial operators include AOM, Immen Sazan Omran Pars International, Immen Zamin Espadana, and Solh Afarinan-e Bedoun-e Marz (SABM). Three other companies, Imen Gostaran Mohit (IGM), Moshaver Omran Iran, and ZPP International, undertake quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC).¹⁰

Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC), the development arm of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), contracts and monitors commercial operators conducting clearance of Iran's oil and gas producing areas which are concentrated in mine-affected areas of western and south western Iran bordering Iraq.¹¹

Commercial mine and ERW clearance in Iran is conducted to ensure that land is free from explosive ordnance before it is used for economic purposes or developed. It is separate to humanitarian demining of areas known or suspected to contain explosive ordnance in order to make the land safe for civilian use, which comes under the remit of IRMAC. In a number of countries, commercial demining is applied to areas whether or not there is firm evidence of a threat from explosive ordnance.

The Iranian Army and Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps assisted demining efforts to support the response to the flash flooding which affected Iran in March and April 2019.¹²

International operators are not believed to have been active in Iran since 2008.

There is no available information on quality management procedures. In the past, very high levels of casualties were recorded during demining in Iran. IRMAC reported that since its establishment, in 2005, 200 deminers have been killed or injured during clearance of mines and ERW, which equates to one accident for every 15,000 mines or ERW detected.¹³

According to IRMAC, more than 2 million mines and over 1 million items of ERW have been destroyed since the start of its programme.¹⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

No data were available from IRMAC on any mine survey or clearance in 2019, as was the case in previous years.

Iran is believed to have dedicated significant resources and effort to clearing mined areas on its territory, but the results of survey and clearance, and the standards to which clearance has been conducted, have not made publicly available.

IRMAC lists the challenges it faces in humanitarian clearance in Iran as: high density of contamination; minefield barriers in place; flooding in contaminated areas, which hinders access; mines and UXO displaced by flooding; displacement of mines to bottom layers of soil (up to 6 metres); the transformation [degradation] of mines, and vegetation.¹⁵

In a mine/ERW clearance project in western Iran, three mines were discovered in 2019, during the first phase of mine/ERW clearance of a 10km² commercial clearance project.¹⁶

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- 1 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation, available at: bit.ly/38ALojt; and presentation by Mr. Pourbagher, Deputy Director of IRMAC, National Directors Meeting, Geneva, 12 February 2020.
 - 2 Ministry of Defence, "Commander Dehghan in the ceremony of World Mine Awareness Day: In Iran 28,000 hectares of land are landmine-contaminated", 8 April 2014.
 - 3 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation at IRMAC headquarters, Tehran, 9 February 2014.
 - 4 "Unexploded Ordnance Threatening Iranian Lives in Flood-Hit Areas", *IFP News*, 5 April 2019, at: bit.ly/33Tsp0K; and "Nationwide Flood Alert In Iran As Emergency Declared In Oil-Producing Province", *Radio Farda*, 31 March 2019, at: bit.ly/2zjb3MJ.
 - 5 IRMAC PowerPoint Presentation, Tehran, 9 February 2014; and IRMAC, "Presentation of IRMAC".
 - 6 "Tehran hosts international roundtable on humanitarian mine action", *Mehr news agency*, 12 March 2019, at: bit.ly/2Z4LsIE; and ICRC, "International roundtable on "humanitarian mine action: challenges and best practices", 15 March 2019, at: bit.ly/2QH3cR6.
 - 7 "1st International Humanitarian Demining Training Center opens in Tehran", *Mehr News Agency*, 12 November 2019, available at: bit.ly/2C7wRzG.
 - 8 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation, available at: bit.ly/38ALojt; and presentation by Mr Pourbagher, Deputy Director of IRMAC, National Directors Meeting, Geneva, 12 February 2020.
 - 9 Information provided by Reza Amaninasab, Director, Ambassadors for development without borders, September 2019.
 - 10 Ibid.
 - 11 Information provided by mine action expert on condition of anonymity.
 - 12 Information provided by Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for development without borders, September 2019.
 - 13 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation, available at: bit.ly/38ALojt; and presentation by Mr Pourbagher, Deputy Director of IRMAC, National Directors Meeting, Geneva, 12 February 2020.
 - 14 Ibid.
 - 15 Ibid.
 - 16 Information provided by Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for development without borders, August and September 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Israel should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Israel has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The exact extent of mine contamination in Israel is not known. Israel reported 41.58km² of confirmed mined area and a further 48.51km² of suspected mined area, as at the end of 2017,¹ but did not report the amount of mined area as at the end of 2018 or 2019. The combined 90km² as at end 2017, represents only the area affected by mines that are not deemed essential to Israel's security. The size of other mined areas is not made public. The total figure includes 18.38km² of mined area in the Jordan Valley (11.84km² of anti-personnel mined area, 6.19km² of anti-vehicle mined area, and 0.35km² of mixed mined area) and in the West Bank² (see the *Clearing the Mines* report on Palestine in this work for further information).

Table 1: Mined area (at end 2017)³

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (km ²)	SHAs	Area (km ²)
AP mines only	201	19.93	5	39.54
AV mines only	29	17.00	8	1.17
AP and AV mines	2	4.65	9	7.80
Totals	232	41.58	22	48.51

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle CHA = Confirmed hazardous area SHA = Suspected hazardous area

Israel's mine problem dates back to the Second World War. Subsequently, Israel laid significant numbers of mines along its borders, near military camps and training areas, and near civilian infrastructure. In August 2011, Israel's military reported planting new mines to reinforce minefields and other defences along its de facto border with Syria in the Golan Heights.⁴

In the Golan Heights the mines laid by Syrian forces remain largely unknown and areas have been fenced off by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). However, according to an online media report, fencing is not always properly maintained with warning signs, and civilians occasionally cross into minefields looking for edible plants.⁵

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

A March 2011 law on minefield clearance established the Israeli National Mine Action Authority (the INMAA) to undertake a "comprehensive programme of mine clearing projects inside Israel".⁶ The law's aim was "to create a normative infrastructure for the clearance of minefields that are not essential to national security, and to declare them as free from landmines with the highest degree of safety to civilians, in accordance with the international obligations of the State of Israel, and within the shortest period of time possible."⁷

The law provides for the establishment of a professional Advisory Board, to be composed of representatives of relevant ministries and governmental and municipal authorities, as well as a representative for mine victims. It calls for the formulation of annual and multi-year plans; coordination and cooperation between INMAA and the IDF; employment of private contractors in mine clearance operations; earmarking of specific government budget for such activities; and the creation of a National Minefield Clearance Fund which will receive, manage, and allocate donations.⁸

In February 2019, the Director of INMAA reported that new legislation had been passed, in the form of a regional law, giving INMAA responsibility for clearing former military bases and for addressing abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO), unexploded ordnance (UXO), and anti-vehicle mines. Prior to this, the INMAA had only had responsibility for addressing anti-personnel mines, and for mixed mined areas.⁹

INMAA was established within the Ministry of Defence, with ministry staff responsible for planning mine action.¹⁰ As a result of the new law, staffing at the INMAA was expected to expand by at least 50%, but as at February 2019 it was unclear if the budget would be increased to enable this to occur.¹¹

In 2017, the annual mine action budget for Israel was NIS41.7 million (approx. US\$11.5 million), of which NIS27 million was from the INMAA's budget and the remaining NIS14.7 million from additional external funding by various infrastructure development companies and state authorities.¹² The size of the 2018 or 2019 budget is not known.

INMAA provided funding to support mandatory quality assurance (QA) covering the last two months of HALO Trust clearance operations at the Arraba minefield in the West Bank and for the full cost of QA at the Baptism Site Project in 2018 and 2019. In addition, since November 2019, the Israeli Ministry of Defence (MoD) funded HALO's full clearance costs at the Baptism Site (see the *Clearing the Mines* report on Palestine for further information).¹³

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

According to Israel, in 2019, the IDF's Engineering Corps continued its activities to promote an improved minefield GPS recording and GIS capacity "building an accurate archive of manually-emplaced minefields".¹⁴ In addition, INMAA manages a "minefield information bank" that is open for public queries concerning demining plans and programmes.¹⁵

PLANNING AND TASKING

INMAA is "tasked with forming a national demining plan, which will be consistent with Israel's international obligations and based on IDF demining procedures and instructions, as compatible as possible with International Mine Action Standards".¹⁶ INMAA approves annual mine clearance plans and "keeps mapping existing minefields and sets priorities, creating a work plan for mine clearance in coordination with the relevant agencies", which is implemented by local civilian operators.¹⁷ INMAA also has a multi-year clearance plan for 2017–20 that focuses on technical survey and clearance in the Golan Heights in the spring/summer/autumn, and in the Jordan Valley and Arava Plain in the winter.¹⁸

At the start of 2017, INMAA began surveying the Jordan Valley minefields in the West Bank, operating through Israeli companies funded from the national budget. INMAA sees significant potential for cancellation and reduction of mined areas in the Jordan Valley, and is using a range of technologies and scientific tools to assess incidence of mine drift. The INMAA planned to invest around NIS 900,000 (approximately US\$250,000) in this project in 2017–19.¹⁹

In addition, the INMAA continues to oversee HALO Trust clearance projects in Area C of the West Bank.²⁰

INMAA "defines clearance policies, sets the national priorities and implements them in coordination with other relevant governmental ministries, the IDF, and local authorities".²¹ Clearance tasks are assigned according to a classification formula laid down by INMAA, and prioritisation is set nationally every three years. The criteria used for the formula are largely based on the risk level and development potential of the affected areas.²² INMAA has been studying the social and economic impacts of land released over the last four years, as well as on the potential impact for future clearance sites.²³

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

National mine action standards, which concern rules and regulations covering clearance methods, quality management, legislation, and insurance, are contained on the INMAA website.²⁴ There are also IDF regulations and orders concerning marking, fencing, and monitoring, as well as demining and disposing of mines, booby-traps, and other devices.²⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Commercial companies are contracted to conduct clearance as well as QA and quality control (QC).

In 2017, 106 demining personnel and 36 machines were deployed for clearance operations.²⁶ The clearance companies contracted in 2018 and 2019, and their demining capacity, is not known.

The IDF also conduct mine clearance according to their own mine action plans "that are executed by their military methods and techniques". They have an annual programme that includes demining, monitoring, and maintenance of mined area protection.²⁷ During the winter, the IDF give special attention to minefields that are close to farms, residential areas, or hiker routes, as mines may be carried into these areas by floods.²⁸

The HALO Trust works under the auspices of both INMAA and the Palestine Mine Action Centre (PMAC) in the West Bank²⁹ (see the *Clearing the Mines* report on Palestine for further information).

Every mine clearance project in Israel has an INMAA supervisor, a QA/QC contractor, and a clearance operator.

Israel uses several types of machines in its mine clearance operations for ground preparation, survey, and clearance. They are said to include, as and where appropriate, screening and crushing systems, bucket loaders, excavators, sifters, and flails/tillers.³⁰ Some of these operations are conducted by Israel directly, while others are performed by contractors.³¹

Throughout 2019, INMAA continued to be supported by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in developing its animal detection system capacity.³² A pilot project using mine detection dogs (MDDs) conducted in 2017³³ had concluded that dogs would not be a valuable tool.³⁴ However, after investigating and conducting further research into animal detection and behaviour, INMAA planned to conduct further trials.³⁵

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

In reporting under Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II, Israel stated that INMAA had overseen clearance of approximately 577,000m² in 2019, destroying 1,200 mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). In addition, the IDF's Engineering Corps was reported to have cleared 106,000m², destroying 911 mines and ERW.³⁶ However, there was no disaggregation on what proportion of this land release was of mined area (as opposed to battle area) or whether it also includes land released in Palestinian territory in the West Bank.

In addition, according to Israel, in 2019, "the IDF has made significant progress in re-surveying mine affected areas, and in examining the possibility of area cancellation, following a completion of a full detailed non-technical survey".³⁷

The HALO Trust continued its clearance of minefields in Area C of the West Bank in 2019, working under the auspices of both INMAA and PMAC, with international and Israeli funding for the Baptism Site Project (see the *Clearing the Mines* report on Palestine for further information).

Based on the clearance rates of the past few years, it will take many years to clear remaining anti-personnel mine contamination in Israel.

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| <p>1 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly Director of Technology and Knowledge Management, Israeli National Mine Action Authority (INMAA), 26 May 2018.</p> <p>2 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly INMAA, 26 May 2018.</p> <p>3 Ibid.</p> <p>4 "Israel army plants new mines along Syria border", Associated Press, 13 August 2011.</p> <p>5 "New Golan mine-clearing project to begin this summer", Jerusalem Post, 16 March 2017, at: bit.ly/2MyEKBc.</p> <p>6 Minefield Clearance Law 5771-2011 of March 2011, unofficial translation at: bit.ly/2GDOQgJ; Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2010), Form A. Form A refers to details provided in Form D, but information in Form D has been deleted.</p> <p>7 Minefield Clearance Law 2011 (MCL 5771-2011).</p> <p>8 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report submitted in 2020 (covering 2019), Form D.</p> <p>9 Interview with Marcel Aviv, Director, INMAA, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.</p> <p>10 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly INMAA, 26 May 2018.</p> <p>11 Interview with Marcel Aviv, INMAA, Geneva, 7 February 2019.</p> <p>12 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly INMAA, 26 May 2018.</p> <p>13 Emails from Ronen Shimoni, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 20 April and 18 June 2020.</p> <p>14 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.</p> <p>15 Ibid., Forms A and B.</p> | <p>16 Ibid., Form D.</p> <p>17 Ibid., Form B.</p> <p>18 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly of INMAA, 26 May 2018.</p> <p>19 Emails from Michael Heiman, INMAA, 23 July and 10 August 2017.</p> <p>20 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.</p> <p>21 Ibid., Form B.</p> <p>22 Email from Michael Heiman, INMAA, 23 July 2017.</p> <p>23 Email from Michael Heiman, INMAA, 19 September 2016.</p> <p>24 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.</p> <p>25 Ibid., Form D.</p> <p>26 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly of INMAA, 26 May 2018.</p> <p>27 Email from Eran Yuvan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 29 April 2014; and CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.</p> <p>28 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.</p> <p>29 HALO Trust, "West Bank", accessed 31 May 2020.</p> <p>30 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form C.</p> <p>31 Email from Michael Heiman, INMAA, 23 July 2017.</p> <p>32 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form E.</p> <p>33 Email from Michael Heiman, INMAA, 23 July 2017.</p> <p>34 Email from Michael Heiman, formerly INMAA, 26 May 2018.</p> <p>35 Interview with Marcel Aviv, INMAA, Geneva, 7 February 2019.</p> <p>36 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.</p> <p>37 Ibid.</p> |
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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Kyrgyzstan should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Kyrgyzstan has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Kyrgyzstan should detail whether it has fully addressed mine contamination in areas under its jurisdiction or control and, if not, report on the extent and location of its remaining mined areas and clearance operations.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

Kyrgyzstan is suspected to be contaminated by mines, though the precise location and extent of any mined areas is not known. According to the Minister of Defence, contamination in the southern Batken province bordering Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the result of mine use by Uzbekistan's military between 1999 and 2000, was cleared by Uzbek forces in 2005.¹ It was reported, however, that rainfall and landslides had caused some mines to shift.²

In 2003, Kyrgyz authorities claimed that Uzbek forces had also laid mines around the Uzbek enclaves of Sokh and Shakhimardan located within Kyrgyzstan. Press reports have suggested that Uzbek troops partially cleared territory around the Sokh enclave in 2004–05 and that they completely cleared mines around the Shakhimardan enclave in 2004.³ In October 2017, Uzbek President Islam Karimov, and his Kyrgyz counterpart, Almazbek Atambaev, signed an agreement to demarcate some 85% of the countries' nearly 1,300km-long border and began discussing options for the 36 disputed sectors.⁴

Kyrgyzstan has admitted using anti-personnel mines in 1999 and 2000 to prevent infiltration across its borders, but has claimed that all the mines were subsequently removed and destroyed.⁵ In June 2011, a government official confirmed: "We do not have any minefields on the territory of Kyrgyzstan."⁶

In October 2011, ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Defence conducted a mine action assessment mission. The assessment confirmed that poor ammunition storage conditions as well as obsolete ammunition posed a serious threat to human security. Agreement on cooperation was reached on 25 July 2013, when the ITF signed a Protocol on Cooperation with the Ministry of Defense of the Kyrgyz Republic.⁷ The ITF has reported that in 2014 it continued to implement activities agreed on in the Protocol on Cooperation. This includes technical checks on anti-personnel mines and other ammunition in three storage warehouses, procurement of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) equipment, and support for disposal of ammunition surpluses.⁸

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Kyrgyzstan has no functioning mine action programme.

LAND RELEASE

There are no reports of any survey or clearance of mined areas occurring in 2019.

1 Fax from Abibilla Kudaiberdiev, Minister of Defence, 4 April 2011.
 2 See, e.g., Y. Yegorov, "Uzbekistan agrees to remove minefields along its border with Kyrgyzstan", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 1, Issue 41, 29 June 2004.
 3 S. Zhimagulov and O. Borisova, "Kyrgyzstan Tries to Defend Itself from Uzbek Mines", *Navigator* (Kazakhstan), 14 March 2003; and "Borders are becoming clear", Blog post, at: bit.ly/2z0s7qU.
 4 "Tug-Of-War: Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan Look To Finally Settle Decades-Old Border Dispute", *Radio Free Europe*, 14 December 2017, at: bit.ly/2yXsrXt.

5 Statement of Kyrgyzstan, Intersessional Meetings (Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Convention), Geneva, 8 May 2006; and Letter 011-14/809 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 30 April 2010.
 6 Letter from Amb. G. Isakova, Permanent Mission of Kyrgyzstan to the UN in Geneva, 29 June 2011.
 7 ITF, "Kyrgyz Republic", accessed 10 October 2015, at: bit.ly/31Fwd44.
 8 ITF, "Kyrgyz Republic", accessed 10 October 2015, at: bit.ly/31Fwd44.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Lao PDR has obligations under international human rights law to clear landmines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- In light of the continuing reports by clearance operators of anti-personnel mines being encountered during cluster munition remnant survey (CMRS), the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) should consider convening a sector-wide meeting to discuss National Standards, accreditation, and procedures for addressing all mine (both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle) contamination.
- Lao PDR should ensure that its Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database disaggregates data on landmines, distinguishing anti-personnel mines from anti-vehicle mines.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

While by far the greatest contamination in Lao PDR is from explosive remnants of war (ERW), in particular cluster munition remnants (CMR) (see the *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Lao PDR for further information), Lao PDR is also contaminated by anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines. The extent of mine contamination is not known. During the Indochina conflict of the 1960s and 1970s, all sides in the war laid anti-personnel mines, particularly around military installations and patrol bases. Mined areas also exist in some border regions as a legacy of disputes or tensions with or within neighbouring countries.¹

A Humanity and Inclusion (formerly Handicap International, HI) survey in 1997 found mines in all 15 provinces it surveyed, contaminating 214 villages.² As at June 2020, HI had identified 44 suspected minefields in 19 villages, during non-technical survey in Houamuang district of Houaphanh province, where it is currently operating. Anti-personnel mines discovered included United States (US)-manufactured M7, M16, and M14 mines, Vietnamese MBV-78A1 mines, and Soviet POMZ mines.³ Across Lao PDR as a whole, the NRA has reported that "gravel mines" (US air-dropped anti-personnel mines) had all degraded, but remaining mine types included M14 anti-personnel blast mines, M16 bounding fragmentation mines, M18 claymore mines, and M15 and M19 anti-vehicle mines, Soviet or Chinese PMN anti-personnel blast mines, POMZ fragmentation stake mines, and TM41, TM46, and TM57 anti-vehicle mines.⁴

The remote location of many mined areas means that mines have little impact and are not a clearance priority. Of 101,512 items of explosive ordnance destroyed in 2019, only 40 (less than 0.04%) were mines.⁵ The NRA, however, has observed that "with a steady expansion of land use 'mined areas' will become areas for growing concern."⁶

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The NRA, created by government decree in 2004 and active since mid 2006, has an interministerial board composed of representatives from government ministries and is chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare.⁷ The Prime Minister of Lao PDR approved a new decree, "On the Organisation and Operations of the National Regulatory Authority for UXO in Lao PDR", in February 2018. The decree defines the position, role, duties, rights, organisational structure, and the working principles and methods of the NRA.⁸

The NRA acts as the coordinator for national and international clearance operators and serves as the national focal point for the sector. This includes overall management and consideration of policy, planning, projects, and coordination of survey and clearance operations nationwide, as well as NRA planning and coordination functions at the provincial and district levels.⁹ While the NRA has the central role of UXO Sector coordination, increased coordination and collaboration between all stakeholders, including line ministries, local authorities, UXO operators, development partners, are essential for the NRA to fulfil its coordination role.¹⁰

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides programmatic and technical support to the NRA and UXO Lao, including with regard to information sharing and coordination, albeit at a reduced capacity compared to previous years.¹¹ Further capacity development in information management, quality management, and operations support, is provided primarily to UXO Lao, and to a lesser extent the NRA, through a US-funded grant manager, Tetra Tech.¹² The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) provide capacity development support on the development of Lao's new national strategy, information management, and risk management.¹³

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

For details regarding gender and diversity in Lao PDR's survey and clearance programme, please see the *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Lao PDR.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

In November 2019, Lao PDR stated at the Fourth Review Conference of the APMBC in Oslo, that it was in the process of preparing a voluntary APMBC Article 7 report.¹⁴ However, as at 15 August 2020, a voluntary report had yet to be submitted. The only voluntary Article 7 report submitted previously by Lao PDR, was in 2011.¹⁵

PLANNING AND TASKING

The Lao Government's national strategy, "Safe Path Forward II, 2011–20", was reviewed in June 2015, when the NRA set a number of specific targets for the remaining five years up to 2020.¹⁶ There is a corresponding multi-year work plan 2016–20 for implementation of the Safe Path Forward II strategy,¹⁷ but both Safe Path Forward II and the corresponding work plan predominantly focus on CMR, and do not include a strategy or plans for addressing mined areas.

A multi-stakeholder workshop facilitated by the GICHD and planned to take place in Vientiane in March 2020, to discuss the elaboration of "Safe Path Forward III, 2021–2030", the new ten-year strategy, was postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.¹⁸ As at August 2020, the new strategy was being drafted.¹⁹ Through its US-funded agreement between Tetra

Tech and the NRA, the United States is continuing to "support the Lao Government as it formulates its 10-year National Strategic Plan for the UXO Sector, a plan that will map the path to achieving SDG 18 – the elimination of UXO as a barrier to national development by 2030."²⁰

Discovery of mines during CMRS will impede CMR survey and clearance operations.²¹ However, it is not known to what extent the new "Safe Path Forward III", which was being elaborated during 2020, will include addressing anti-personnel (and anti-vehicle) mine contamination.

According to an interview with the NRA in 2018, responsibility for clearance of mined areas in Lao PDR predominantly falls under the remit of the Lao armed forces.²²

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

Lao PDR's National Standards make a clear distinction between UXO clearance (including CMR) and mine clearance, and for the purposes of the National Standards, "UXO does not include hand-laid mines but it may include disposal of 'one off' mines located during EOD roving tasks."²³ As such, the National Standard on UXO clearance only relates to UXO clearance operations and not to mine clearance operations.²⁴ Furthermore, while dated 2012, the National Standards are believed to have been drafted several years before, and are in need of being brought up to date in accordance with the latest International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

According to Lao PDR's National Standard on Mine Clearance Operations (Chapter 12), "the systematic locating and clearing of hand laid mines in known or suspected mined areas, are not commonly conducted in Lao PDR. However, it is known that mined areas exist in Lao PDR and at some stage in the future these areas will have to be cleared."²⁵

According to Chapter 7 of the National Standards, if a mine is located during UXO clearance, work is immediately ceased and "the clearance supervisor should then assess the situation and determine if the mine is a random one or part of a mined area. If the mine is assessed as being part of a mined area, work on the site is to cease and the matter reported to the tasking authority. Details of mined areas are to be reported by the clearance organisation concerned to the NRA head office and the NRA provincial office."²⁶

However, in practice, determining whether a mine is part of a bigger mined area can prove challenging, especially if field-based personnel are not trained (or equipped) to address anti-personnel mine contamination. Therefore, at the July 2019 technical working group meeting on clearance, HI proposed an addendum to the standard to help address this.²⁷

HI further discussed this issue with the Director of the NRA during a visit to Houamuang district in March 2020 and recommended that the National Standards could be expanded to include the suggestion that, "if a landmine is found in undeveloped land it shall be assumed to be part of a minefield" and "if the landmine is found in well-developed land it can assumed to be a random one". HI also noted, however, that "additional information should be gathered to add weight to the conclusions; namely the location of wartime military bases and location of other landmine finds",²⁸ as well as whether mines discovered by members of the local community had been moved.

The standards also note that, "Some relatively small-scale mine clearance has been carried out by UXO Lao and by commercial operators in the past but mine clearance operations are not regularly carried out as a deliberate mine action activity in Lao PDR."²⁹

According to the National Standards, "Mine clearance operations are considerably more dangerous than UXO area clearance operations and the requirements and procedures for mine clearance are more stringent. When mine clearance operations are necessary, they are only to be carried out by accredited mine clearance organisations with personnel with the appropriate training and equipment and specific mine clearance operating procedures."³⁰

Non-governmental organisation (NGO) clearance operators in Lao are not currently accredited for mine clearance,³¹ and national standards would need revising in order for NGO to conduct mine clearance.³² In addition, HI believes that the NRA should coordinate and organise training, and adjust the standards accordingly, with regard to CMRS in areas also affected by mines. Demographic pressures regarding land will lead to people accessing remote places that could be mined. Action on locating and recording mined areas needs to occur before the older generations that know about the presence of landmines disappear.³³

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

No planned or systematic mine clearance was conducted during 2019, though 40 mines were reported to have been destroyed in 2019 out of a total of 101,512 items of explosive ordnance, according to Lao PDR's transparency reporting under the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).³⁴ This compares to 28 mines in 91,468 items of UXO destroyed in 2018.³⁵ As yet, no distinction is made in IMSMA between anti-personnel mines and anti-vehicle mines.³⁶

However, according to the NRA's 2019 UXO Sector Annual Report, a total of 39 mines were destroyed during 2019: 4 by humanitarian clearance operators during clearance operations (3 by UXO Lao and 1 by HI); 1 by HALO Trust during technical survey operations; and 34 destroyed during roving tasks (10 by UXO Lao; 3 by HALO Trust; 4 by NPA; 2 by MAG; 17 by HI; and 2 by Army58).³⁷

Data reported by HALO Trust, HI, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) on the number of anti-personnel mines discovered and destroyed during cluster munition survey and clearance operations in 2019 varied from data in the NRA's 2019 UXO Sector Annual Report.³⁸

In 2019, HALO Trust discovered and destroyed four anti-personnel mines. Three were found during non-technical survey as part of CMRS operations in Sepon and Phalanxai districts in Savannakhet province and one anti-personnel mine during an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot task.³⁹

In addition, as already included in last year's *Clearing the Mines 2019* report on Laos PDR, in July 2019, HALO Trust's EOD team leader responded to a call-out in Phalanxai district in Savannakhet province, near the site of an old US military base, during which a cache of M-16 mines, a couple of other laid M-16 mines, and a PMN mine were discovered. Villagers told HALO Trust that there had been accidents in the immediate area in the 1980s, but that the PMN had been discovered last year while ploughing the land and was moved to its current position. HALO did not destroy the mines discovered, but reported the mined area to the

NRA and withdrew from the area immediately.⁴⁰ The HALO Trust planned to start mine clearance operations in 2020 in Phalanxai district,⁴¹ subject to accreditation and necessary amendments being made to the National Standards.

In 2019, HI discovered and destroyed one anti-personnel mine during CMR clearance operations in Houaphan province and a further 15 anti-personnel mines during EOD spot tasks.⁴² With respect to spot tasks, HI will only destroy mines that are clearly identified in a spot task location where it can be accessed safely.⁴³ If mines are discovered during cluster munition remnant survey or clearance operations, the task is immediately suspended and the discovery reported to HI's Operations Manager, who then visits the site to assess the situation. If the discovered mine was not emplaced and was found in land used for agriculture it is destroyed. Additional information is obtained about the threat of mines from the landowner and a risk assessment conducted before deciding whether or not operations are allowed to resume. If the mine found is emplaced and is in an area which has not been developed, the task is halted, additional data collected, and external boundaries of the site are tentatively identified (historically safe tracks). A mine report is then submitted by HI to the NRA.⁴⁴

As at June 2020, HI had identified 44 suspected minefields in 19 villages, in Houamuang district, in Houaphanh province.⁴⁵ During non-technical survey and risk education visits, HI interviews older generations to understand the village history during the war, including anti-aircraft gun and other military positions; often M16 and M14 mines were laid around defensive positions. HI also collects information on injuries sustained in the forest due to mines and on areas not developed or which are not accessed due to previous accidents or reports of injured animals, or mines being detonated by fires during "slash and burn" operations. In some instances, villagers had collected or moved mines they had discovered.⁴⁶

During non-technical survey in 2019, MAG found five emplaced anti-personnel mines in two separate suspected minefields in Gnommalath district, Khammouane province. For emplaced mines, basic information is gathered, a projected polygon produced electronically, and information immediately shared with the NRA. MAG reported, but did not destroy the emplaced mines, and its teams are not trained or authorised to deal with suspected minefields.⁴⁷ MAG did, however, also find a small number of abandoned or moved landmines and obtained specific permission for its EOD team to destroy these, with the support of MAG's international Technical Field Managers.⁴⁸

In 2019, NPA discovered and destroyed (in situ) a total of four anti-personnel mines. One mine was discovered in Laongarm district of Saravane province and the remaining three mines (types M14, M16, and M18) were discovered in Champasak province, in the districts of Bachiangchaleunsook, Paksong, and Pathoomphone.⁴⁹ NPA's survey teams in Champasak province received information on the presence of mines during non-technical survey in September 2019, and after this was confirmed by NPA, work was stopped in the area and NPA reported the suspected minefield to the NRA.⁵⁰

UXO Lao was operating in nine provinces in 2019: Attapeu, Champasak, Houaphanh, Khammouane, Luang Prabang, Savannakhet, Saravan, Xekong, and Xiengkhouang. UXO Lao did not report the total number of anti-personnel mines it destroyed, but did note that during its CMR clearance operations in 2019 it destroyed two anti-personnel mines, both in Xiengkhouang province. It also confirmed that no anti-vehicle mines were found or destroyed in 2019.⁵¹

<p>1 NRA website, "UXO types: Mines", undated but accessed 9 March 2020 at: bit.ly/2XZyv04.</p> <p>2 Handicap International, "Living with UXO, National Survey on the Socio-Economic Impact of UXO in Lao PDR", Vientiane/Brussels, 1997, p. 7.</p> <p>3 Emails from Julien Kempeneers, Humanitarian Mine Action Coordinator, HI, 27 August 2019, and 25 March and 29 June 2020.</p> <p>4 NRA website, "UXO types: Mines", 9 March 2020.</p> <p>5 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2019), Form A; and Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>6 NRA website, "UXO types: Mines", 9 March 2020.</p> <p>7 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, Part B, Detailed Narrative, p. 18.</p> <p>8 Government Decree No. 67, dated 12 February 2018; CCM Extension Request 2019, Part B, Detailed Narrative, p. 17; and Statement of Lao PDR on National Implementation Efforts, CCM Eighth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 3 September 2018.</p> <p>9 2019 Article 4 deadline Extension Request 2019, Part B, Detailed Narrative, p. 18.</p> <p>10 Statement of Lao PDR on National Implementation Efforts, CCM Eighth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 3 September 2018.</p> <p>11 Interview with Olivier Bauduin, (then) UNDP, Vientiane, 2 May 2018; and email, 10 July 2018.</p> <p>12 Email from Nigel Orr, Technical Advisor Survey and Clearance, Tetra Tech, 14 June 2019; and "US Renews Partnership with Lao PDR to Build Capacity in UXO Sector", US Embassy in Lao PDR, 31 January 2020, at: bit.ly/2LzmG8J.</p> <p>13 Email from Robert White, Advisor, Strategic Management & Residual Contamination, GICHD, 22 July 2020.</p> <p>14 Statement of Lao PDR, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 29 November 2019.</p> <p>15 Ibid.</p> <p>16 Interview with Phoukhieo Chanthasomboune, Director, NRA, Vientiane, 4 May 2016.</p> <p>17 CCM Extension Request 2019, Part B, Detailed Narrative, p. 26.</p> <p>18 Emails Katherine Harrison, Programme Coordinator, NPA, 21 July 2020; and Robert White, GICHD, 22 July 2020.</p> <p>19 Email from Mark Frankish, Chief Technical Advisor UXO Unit, UNDP, 26 August 2020.</p> <p>20 "US Renews Partnership with Lao PDR to Build Capacity in UXO Sector", US Embassy in Lao PDR, 31 January 2020.</p> <p>21 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 22 March 2019.</p> <p>22 Interview with Phoukhieo Chanthasomboune, NRA, Vientiane, 2 May 2018.</p> <p>23 Lao PDR National UXO/Mine Action Standards (NS), "Chapter 0: Introduction and Glossary", accessed on NRA website on 12 May 2020, p. xi.</p> <p>24 Lao PDR NS, "Chapter 7: UXO Clearance Operations", accessed on NRA website on 12 May 2020, p. 5.</p>	<p>25 Lao PDR NS, "Chapter 12: Mine Clearance Operations", accessed on NRA website on 12 May 2020, p. 5.</p> <p>26 Lao PDR NS, "Chapter 7: UXO Clearance Operations", p. 13.</p> <p>27 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 27 August 2019.</p> <p>28 Email from Julien Kempeneers, on behalf of Yvon Le Chevanton, Technical Survey/Clearance Operations Manager, HI, 25 March 2020.</p> <p>29 Lao PDR NS, "Chapter 12: Mine Clearance Operations", accessed on NRA website on 12 May 2020, p. 5, note 1.</p> <p>30 Ibid., p. 5.</p> <p>31 Emails from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 25 March 2020; Cameron Imber, Programme Manager, HALO, 7 April 2020; Katherine Harrison, NPA, 6 May 2020; and Simon Rea, Regional Director, South and South East Asia, MAG, 17 June 2020.</p> <p>32 Emails from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 25 March 2020; and Cameron Imber, HALO, 7 April 2020.</p> <p>33 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 25 March 2020.</p> <p>34 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2019), Form A; and CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.</p> <p>35 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2018), Form A. This is a slight discrepancy with the 97,624 items of UXO destroyed, of which 31 were mines, reported by Lao PDR in its CCM Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F.</p> <p>36 Email from Mark Frankish, UNDP, 26 August 2020.</p> <p>37 2019 UXO Sector Annual Report, NRA, undated, pp. 7 and 8.</p> <p>38 Emails from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 25 March 2020; Cameron Imber, HALO, 7 April 2020; and Katherine Harrison, NPA, 6 May 2020.</p> <p>39 Email from Cameron Imber, HALO, 7 April 2020.</p> <p>40 Email from Cameron Imber, HALO, 19 May 2020.</p> <p>41 Email from Cameron Imber, HALO, 7 April 2020.</p> <p>42 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 25 March 2020.</p> <p>43 Ibid.</p> <p>44 Email from Julien Kempeneers, on behalf of Yvon Le Chevanton, HI, 25 March 2020.</p> <p>45 Email from Julien Kempeneers, HI, 29 June 2020.</p> <p>46 Email from Julien Kempeneers, on behalf of Yvon Le Chevanton, HI, 25 March 2020.</p> <p>47 Email from Simon Rea, MAG, 17 June 2020.</p> <p>48 Ibid.</p> <p>49 Email from Katherine Harrison, NPA, 6 May 2020.</p> <p>50 Ibid.</p> <p>51 Email from Saomany Manivong, Chief of Programme Office and Public Information, UXO Lao, 3 August 2020.</p>
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KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) and its national and international partners continued to make progress in mine clearance in 2019, both in the far south near the Blue Line and in small, scattered mined areas in Mount Lebanon, as well as addressing more recent contamination along the border with Syria in the north. In a positive development, on 30 January 2020, the United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL) and LMAC signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on demining, with UNIFIL planning to start survey and clearance for humanitarian purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Lebanon should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority. Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Lebanon has obligations under international human rights law to clear landmines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Wherever possible, evidence-based non-technical survey and technical survey should be used to more accurately define areas of actual mine contamination prior to initiating clearance.
- The integration and consolidation of the LMAC and Regional Mine Action Centre (RMAC) databases and servers should be completed as soon as possible.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2019, Lebanon had more than 18.65km² of confirmed mined area, including along the Blue Line, across 1,353 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) (see Table 1).¹ Three new CHAs of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination, totalling 8,714m², were added to the database in 2019.²

At the end of 2018, Lebanon reported more than 19.6km² of confirmed mined area across 1,399 CHAs.³

Table 1: Mined area by province (at end 2019)⁴

Province	CHAs	Area (m ²)*
Al Beqaa	51	969,733
Al Janoub and Al Nabatiyeh (south Lebanon)	985	7,927,166
Jabal Loubnan (Mount Lebanon)	272	9,501,128
Al Shimal (north Lebanon)	45	254,658
Totals	1,353	18,652,685

* Includes 474,904m² containing anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature at Jroud Aarsal.

In addition, "Dangerous Areas" totalling more than 13.3km² are suspected to contain scattered mines, booby-traps, or other explosive remnants of war (ERW) other than cluster munition remnants (CMR).⁵ The "Dangerous Areas" relate predominantly to rapid response or explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks and are often the result of accidents having been reported to LMAC by the local community,⁶ for which further investigation/survey is required in order to confirm the existence, type, and extent of any contamination.⁷

Mines affect the north and south of the country, and the Mount Lebanon governorate in the middle, though most mined areas are in the south. The minefields in north Lebanon and Mount Lebanon are typically "militia" minefields (i.e. were laid without a pattern and for which minefield records and maps do not exist), and were laid by multiple actors during the civil war. The mined areas in the south are typically conventional minefields, laid according to a pattern and where the location of the mines is identified on minefield maps.⁸

Lebanon's mine problem is largely a legacy of 15 years of earlier civil conflict and Israeli invasions of south Lebanon (in 1978 and 1982) and subsequent occupations that ended in May 2000, and there is a small amount of new mine contamination in "Jroud Arsal" on the north-east border with Syria, resulting from spill-over of the Syrian conflict onto Lebanese territory in 2014–17.⁹ The Lebanese territory in question was fully regained by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in August 2017 and was assigned to LMAC for survey and clearance. Contamination also includes improvised explosive devices (IEDs), CMR, and other ERW.¹⁰

The LAF continue to play a major role in this northern region, as the number of rapid-response missions remains high. The increased number of returnees for economic purposes has led to more ERW being found.¹¹ Furthermore, in its annual report for 2019, LMAC noted that it has had to address the challenge posed by contamination from mines migrating from the north Syrian border, through floods and river beds, to new areas in Wadi Khaled and Wadi Nahle in the north.¹²

Lebanon is also contaminated with CMR and other ERW (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Lebanon for further information).

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Established in 1998 by the Council of Ministers, the Lebanon Mine Action Authority (LMAA) is the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and is chaired by the Minister of Defence. The LMAA has overall responsibility for Lebanon's mine action programme. In 2007, a national mine action policy outlined the structure, roles, and responsibilities within the programme, and LMAC was tasked to execute and coordinate the programme on behalf of the LMAA.¹³

LMAC, part of the LAF, is based in Beirut. Since 2009, the RMAC-N, based in Nabatiyeh, which is a part of LMAC, has overseen operations in south Lebanon and western Beqaa, under LMAC supervision.¹⁴ At the end of 2018, a new regional centre, RMAC-RB, was established in the north-east of Lebanon in the village of Ras Baalbek, to oversee the mine action operations in this region.¹⁵ To a large extent LMAC has a well-functioning capacity, but, as they are army officers, the senior management of LMAC and RMAC are typically routinely rotated (every couple of years), which can hamper development and continuity in the management of the three mine action centres.¹⁶ The current director of LMAC started in March 2019, replacing his predecessor who had served as director for two years.¹⁷

A new standing operating procedure (SOP), developed for LMAC in 2020, was reported to be in its final stage of approval as at March 2020. This SOP specifies the roles of each section of LMAC and clarifies the responsibilities and cooperation between sections. It is hoped that it will help new LMAC staff and reduce the impact of staff rotations.¹⁸

UN Development Programme (UNDP) personnel, funded by the European Union (EU), are also seconded to LMAC, providing support for capacity building, including transparency reporting, strategic reviews, Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database entry, community liaison, and quality assurance (QA).¹⁹

EU funding for UNDP institutional support to LMAC, which had been due to finish at the end of 2019, but which would have resulted in a gap in capacity development,²⁰ was extended for the first six months of 2020. During this period, UNDP was providing expertise and support on operational efficiency, prioritisation, research into clearance in difficult terrains, and risk education for Syrian refugees.²¹ With regard to difficult terrains, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) will also partner with LMAC on a study that was expected to start in the third quarter of 2020.²² UNDP also mobilised funds for the first half of 2020 from the Norwegian Embassy, in order to: assist with the strengthening of national capacity to document and

prioritise clearance operations in line with Mine Action Forum recommendations; help LMAC to meet its national, regional, and international obligations and coordination functions and ensure follow-up of Mine Action Forum action points; and to support LMAC in effectively communicating its results and establishing partnerships.²³ LMAC will seek to extend UNDP's support beyond the second quarter of 2020.²⁴

A "Mine Action Forum" has been established in Lebanon in close partnership between LMAC and Norway. It provides an informal platform for LMAC to continue open dialogue and information sharing between the national authorities, implementing partners, and donors, on priorities and needs for the survey and clearance of cluster munitions and landmines in Lebanon.²⁵ Through the forum, the LMAA is "promoting a transparent and inclusive partnership with all HMA stakeholders".²⁶ The forum meets twice a year, with UNDP designated as the secretariat to follow up on action points and develop progress reports.²⁷ It is an example of what a "Country Coalition" under the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) could look like, but in the case of Lebanon it was agreed the forum should be broadened to include landmines, and not just CMR. As of writing, the most recent Mine Action Forum was held on 22 January 2020, during which LMAC officers presented and discussed the new 2020–25 national mine action strategy, operational efficiencies, and a new explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) project.²⁸

The Mine Action Forum in Lebanon has resulted in better coordination and greater transparency as well as on enhancements to land release methodology, enshrined in the revised National Mine Action Standards (NMAS). These measures have all served to strengthen donor confidence and mobilise additional resources.²⁹

There is good coordination and collaboration between LMAC/the RMAC and clearance operators, with the operators consulted before key decisions are taken.³⁰ International clearance operators reported that an enabling environment exists for mine action in Lebanon, with no obstacles regarding visas for international staff, approval of MoUs, or the importation of equipment.³¹

A technical working group (TWG) was established in March 2018, under the auspices of LMAC, following the release of the revised NMAS. The TWG, which meets quarterly, provides a useful forum for LMAC/the RMACs to meet collectively with clearance operators to review and discuss field issues, including implementation of revisions to the NMAS, and potential ways to improve operational efficiencies.³²

As in the previous year, Lebanon reported contributing US\$9 million annually in 2019 towards mine action in Lebanon (for both mine- and CMR-related work): to support costs associated with the running of LMAC (facilities and staff); the LAF Engineering Regiment companies working in demining (four teams, two of which work on submunitions; in addition to mechanical and mine detection dog (MDD) support); risk education; and victim assistance.³³

A Regional School for Humanitarian Demining in Lebanon (RSHDL) has been established in partnership between Lebanon and France, with technical mine action support provided by a French military officer, to support the development of the curriculum on EOD disposal (EOD levels 1, 2, and 3) in compliance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).³⁴ The Regional School became operational in 2017, enabling civilian and military personnel from Arab and other countries to benefit from an array of courses and workshops on demining.³⁵ It now provides training to national, regional, and international participants, including courses on non-technical survey, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), operational efficiency, and threat assessment and risk management.³⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The gender and diversity-related policy applied at LMAC is that of the LAF military rules. According to LMAC, all its personnel are familiar with these rules and the specific provisions related to gender equality and inclusion, safeguarding, and behavioural codes.³⁷

LMAC reported that it has taken several actions to mainstream gender in its implementation plan, including through inclusive policies, data disaggregation in risk education and victim assistance, and participation in courses at the RSHDL.³⁸ In agreement with LMAC, the GICHD conducted a gender and diversity capacity assessment visit to Lebanon in July 2019. The aim of the assessment was to reinforce a sustainable national capacity for gender and diversity mainstreaming in the LMAC and contribute to the achievement of gender equality and inclusion.³⁹ In August 2019, LMAC reported that it had appointed a new gender focal point, who will help mainstream gender-sensitive policies and procedures and monitor their implementation across the mine action centre.⁴⁰

Lebanon's new National Mine Action Strategy 2020–25, signed by the LMAA in June 2020, includes considerations on gender and diversity.⁴¹ Of the five objectives in the new strategy, the fifth states that, "The specific needs and perspective of women, girls, men and boys from all groups of society are considered, in order to deliver an inclusive HMA [mine action] response". LMAC also acknowledges in the strategy that, "Mine Action is a male-dominated environment and we have therefore a particular responsibility to empower women and ensure that we have a gender sensitive approach to our work".⁴² Gender and diversity considerations will be further detailed in LMAC's strategic implementation plan, which was being elaborated in the course of 2020, to support the new strategy.⁴³

Of LMAC's 157 personnel, 16 (10%) are female. The number of staff at LMAC is determined by the LAF headquarters, to whom LMAC always requests that the percentage of women is increased.⁴⁴ With respect to operational roles, two women work for the operations section and one woman is a member of the non-technical survey team. With respect to managerial/supervisory level positions at LMAC, six women work in management and five in IT.⁴⁵

Humanity and Inclusion (HI), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) all reported having gender policies in place in 2019.⁴⁶

HI disaggregates relevant mine action data by sex and age. HI also ensures that all population groups, including women and children, are consulted during its survey and community liaison activities. However, while 50% of HI managerial/supervisory positions are held by women, only 3% of its survey and clearance staff are female.⁴⁷

LAMINDA did not report the percentage of female deminers, but did report that women are employed in LAMINDA's clearance teams and that one female staff member is in a managerial position, as clearance team leader.⁴⁸

MAG reported that it consults women during survey and community liaison activities; that all its community liaison teams are mixed; and that its data is disaggregated by sex and age. Overall, women account for 16% of operational roles in MAG's survey and clearance teams in Lebanon, and 28% of managerial level/supervisory positions.⁴⁹

NPA is in the process of developing an implementation plan for its organisational gender policy for Lebanon, based on recommendations from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). It reported making progress in encouraging more women to apply, resulting in a 5% increase in the proportion of women hired for operational roles. NPA planned to conduct training in gender equality, safeguarding, and code of conduct in 2020.⁵⁰ NPA reported that its survey and community liaison teams are gender balanced, and 20% of employees in operational roles in NPA's survey and clearance team in the south are women and 32% in its Aarsal operations which commenced in 2018. A total of 20% of NPA's managerial level/supervisory positions are held by women. NPA disaggregates data by sex and age.⁵¹

Both UNIFIL's Troop Contributing Countries (Cambodia and China) have female deminers and team leaders and in total there are seven women (5% of the total demining personnel).⁵²

Women and children are consulted during survey and community liaison activities.⁵³ According to LMAC, Lebanon's baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination has been established through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men, including, where relevant, minority groups.⁵⁴

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

During 2019, efforts continued to integrate RMAC's information management database with the LMAC server and to synchronise the two databases.⁵⁵ Harmonisation and consolidation of the LMAC and RMAC databases will enable IMSMA reports will be sent directly to LMAC for approval, improving the accuracy and efficiency of the process. The integration will also help better protect data while decreasing maintenance costs.⁵⁶ As at March 2020, harmonisation of the two databases had been completed and servers installed to maintain the database, but LMAC was awaiting resolution of a technical issue to ensure the two servers are properly linked.⁵⁷

Furthermore, LMAC is migrating from its current version of IMSMA (IMSMA New Generation) to IMSMA Core, which it hopes will help facilitate the production of clearer reports that can be translated into dashboards for stakeholders, including donors, to monitor and follow.⁵⁸ As at March 2020, migration of data to IMSMA Core had begun, but the process requires regular IMSMA back-ups and corrections to data and therefore takes time.⁵⁹ In the process of migrating to IMSMA core, LMAC discovered some overlap between its records of Dangerous Areas and minefields. Non-technical survey teams therefore checked these overlaps on the ground and the database clean-up was completed in July 2020.⁶⁰ LMAC personnel will receive GICHD training on IMSMA Core and LMAC planned to launch it by the end of 2020.⁶¹

Some clearance tasks result in a clearance output in excess of the task size originally recorded in IMSMA, often due to fade-out. LMAC has reported that the system for database entry now more accurately reflects operational data.⁶² Now, any area cleared in excess of the original task size is no longer recorded as additional tasks in the database, but as "productivity".⁶³

Some of the information in the database may not be accurate. This is especially the case with respect to minefields from civil war, for which non-technical survey was conducted many years ago, with limited information available. It can be challenging to gain a clear picture of what contamination was cleared by the LAF and if the related clearance documents were transferred to LMAC and are included in the information management database.⁶⁴

MAG started work on "Survey123" in 2019, during which it reviewed data forms and data flow, in preparation for the launch of the project in the second half of 2020.⁶⁵ According to LAMINDA, there are now daily reporting sheets for items and clearance.⁶⁶

In the Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020–25, LMAC states that it will initiate voluntary APMBC Article 7 reporting,⁶⁷ but had yet to do so as at May 2020.

PLANNING AND TASKING

In September 2011, LMAC adopted a strategic mine action plan for 2011–20.⁶⁸ The plan called for clearance of all CMR by 2016 and for completion of mine clearance outside the Blue Line by 2020. Both goals were dependent on capacity, but progress fell well short of planning targets, which were not met. Interim reviews of the strategy conducted in 2014 and 2016, to assess progress against milestones, highlighted the huge gap between actual mine clearance output and planned output, when compared to the original strategic plan. The second review also reflected on the achievements, challenges, and lessons learned, offering recommendations that reflected available resources (financial and human), as well as a qualitative roadmap towards completion.⁶⁹

LMAC has developed a new National Mine Action Strategy for 2020–25, with support from the EU funded UNDP project, in a participatory approach with national and international implementing agencies, mine action non-governmental organisations (NGOs), UN agencies, and donors.⁷⁰ The new strategy was signed by the LMAA in June 2020. A mid-term and final external review are planned, as well as annual reporting on progress.⁷¹ LMAC is also elaborating a strategic implementation plan for 2020–25, in collaboration with implementing partners, to operationalise the new strategy with objectives, outputs, and indicators. LMAC expected to complete the implementation plan in August 2020. LMAC also plans to develop annual plans.⁷²

Clearance operators in Lebanon believe that reprioritisation is needed, as all of the current tasks fall between priorities 2 and 3, and reprioritisation has not occurred for some time.⁷³ According to LMAC, increased urbanisation; clearance of the Blue Line; spill-over from Syria creating new contamination, including IEDs; and the sudden increase in residents, have combined to result in a change to clearance priorities. LMAC plans to work with operators to develop an updated prioritisation approach, including focusing on the socio-economic impact of contamination.⁷⁴

HI's prioritisation of tasks is based on proximity to populated area, but mine clearance operations in north Lebanon and the Mount Lebanon area are also determined by seasonal factors: clearance of low altitude minefields during winter (October to April), and then clearance tasks above 2,000 metres begin in April and continue through the summer, depending on snow.⁷⁵ Most of the remaining demining tasks in the area in which HI has been operating since 2011 are in contaminated cedar forests at high altitude.⁷⁶

Prior to 2016, demining along the border with Israel had been said to depend on "political developments",⁷⁷ but the Lebanese government subsequently took the decision to initiate larger-scale, planned clearance on the Blue Line⁷⁸ and clearance by humanitarian demining operators began in November 2016⁷⁹ and remained ongoing as of writing.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Lebanon developed its first NMAS in 2010.⁸⁰ Adopting a consultative and constructive approach with its implementing partners, LMAC undertook a project with UNDP and other partners, funded by the EU, to revise and harmonise national standards with IMAS, as well as to add new modules not present in the original standards.⁸¹ The revised NMAS, formally approved in March 2018, have a solid focus on land release and evidence-based decision-making, in line with the IMAS, and based on recommendations and analysis of operational data. Notable enhancements included reduction of the required clearance depth from 20cm to 15cm; revision of fadeout specifications for pattern minefields, and enhancements in how rapid response tasks are addressed and recorded.⁸²

Mined areas in pattern minefields/along the Blue Line have been reclassified into high-threat hazardous area (HTHA) and low-threat hazardous area (LTHA). The use of technical survey, instead of full clearance, is permitted for some parts of CHAs based on discussion and agreement between LMAC operations officers and clearance operators.⁸³ Previously, full clearance had been required for 15 metres from the mine rows, but in the revised NMAS this has been changed to a required fade-out of five metres from the mine rows, and technical survey from the edge of the five-metre fadeout up to the minefield fence, for minefields in which the lanes have not been disrupted.⁸⁴ If there is no fence, 10 metres of technical survey is required from the edge of the 5-metre fade-out. Fade-out for anti-vehicle mines has been reduced from 20 metres to 10.⁸⁵ Previously, operators have been required to fully clear the area between the mine rows and the minefield fence, plus an additional two metres outside the fence, with one asset.⁸⁶

MAG and NPA have noted that to further enhance efficiencies, fade-out requirements at the Blue Line could be further revised based on empirical evidence. Evidence from clearance operations on the Blue Line to date reveals that no mines have been found further than five metres from the outer mine row, in minefields in which the lanes have not been disturbed. In the operators' opinion, technical survey beyond the five-metre fadeout (up to the minefield fence or for ten metres in the absence of a fence) should only be required if there is sufficient evidence to suggest mines have migrated from the mine rows.⁸⁷

Further updates made to Lebanon's NMAS in 2019, included introduction of a new NMAS (07.14) on Risk Assessment and a new standard (09.31) on IED Disposal (IEDD).⁸⁸ With regard to technical survey, the NMAS no longer specifies a minimum percentage of area over which technical survey must be conducted, which permits LMAC to reduce technical survey when appropriate, especially on the Blue Line and for cluster munition remnants.⁸⁹ The NMAS also allows for areas under full clearance to be reduced (or in part reduced), based on information gathered during clearance, as well as for the original task boundaries to be changed based on experience during clearance. Changes were also made to the NMAS (09.31) on demolitions.⁹⁰

NPA believes changes could be considered to the procedure for missing mines in patterned minefields along the Blue Line. Many mines are missing due to water and soil-related movement or detonation by animals and the current

"missed-mine" protocol is resource-intensive. In 2019, NPA began to consider using Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR)-equipped detectors as a solution and was planning to arrange a potential trial of United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)-owned dual sensor equipment in 2020 to conduct missed-mine checks.⁹¹

NPA also recommends that LMAC continues its review of how the metal-free requirements contained in NMAS are implemented in operations in the north-east of Lebanon, with a view to enhancing clearance efficiency while also maintaining safety.⁹²

LAMINDA and MAG also reported that following discussions between clearance operators and the national authorities, the NMAS for non-fragment blast minefields on the Blue Line have been amended and now permit the safety distance between deminers to be reduced from 25 to 15 metres.⁹³

Anti-vehicle minefields represent another challenge on the Blue Line because of their proximity to the fence. LMAC has been discussing the best way to render safe the anti-vehicle mines and move them away, in order to save time on anti-personnel mine clearance. In coordination with LMAC, multiple trials were conducted by MAG in late 2019, looking at various destruction techniques, including burning, which has proved to be effective and safe. Other options are under consideration, including render safe and moving the mines, UNIFIL involvement, and a combination of these and existing methods. As at March 2020, a final decision had not been made on this issue.⁹⁴

New Handheld Standoff Mine Detection System (HSTAMIDS) detectors were planned to be introduced for use on Blue Line operations in 2019, with the aim of increasing efficiency. This did not occur. As at March 2020, however, a training area at the RSHDL was close to completion. MAG planned to bring HSTAMIDS detectors to Lebanon in 2020, after which training and testing will be conducted.⁹⁵

In the last couple of years, national authorities in Lebanon have actively promoted the use of non-technical survey and technical survey, in order to define the presence or absence of an explosive threat.⁹⁶ In 2019, LMAC agreed with the NGO operators the option for each to have a non-technical survey team to re-survey for each new task prior to starting clearance. As at March 2020, the NGOs had non-technical survey teams or were negotiating with donors to establish them,⁹⁷ and where necessary, clearance operators are now permitted to conduct non-technical survey prior to clearance operations.⁹⁸

Furthermore, operators now have an opportunity to discuss specific land release considerations with LMAC for assigned clearance tasks, which arise during the pre-clearance assessment stage of operations. Such discussions might result in the refining of the task size or approved land release specifications (e.g. use of technical survey, for all or part of the task, rather than full clearance).⁹⁹ International NGOs see collaboration between LMAC and clearance operators on application of evidence-based non-technical survey and technical survey where needed as being essential to more accurately confirm and define areas of mine contamination prior to clearance.¹⁰⁰

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2019, manual mine clearance was conducted by international operators DanChurchAid (DCA), HI, LAMINDA, MAG, and NPA, along with the Engineering Regiment of the LAF. In addition, as in previous years UNIFIL also conducted demining operations on the Blue Line in 2019, but not for humanitarian purposes.

The LAF Engineering Regiment has deployed four clearance teams (two BAC and two mine clearance) to work in the south of Lebanon and Mount Lebanon. In addition, Engineering Regiment and Combat Engineering companies in all Brigades conduct EOD spot tasks and respond to rapid-response callouts across Lebanon.¹⁰¹ The LAF has seven MDD teams¹⁰² for technical survey and for use as a secondary asset supporting clearance. The LAF also have mechanical assets. In Lebanon, machines are mostly used as secondary assets to support clearance teams (e.g. for ground preparation, rubble removal, or for fadeout); in areas where manual clearance is difficult; and for technical survey and LTHA.¹⁰³ Through the Engineering Regiment, LMAC provides MDDs and mechanical assistance to clearance operators that lack this capacity.¹⁰⁴ Often, however, the terrain is not suitable for MDDs or machines.

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019¹⁰⁵

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	Comments***
DCA	2	16	0	0	
HI	4	29	0	0	
LAMINDA	2	12	0	0	LAMINDA increased its mine clearance capacity by two persons in each team in 2020. ¹⁰⁶
LMAC	2	16	7	4	
MAG	6	48	0	7	
NPA	7	37	0	0	
Totals	23	158	7	11	

* Clearance personnel could also be deployed for technical survey. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters. *** Clearance teams also work on technical survey tasks.

In addition, in 2019, clearance capacity was also provided by two UNIFIL Troop Contributing Countries, Cambodia and China. Operational capacities and capabilities of UNIFIL are determined by operational need. UNIFIL capacity in 2019 remained the same as the previous year and comprised five manual clearance teams, two EOD teams, and one mechanical team, totalling 123 persons in total. Capacity was expected to remain the same in 2020.¹⁰⁷ UNMAS provided refresher training, validation of the teams, and QA during UNIFIL demining operations in 2019.¹⁰⁸ UNMAS also carries out confirmatory training with UNIFIL demining units when they rotate into the country.¹⁰⁹

UNIFIL was established in 1978¹¹⁰ in order to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon (which occurred in 2000); restore international peace and security; and assist the Government of Lebanon to re-establish its authority in the area.¹¹¹ The primary task of UNIFIL mine clearance teams has been to clear access lanes through minefields in order to visibly demarcate the 118km-long Blue Line. Historically, UNIFIL has not conducted clearance on the Blue Line for humanitarian purposes but only to facilitate placement of markers by clearing three-metre-wide lanes into mined areas,¹¹² and also to clear mines close to UNIFIL posts or which pose a danger to UNIFIL patrols. However, in a positive development, on 30 January 2020, UNIFIL and LMAC signed an MoU on Humanitarian Demining, and as at April 2020, were working together to plan to begin survey and clearance for humanitarian purposes and for UNIFIL to help the LAF/LMAC clear areas contaminated by both mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO).¹¹³

With respect to non-technical survey capacity, LMAC had three non-technical survey teams in 2019;¹¹⁴ HI had one non-technical survey team with three personnel, which started field operations in October 2019;¹¹⁵ and MAG had two operational non-technical survey teams in 2019, with a total of four personnel.¹¹⁶ NPA had no non-technical survey capacity in 2019, although it was in the process of establishing this in 2020. NPA's dedicated technical survey capacity was exclusively tasked to CMR tasks, although, where necessary, clearance personnel also undertook technical survey of mined area. NPA reported that it was moving towards a multi-task approach to be able to respond to changing priorities and operational constraints.¹¹⁷

NPA believes that MDDs could be beneficial in technical survey to help reduce areas containing low density ERW (including CMR) and IED contamination in north-east Lebanon, on the border with Syria.¹¹⁸

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of more than 0.79km² of mined area (i.e. area suspected or confirmed to contain anti-personnel mines) was released in 2019, of which 0.48km² was cleared, 0.11km² was reduced through technical survey, and 0.2km² was cancelled through non-technical survey.

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, 204,343m² of mined area, was cancelled through non-technical survey and 109,191m² was reduced through technical survey (see Tables 3 and 4).¹¹⁹ This is an increase compared to the 28,633m² of mined area cancelled through non-technical survey in 2018 and 7,646m² reduced through technical survey,¹²⁰ and reflects LMAC's increased application of survey.

As non-technical survey operations in 2019 were focused on CMR, no mined area was cancelled by NGO operators in 2019. Non-technical survey of mined areas was planned to take place in the course of 2020.¹²¹

Neither DCA, HI, nor NPA reduced any mined area through technical survey the previous year, demonstrating a positive trend in the increased use of technical survey in Lebanon in 2019.

Three CHAs of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination, totalling 8,714m², were added to the database in 2019.¹²²

Table 3: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019¹²³

Province	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Jabal Loubnan (Mount Lebanon)	LAF	204,343
Total		204,343

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2019¹²⁴

Operator	Area cleared* (m ²)	Area reduced (m ²)
DCA	1,781	2,993
HI	19,096	10,168
MAG	75,417	69,825
NPA	4,195	26,205
Total	100,489	109,191

* Included in Table 5 clearance data.

CLEARANCE IN 2019

Lebanon reported clearing more than 0.48km² of mined area in 2019 (0.36km² by demining NGOs and 0.12km² by LAF), destroying in the process 21,708 anti-personnel mines (21,655 by demining NGOs, 53 by the LAF), 22 anti-vehicle mines, and 301 items of other UXO (see Table 5).¹²⁵ A further 3,393 anti-personnel mines were destroyed by UNIFIL in 2019.¹²⁶ Clearance in 2019 was a slight increase on the 0.39km² of mined area cleared in 2018.¹²⁷

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2019¹²⁸

Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
DCA	37,481	3,489	0	76
HI	92,264	262	0	25
MAG	190,920	14,416	22	144
NPA	25,784	2,660	0	4
LAMINDA	15,130	828	0	52
LAF*	121,398	**53	14	***4,134
Totals	482,977	21,708	36	4,435

AP = Anti-personnel; AV = Anti-vehicle; UXO = unexploded ordnance; N/R = not reported

* Includes items destroyed by the LAF combat engineers during rapid response call outs across Lebanon.

** Includes three victim-activated IEDs. *** UXO destroyed across all LAF operations, including BAC.

In addition, UNIFIL found and destroyed 3,393 anti-personnel mines during its 2019 operations along the UNIFIL patrol road, in the far south of Lebanon near the Blue Line.¹²⁹ LMAC does not have access to UNIFIL clearance data, but as part of the MoU signed in 2020, LMAC have asked for UNIFIL's historical clearance data and will update the national database accordingly.¹³⁰

According to LAMINDA, its mine clearance tasks are larger than the reported size in the database, due to the disturbance of the minefield areas and dislocation of mine rows onto nearby land, which reportedly occurred in 2016 when Israeli bulldozers entered the minefields during the conflict and after the initial survey by the LMAC.¹³¹

HI's clearance output decreased slightly in 2018, compared to the previous year, due to extremely bad weather conditions in 2019. The number of anti-personnel mines found and destroyed decreased significantly. A total of 10 mined areas cleared by HI in 2019 were found not to contain anti-personnel mines.¹³²

Due to the nature of the militia minefields in north Lebanon, there is sometimes a lack of clearly defined CHAs. Accordingly, in certain areas, additional non-technical survey and technical survey could help to more accurately define areas of actual contamination. Unfortunately, deployment of MDDs or demining machinery to help facilitate survey and clearance in north Lebanon is limited in scope, due to the climate and terrain of many of the tasks in the region.¹³³

The CHAs tasked by LMAC to clearance operators do not include obligatory fade-out distances, which can considerably increase the overall size of the task.¹³⁴

NPA cleared roughly the same amount in 2019 as the year before, with the slight increase in 2019 due to expansion of clearance operations in north-east Lebanon. NPA reported completing one clearance task in the north-east in 2019 in which no anti-personnel mines were found. It also reported a slight decrease in productivity overall due to the increased difficulty of the tasks (harder to access, steep slopes, heavy vegetation, and high metal content).¹³⁵

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

According to Lebanon’s Statement as an observer at the Fourth Review Conference of the APMB in Oslo in November 2011, Lebanon’s national mine action policy affirms its aspiration to become a State Party to the APMB. The Minister of Defence, who also heads the LMAA, sent a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stating that the Ministry of Defence has no objections to Lebanon acceding to the Treaty. LMAC recognises the 2025 aspiration of a landmine-free world and works in the spirit of compliance with the APMB and with the IMAS.¹³⁶ LMAC also asserts that it will implement the Oslo Action Plan, adopted at the Fourth Review Conference of the APMB.¹³⁷

Clearance of mined areas was originally expected to be completed by the end of 2020, in accordance with the 2011–20 national strategy, but meeting the target was contingent on deployment of considerable resources: 125 manual clearance teams (45 for minefields excluding the Blue Line and 80 for the Blue Line), 2 mechanical teams, and 9 two-strong MDD teams.¹³⁸ Actual mine clearance capacity was far lower and progress against the strategy fell well behind schedule.

Lebanon’s new National Mine Action Strategy 2020–25 sets out annual targets for the next six years. LMAC expects Lebanon to be free from known mined areas in ten years, with the application of efficient land release methodology and subject to securing the necessary funding.¹³⁹ However, this looks to be very ambitious, considering the extent of the remaining mined area (18.65km²) and annual mine clearance rates of less than 1km² per year, with less than 3km² of mined area cleared in the last five years (see Table 6).

It will take many years for Lebanon to become mine-free. However, progress in land release is expected to be accelerated by adoption of better land release procedures since 2018, as enshrined in the revised NMAS. Crucially, LMAC’s demonstrated commitment to enhance the use of non-technical and technical survey should help to cancel or reduce areas more efficiently.¹⁴⁰

Rocky and forested terrain continued to pose a challenge to demining operations, in addition to lack of minefield records for much of the contamination (especially in the North).¹⁴¹

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the whole of Lebanon’s mine action programme and all operations were suspended from 12 March for more than two months. After the relaxation of general mobilisation measures by the government of Lebanon, a TWG meeting was held and the phases for restarting operations and necessary safety measures relating to COVID-19 were developed and adopted. Operations resumed in early May 2020, under the new guidelines and safety measures, and as at July 2020 NGO clearance operators were fully operational.¹⁴²

Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	0.48
2018	0.39
2017	0.51
2016	0.55
2015	0.92
Total	2.85

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

According to LMAC, the strategic implementation plan, which will support the new National Mine Action Strategy 2020–25, will address an exit strategy and long-term risk management.¹⁴³

- 1 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, Operations Section Head, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 2 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 3 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 5 April 2019.
- 4 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020. There is a discrepancy with the 18,794,681m² baseline of mine contamination, as per LMAC's "Annual Report 2019", p. 13.
- 5 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 6 Interview with Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif, Director, and Brig.-Gen. Fakh, Head of Operations, LMAC, Beirut, 18 April 2016.
- 7 Interview with Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif and Brig.-Gen. Fakh, LMAC, Beirut, 18 April 2016.
- 8 Interview with Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif and Brig.-Gen. Fakh, LMAC, Beirut, 11 April 2016.
- 9 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 7 March 2019; David Willey, Programme Manager, MAG, 7 March 2019; and Emile Ollivier, Grants Coordinator, NPA, 19 March 2019.
- 10 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 7 March 2019, and presentation in Beirut, 8 April 2018; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", p. 14.
- 11 LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 14.
- 12 Ibid., pp. 7 and 25.
- 13 LMAC, "Mid-term Review to Strategy 2011–2020, Milestone 2013", August 2014, pp. 4–5.
- 14 LMAC, "Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2011–2020", September 2011, p. 4.
- 15 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 21 August 2019.
- 16 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020–25 (draft), 2 January 2020, p. 4.
- 17 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, Director, LMAC, 26 March 2019.
- 18 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 19 Interview with Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif and Brig.-Gen. Fakh, LMAC, Beirut, 11 April 2016; and LMAC, "Lebanon Mine Action Strategy. Second Milestone Review 2014–2016", March 2018; and "Mine Action Forum: Action Points 1st Quarter Progress Report, March 2018".
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- 21 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 22 Email from GICHD, 22 July 2020.
- 23 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 24 LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 7.
- 25 LMAC, "2018 Annual Report Lebanon Mine Action Centre", p. 23; and Statement of Lebanon on International Cooperation and Assistance, CCM Ninth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 4 September 2019.
- 26 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020–25 (draft), 2 January 2020, Foreword by the chair of the LMAA (Minister of Defence).
- 27 LMAC, "2018 Annual Report Lebanon Mine Action Centre", p. 23.
- 28 LMAC, "5th Mine Action Forum", 24 January 2020, LMAC website.
- 29 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 7 March 2019 and 19 March 2020; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", p. 23.
- 30 Emails from Emile Ollivier, NPA, 19 March 2019; David Willey, MAG, 7 March 2019; Mahmoud Rahhal, POD, 8 March 2019; and David Ligneau, Mine Action Programme Manager, HI, 21 April 2020.
- 31 Emails from Emile Ollivier, NPA, 19 March 2019; and David Willey, MAG, 7 March 2019.
- 32 LMAC, "2018 Annual Report Lebanon Mine Action Centre", pp. 4, 7, and 17; and emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 7 March 2019; and Emile Ollivier, NPA, 19 March 2019.
- 33 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 7.
- 34 LMAC, "Lebanon Mine Action Strategy. Second Milestone Review 2014–2016", March 2018.
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- 36 LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", pp. 21–24.
- 37 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 38 LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", p. 5; and email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 7 March 2019;
- 39 Email from Rana Elias, Cooperation Programmes Coordinator, GICHD, 26 August 2020.
- 40 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 21 August 2019.
- 41 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March and 22 July 2020.
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- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Emails from Emile Ollivier, NPA, 19 March 2019; David Willey, MAG, 7 March 2019; and David Ligneau, HI, 23 August 2019.
- 47 Email from David Ligneau, HI, 21 April 2020.
- 48 Email from Ret. Brig. General Badwi El Sakkal, President, LAMINDA, 18 March 2020.
- 49 Emails from David Willey, MAG, 7 March 2019; and Sylvain Lefort, Country Director, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 50 Email from Valerie Warrington, Programme Manager, NPA, 28 May 2020.
- 51 Email from Valerie Warrington, NPA, 28 May 2020.
- 52 Email from Lt.-Col. (CHN) Zengliang Zhou, Chief – J3 Combat Engineer Section, UNIFIL Force HQ, 20 April 2020.
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- 55 LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", p. 15; and email from Rana Elias, Cooperation Programmes Coordinator, GICHD, 17 June 2019.
- 56 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 27 April 2018; and interview with Maj. Ali Makki, Information Management Section Head, LMAC, and Ariane Elmas, UNDP, Beirut, 16 April 2019.
- 57 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 58 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 27 April 2018; email from LMAC Operations Department, 28 June 2018; "Mine Action Forum: Action Points 1st Quarter Progress Report, March 2018"; and LMAC, "2018 Annual Report Lebanon Mine Action Centre", p. 14.
- 59 Emails from Rana Elias, GICHD, 17 June 2019; and Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 60 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March and 4 September 2020.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Interview with Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif and Brig.-Gen. Fakh, LMAC, Beirut, 11 April 2016.
- 63 LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", p. 14; and interview with Maj. Ali Makki, LMAC, Beirut, 16 April 2019.
- 64 Email from David Ligneau, HI, 21 April 2020.
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- 67 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020–25, June 2020, p. 4.
- 68 LMAC, "Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2011–2020", September 2011, p. 4.
- 69 LMAC, "Mid-term Review to Strategy 2011–2020, Milestone 2013", August 2014; LMAC, "Lebanon Mine Action Strategy. Second Milestone Review 2014–2016", March 2018; LMAC, "2017 Annual Report Lebanon Mine Action Centre", undated; and email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 27 April 2018.
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- 73 Email from Dave Wiley, MAG, 19 August 2019.
- 74 LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 30.
- 75 Emails from Chris Chenavier, HI, 7 April 2016; and David Ligneau, HI, 9 April 2019.
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- 79 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 24 April 2017.
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- 81 Emails from Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif, LMAC, 7 July 2015; Dave Wiley, MAG, 27 April 2018 and 7 March 2019; and Craig McDiarmid, Programme Manager, NPA, 17 April 2018 and 19 March 2019.
- 82 Emails from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 27 April 2018; Craig McDiarmid, NPA, 17 April 2018; and Dave Wiley, MAG, 27 April 2018; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", p. 17.
- 83 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 27 April 2018.
- 84 Email from Dave Wiley, MAG, 19 August 2019.
- 85 Emails from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 27 April 2018; Craig McDiarmid, NPA, 17 April 2018; and Ali Nasreddine, MAG, 24 July 2018.
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- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 Email from Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 Emails from Ret. Brig. General Badwi El Sakkal, LAMINDA, 18 March 2020; and Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 3 April 2020.
- 94 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 5 April, 21 August 2019 and 19 March 2020; and Dave Wiley, MAG, 19 August 2019.
- 95 Ibid.
- 96 Emails from Dave Wiley, MAG, 27 April 2018; and Craig McDiarmid, NPA, 17 April 2018.
- 97 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 5 April 2019 and 19 March 2020.
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- 100 Email from Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020.
- 101 LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 11.; and emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020 and 22 July 2020.
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- 103 Emails from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 24 April 2017; Samuel Devaux, HI, 4 April 2017; Dave Wiley, MAG, 25 April 2017; and Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 5 April 2019.
- 104 LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 11; and email from Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Badwi El Sakkal, LAMINDA, 18 March 2020.
- 105 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March and 22 July 2020; Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Badwi El Sakkal, LAMINDA, 18 March 2020; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 3 April 2020; David Ligneau, HI, 21 April 2020; and Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020. In the LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 10, MAG was reported as having eight mine clearance teams and LAMINDA three, making a total of 24 teams across all operators. In addition, HI reported having 32 deminers in 2019, as opposed to the 29 deminers reported by LMAC. NPA reported deploying five manual mine clearance teams totalling twenty-four deminers (two teams in Arsal and three in southern Lebanon), as opposed to the seven teams reported by LMAC.
- 106 Email from Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Badwi El Sakkal, LAMINDA, 18 March 2020.
- 107 Email from Lt.-Col. (China) Zengliang Zhou, UNIFIL, 20 April 2020.
- 108 Email from Lt.-Col. Zengliang Zhou, UNIFIL, 20 April 2020.
- 109 Email from Alan Macdonald, UNMAS, 15 August 2019.
- 110 UN Security Council Resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978).
- 111 UNIFIL, "UNIFIL Mandate", at: bit.ly/2YpCwud.
- 112 Presentation by Maj. Pierre Bou Maroun, RMAC, Nabatiyeh, 4 May 2012; and emails from Henri Francois Morand, UNMAS, 2 October 2015 and 18 September 2017.
- 113 Emails from Lt.-Col. Zengliang Zhou, UNIFIL, 20 April 2020; and Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 114 LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 12.
- 115 Email from David Ligneau, HI, 21 April 2020.
- 116 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020. MAG reported deploying two non-technical survey teams in the south (mainly for BAC tasks) and one team in the north-east (for minefield, BAC, and IEDs). Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 23 June 2020.
- 117 Email from Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020.
- 118 Ibid.
- 119 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020. In Lebanon the term "Mined Area" is used to denote dangerous areas entered into the database when the first impact survey was executed, which were not accessible, and where the type of hazard was not identified. However, for the purposes of this report, mined area refers to areas suspected or confirmed to contain anti-personnel mines.
- 120 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 5 April 2019; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", pp. 11 and 12.
- 121 Email from Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020.
- 122 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.
- 123 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 12.
- 124 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 3 April 2020; and Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020. There was a discrepancy between data reported by LMAC and what was reported by MAG and NPA. MAG reported reducing 6,600m² of mined area in Marjeyoun in 2019 and NPA reported reducing 15,758m² in Nabatiyeh.
- 125 Ibid.; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 7.
- 126 Email from Lt.-Col. Zengliang Zhou, UNIFIL, 20 April 2020.
- 127 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 5 April 2019.
- 128 LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", pp. 10 and 11.; and emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020; Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Badwi El Sakkal, LAMINDA, 22 June 2020; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 3 April 2020; David Ligneau, HI, 21 April 2020; and Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020. There were some discrepancies between data reported by LMAC and what was reported by HI, MAG, and NPA. HI reported clearing 92,604m², slightly lower than the 92,264m² reported by LMAC for HI. MAG reported clearing 186,758m² of mined area and destroying 14,402 anti-personnel mines, 22 anti-vehicle mines, and 141 items of other UXO. NPA reported clearing 27,707m², 2,660 AP mines, and 4 items of other UXO.
- 129 Email from Lt.-Col. Zengliang Zhou, UNIFIL, 20 April 2020.
- 130 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 22 July 2020.
- 131 Email from Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Badwi El Sakkal, LAMINDA, 18 March 2020.
- 132 Email from David Ligneau, HI, 21 April 2020.
- 133 Interview with Chris Chenavier, HI, Toulou, 18 April 2016.
- 134 Ibid.
- 135 Email from Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020.
- 136 Statement of Lebanon, Fourth Review Conference of the APMBC, Oslo, 27 November 2019; and LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020-25, signed June 2020, p. 4.
- 137 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020-25, signed June 2020, p. 4.
- 138 LMAC, "Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2011-2020", September 2011, pp. 16 and 17.
- 139 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March and 22 July 2020.
- 140 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 27 April 2018; and emails from Craig McDiarmid, NPA, 17 April 2018; and Dave Wiley, MAG, 27 April 2018.
- 141 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 27 April 2018.
- 142 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 22 July 2022; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 23 June 2020; and Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Badwi El Sakkal, LAMINDA, 22 June 2020.
- 143 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Libya should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Libya has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- All parties to the conflict in Libya should ensure that forces loyal to them do not use anti-personnel mines.
- As soon as political conditions permit, Libya should enact mine action legislation, establish an interministerial national mine action authority, and adopt a national mine action strategy.
- Libya should, at the earliest opportunity possible and as soon the security situation permits, conduct a baseline survey to identify the extent of contamination from anti-personnel mines and begin systematic clearance.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Mine contamination in Libya is a legacy of the Second World War (mainly in the east and mostly anti-vehicle mine contamination), as well as subsequent armed conflict with Egypt in 1977 (pattern minefields mapped, fenced and marked), with Chad in 1978–87, which resulted in mines being laid on Libya's borders with these two neighbours, and the Libya revolution of 2011 and subsequent armed conflicts.¹ The border with Tunisia is also believed to be affected. During Colonel Muammar Qaddafi's four decades in power, mines were emplaced around a number of locations, including military facilities and key infrastructure.

Mines were used by both the government and the opposition forces during the 2011 conflict leading to Colonel Qaddafi's overthrow. According to the Libyan Mine Action Centre (LibMAC) around 30,000–35,000 mines were laid in five regions and cities, including Misrata, but were "largely cleared" after the downfall of the Gaddafi regime by volunteers with previous military experience.²

Since the overthrow of Qaddafi in 2011, Libya has remained mired in conflict as tribal and armed groups struggle to take over power. Confirmed instance of landmine use by rebels occurred in Ajdabiya, and other locations where pro-government elements laid mines included Brega, Khusha, Misrata, and the Nafusa Mountains.³ The escalation of conflict in Libya in 2014 brought new reports of mine use by armed groups fighting around Tripoli airport.⁴ There were also allegations of landmine use by non-state armed groups between 2016 and 2018,⁵ with contamination believed to be mainly in Benghazi, Derna (in the east of Libya), and Sirte.⁶

Mines of an improvised nature are suspected to have been laid during 2016 by Islamic State in areas that they controlled, such as in Sirte.⁷ In July 2017, the engineering divisions of Operation Dignity⁸ continued to clear mines and booby-traps left by Islamic State fighters from Benghazi, but also warned civilians from attempting to return to their homes before clearance work was finished.⁹

Since April 2019, Libya's governance has been divided between the two entities engaged in an armed conflict, the UN-recognised Government of National Accord (or GNA) and the self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA), led by commander Khalifa Haftar, who laid siege to Tripoli beginning in April 2019.¹⁰ According to reports by Human Rights Watch, fighters aligned to Khalifa Haftar, including foreign forces, appear to have laid mines as they withdrew from southern districts of Tripoli in May 2020.¹¹

In June 2020, the President of the APMBC Meeting of States Parties issued a press release expressing concern at reports of the use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature in and around Tripoli. The press release followed reports, including by the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature being discovered in the Ain Zara and Salahuddin areas of Tripoli, which have maimed or killed civilians returning home for the Eid holiday.¹² Other reports include evidence that LNA-affiliated forces have laid extensive tripwire-activated anti-personnel mines and booby-traps in homes and other civilian objects, and photos and videos verified by Amnesty International show Russian and Soviet-era anti-personnel landmines, including MON-50s, MON-90s, OZM-72s, and MS3s.¹³

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) has reported that substantial quantities of "legacy" victim-operated IEDs (VOIEDs) are still present in formerly contested areas, such as Sirte. According to UNMAS, most VOIEDs are based on simple switches and, invariably, use items of military ordnance as the main charge. When buried in rubble, they represent an enduring hazard to clearance operations.¹⁴

There is no accurate estimate of the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination across Libya, as many suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) have not been surveyed. As at February 2017, national contamination data from the LibMAC Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, reported six confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) contaminated by anti-personnel mines, four in Sirte and two in Misrata, totalling almost 41.5km², while a seventh CHA, in Sirte, of some 7.5km², was contaminated by anti-vehicle mines. A massive single SHA, of almost 223km², was suspected to contain only anti-vehicle mines.¹⁵ It is likely that further survey will drastically reduce these figures, but at the same time many further suspected areas have not been surveyed and furthermore, new use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature has been reported.

UNMAS advocates for survey to help quantify the scale and type of contamination, but the ongoing security situation poses major challenges to operationalising the necessary survey.¹⁶ According to UNSMIL, the presence of landmines, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and unexploded ordnance (UXO) poses a persistent threat to the Libyan population and also hinders the safe return of internally displaced people and restricts access for humanitarian workers.¹⁷

Libya is also contaminated by cluster munition remnants (CMR) (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Libya for further information), and ongoing conflict has left significant quantities of other explosive remnants of war (ERW) in cities across Libya.¹⁸

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Mine action exists in a fragmented and violent political context. Following years of armed conflict, a new UN-backed "unity" government, the Government of National Accord (GNA), was formally installed in a naval base in Tripoli in early 2016. It has subsequently faced opposition from two rival governments and a host of militia forces. In April 2019, Khalifa Haftar, a military commander based in the west of the country, launched an offensive to take control of Tripoli and topple the GNA, and fighting continued into the first half of 2020.

LibMAC was mandated by the Minister of Defense to coordinate mine action in December 2011.¹⁹ Operating under the UN-backed Government of National Accord, LibMAC's headquarters are in Tripoli, in the west of the country, and it also has offices in Benghazi²⁰ and Misrata.²¹ The operating costs and salaries for LibMAC are funded by the United States Department of State and administered by ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF).²²

ITF also provides capacity building support to LibMAC. In order to further increase LibMAC capacity, a new ITF operations technical advisor was deployed on 1 February 2019, primarily to advise LibMAC's Chief of Operations and provide advice on improvement of internal LibMAC procedures. In early April 2019, however, ITF was forced to evacuate its technical advisor due to the lack of security.²³

UNMAS has largely been operating from Tunis since November 2014, from where it provides institutional and operational capacity-building, training, including in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), and coordinates with national authorities and implementing partners to carry out mine action activities to mitigate the threat posed by ERW and provide technical advice and advisory support on arms and ammunition management. The UNMAS Libya Programme is an integral part of UNSMIL.²⁴

In January 2019, most UN staff returned to Tripoli, but due to the hostilities that commenced in April 2019 and the deterioration of security, most subsequently returned to Tunis to operate remotely again. In 2019–20, UNMAS was providing non-technical survey, risk education, and EOD response in various locations across Libya, including in Tawargha, Tripoli and Benghazi, to facilitate humanitarian activities, early recovery, and to prepare for the safe return of displaced people.²⁵

UNMAS prioritises capacity enhancement of Libyan mine action actors and supports LibMAC in coordination with Implementing Partners. Since 2015, UNMAS has trained more than 70 National Safety Authority (NSA) operators and Military Engineers in advanced EOD; 30 officers from eastern Libya in non-technical survey; provided advanced medical first responder training to 72 EOD operators from Benghazi; and trained several operators to address the threat from explosive hazards in Sirte. UNMAS also provided EOD equipment to national actors and assisted LibMAC in developing the Libyan Mine Action Standards which are now being implemented.²⁶ In 2017/18, the United States Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA) and the United Kingdom financed training of 70 IED operators in Sirte, conducted by JANUS, and with participants from the NSA and Military Engineers).²⁷

In 2019, The HALO Trust worked closely with LibMAC to build their capacity to quality assure and accredit mechanical clearance. HALO Trust ran a workshop in the LibMAC Tripoli office, covering all aspects of mechanical clearance. In addition, HALO provided translated quality assurance forms for quality assuring task sites and for accrediting the armouring of mechanical assets; and also conducted armour testing of different materials to provide a baseline of information for LibMAC.²⁸

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

LibMAC is not thought to have a gender and diversity policy for mine action in place. Of the twenty employees at LibMAC, three are women, including one in the Risk Education (RE) department (whose responsibilities include providing RE to women and children); one in logistics; and one in an administrative role.²⁹

The HALO Trust reported that its Libya programme seeks to comply with HALO's general gender and diversity policy. However, due to rigid gender norms that largely impede women's free movement and ability to work in a mixed-gender office setting, particularly reinforced in areas with strong Islamist influence such as Sirte, HALO has reported that the recruitment of women, including for non-operational roles, has proved difficult. In 2019, four of HALO's thirty employees in Libya were women (one international staff and three national staff), including one female community liaison officer in Sirte.³⁰

HALO's approach to community liaison, including door-to-door risk education prior to clearance, targeted risk education task sites, and specific events to reach out to women in particular, is designed to reach out to women

and men equally. This is especially important, given that women are largely absent from public life. In particular, the introduction of pre-clearance focus group discussions with women and men separately helps to ensure that subsequent community liaison/risk education activities are targeted to the needs of all beneficiaries.³¹ With regards to diversity, in Sirte, HALO Trust recruits equally among the tribes and seeks to consult all ethnic groups during survey and clearance processes. HALO makes task prioritisation recommendations based on humanitarian need, although all task orders are issued under the authority of LibMAC.³² The HALO Trust disaggregates relevant mine action data by gender and age.³³

Humanity and Inclusion (HI) reported in 2019 that it had a gender policy in place and disaggregates data by sex and age.³⁴ HI's risk education team, which also conducted community liaison, was gender balanced. Two of HI's project managers and two project officers were female, but women were not employed in survey and clearance, as this was deemed culturally unacceptable for now.³⁵ HI stopped mine action operations in Libya in April 2019.³⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

LibMAC receives technical support for IMSMA from the Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and UNMAS. In March 2019, HI reported that LibMAC had recently announced details of a new effort to bring the IMSMA database up to date and ensure the data are reliable.³⁷ With support from the GICHD, LibMAC planned to transition from IMSMA to IMSMA Core in mid-2020.³⁸

IMSMA is accessible to clearance organisations and data collection forms are reported to be consistent and enable collection of necessary data.³⁹

Since early 2019, The HALO Trust has been working closely with LibMAC to cover mechanical clearance in the Libyan IMSMA database. The planned transition to IMSMA Core will allow data entry for mechanical clearance.⁴⁰

PLANNING AND TASKING

No national mine action strategy is currently known to exist for Libya.

LibMAC does, however, prioritise survey and clearance operations and is responsible for issuing task orders. Prioritisation is, in part, informed by data collected and reported to LibMAC by operators such as the Danish Demining Group (DDG), during non-technical survey or EOD, and by reports from the local community.⁴¹ According to HI, LibMAC generally tasks according to geographic area and the nearest available assets.⁴²

HALO Trust reported that prioritisation is based on humanitarian need with residential areas, community infrastructure, and key access points taking precedence. In Sirte, this means the two neighbourhoods where fighting was heaviest in 2016. In preparation for future clearance along the Tripoli frontlines, areas with significant verified evidence of fighting (as determined by HALO Trust's Tripoli ERW Hazard Mapping and Information Management (IM) project) will be prioritised for survey.⁴³

The Tripoli ERW Hazard Mapping and IM Project uses open-source data collation and geolocation techniques to map potential ERW contamination along the Tripoli frontlines by collecting information on active fighting incidents, weapons systems and ammunition used, and ERW-related accidents and displacement. The online data collection portal, linking to a live database that is shared with LibMAC and other stakeholders, is used to track historical data starting from 4 April 2019 up to recent events. Mapping ERW contamination along the frontlines enables LibMAC to coordinate and direct specialist clearance capacity as well as risk education teams to the most highly contaminated areas.⁴⁴

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

There is no national mine action legislation in Libya, but National Mine Action Standards (LibMAS), in Arabic and English, have been elaborated with the support of the GICHD and UNMAS, and were approved by the GNA in August 2017. The LibMAS are available on the LibMAC website.⁴⁵ According to international clearance operators, the national mine action standards are aligned to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), reproducing it word-for-word in many parts.⁴⁶

While the LibMAS are broad and not overly restrictive, they may, however, be open to different interpretation by various stakeholders and do not necessarily reflect local circumstances and conditions, including the specific context of clearance in urban areas. An example of this is the lack of urban specific characteristics of direct versus indirect evidence, which may lead to more general consideration of evidence and result in less accurate task boundaries.⁴⁷

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Mine action operations have been conducted by the army engineers, a police unit, and the Ministry of Interior's National Safety Authority (NSA), also known as Civil Defence.⁴⁸ Military engineers reportedly lack mine detectors and are working with basic tools.⁴⁹ The NSA is mandated to conduct EOD in civilian areas.⁵⁰ These institutions liaise with LibMAC but are not tasked or accredited by them, nor do they provide clearance reports to the Centre.

The deteriorating security situation resulted in the withdrawal of UNMAS and international mine action operators from Libya in mid 2014. International clearance operators active in Libya include DanChurchAid (DCA), DDG, and HALO Trust.⁵¹ HI's survey and clearance operations stopped in April 2019 and the project formally ended in June of that year.⁵² National NGO operator, Free Fields Foundation (3F), was also operational and another national operator, the Libyan Demining Group (LDG), was in the process of becoming established as at February 2019.⁵³ LDG is believed to have been accredited by LibMAC, but was not currently operational as at the time of writing. Local organisations Peace Organization from Zintan and World Without War (3W), from Misrata, which had been trained by HI in 2016 and received accreditation for non-technical survey,⁵⁴ subsequently had their operations suspended for not fully following standards and in addition, neither organisation had secured funding.⁵⁵

DCA is operational in Libya clearing residential, commercial, education, medical, and agricultural sites of mines and ERW, and providing training in clearance, search, and EOD, to help strengthen the capacity of national authorities. DCA also conducts risk education. Now in its ninth year of working in Libya, DCA has offices in Al-Bayda, Benghazi, Misrata, Sirte, and Tripoli.⁵⁶

DDG set up in Benghazi in December 2017. It had hoped to expand non-technical survey and EOD capacity in Benghazi from the late summer of 2018. In Sabha, DDG had one non-technical survey team and one EOD team, which it was managing remotely. Security issues in the south continue to disrupt mine action operations and prevent continuous operations. In Tripoli, DDG works through its national implementing partner, 3F. 3F operates under DDG's accreditation and SOPs, and has an operational contingent of 37, composed in three EOD teams and one non-technical survey team.⁵⁷

GCS, which finished its operations in 2019, was working in partnership with Libyan NGO 3, to clear ERW from an ammunition storage area on a military airbase in Misrata. The area comprised 37 bunkers destroyed by NATO airstrikes in 2011.⁵⁸ As of March 2019, GCS and 3F had collected a cumulative total of more than 200 tons of ERW and scrap metal of which 40 tons were successfully destroyed through bulk demolitions and burning. An estimated 12,500m² of battle area clearance (BAC) was also conducted around the ammunition storage area.⁵⁹

The HALO Trust has been present in Libya since November 2018, and has offices in Misrata, Sirte, and Tripoli. HALO deployed one four-strong survey/community liaison team in 2019, in partnership with DCA. In September 2019, LibMAC accredited the first mechanical clearance teams in Libya, with clearance at HALO's first task site beginning in October. HALO deployed two mechanical clearance teams, each consisting of one team leader, one operator, and two deminers. The teams shared a single mechanical asset in 2019, while awaiting physical delivery of additional assets. As at July 2020, HALO Trust was training non-technical survey teams in Tripoli and aimed to introduce mechanical clearance in 2020 in response to newly suspected mined areas in southern Tripoli.⁶⁰

The HALO Trust and DCA are currently working in partnership in Sirte under a joint three-year European Union (EU) Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (ICSP) contract, which started in February 2019. Under this contract, HALO provides three mechanical clearance assets and two mechanical clearance teams (MCTs). In January 2020, the first EU-funded MCT was deployed in Sirte. The first of three mechanical clearance assets, a medium-range front-loader, was procured and upgraded locally in Libya in January 2020.⁶¹

A separate 18-month UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) contract in which HALO Trust had also partnered with DCA in Sirte ended on 31 March 2020. During this project HALO had led on mechanical clearance and DCA had provided the supporting EOD capacity, along with a joint non-technical survey team and mine risk education team.⁶² HALO Trust and DCA conducted a socio-economic assessment of Sirte and a field assessment for areas of possible mine and ERW contamination which potentially require mechanical clearance.⁶³ CSSF continue to provide funding in Sirte to HALO who provide mechanical clearance teams as well as non-technical survey and community liaison teams.⁶⁴

Humanitarian access to Libya for survey and clearance operations, remains challenging for all operators. HALO, for example, experienced delays in the granting of multiple-entry visas and limited movement between locations due to ongoing conflict and changing frontlines. In Libya, the provision of security is highly localised; tribe-affiliated armed groups, with oftentimes shifting allegiances, control cities and towns down to neighbourhood level. This in turn requires humanitarian actors to have good knowledge of armed group conglomerates on the one hand and to liaise with many interlocutors on the other hand. The risk of arbitrary detention for local staff is high, either due to tribal background or due to suspected affiliation with opposing armed groups.⁶⁵

HALO is mitigating security risks to its staff by maintaining working relationships with key interlocutors in both East and West Libya, including LibMAC, ministries, and municipal authorities. Community liaison in Benghazi, Misrata, Sirte, and Tripoli is key to ensuring community acceptance. In Sirte specifically, HALO recruits equally among the tribes. International staff are sometimes needed to cut across tribal lines when negotiating access.⁶⁶

HI conducted EOD spot tasks in 2019 in Tawerga, Misrata, but was hindered by security issues. It stopped survey and clearance operations in April 2019 and the project formally ended in June 2019, although its victim assistance work in Libya continues.⁶⁷

A number of other Libyan civil society organisations are also reported to carry out mine action operations, but they are not accredited by LibMAC.

UNMAS provides institutional and operational capacity-building, training, including in EOD, and coordinates with national authorities and implementing partners to carry out mine action activities to mitigate the threat posed by ERW and provide technical advice and advisory support on arms and ammunition management. The UNMAS Libya Programme is an integral part of UNSMIL.⁶⁸ (See Programme Management section for further detail.)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

There were no reports of planned anti-personnel mine clearance during 2019 although several operators engaged in EOD operations. No mined area was reported to have been released through survey in 2019 either.

SURVEY IN 2019

There were no other known reports of anti-personnel survey during 2019, although data from LibMAC, UNMAS, and several clearance operators were not made available.-

According to ITF's annual report, in 2019, LibMAC personnel opened 84 new tasks mostly for risk education and non-technical survey activities performed by international and local NGOs in Benghazi, Sirte, and Tawargha where LibMAC personnel conducted 52 QA/QC missions. LibMAC also conducted 23 accreditation procedures for international and local NGO teams to perform non-technical survey, risk education and EOD activities/tasks.⁶⁹

According to a January 2020 report of the Secretary-General on UNSMIL, "The Mine Action Service project in Benghazi, [mandated] to conduct emergency clearance and map explosive hazards, has removed 40 items of unexploded ordnance and completed non-technical surveys of 24 sites. The surveys will inform future clearance operations and support the protection of civilians and stabilization."⁷⁰ The report did not, however, specify the type of unexploded ordnance.

CLEARANCE IN 2019

There were no known reports of anti-personnel clearance during 2019, although data from LibMAC, UNMAS, and several clearance operators were not made available.-

In June 2020, it was reported in online media sources that demining experts from the Turkish Armed Forces had started to clear landmines and IEDs planted by Khalifa Haftar's forces in south Tripoli, Tarhouna, and other areas, according to the Libyan Foreign Ministry.⁷¹

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LibMAC describes the following challenges to implementation of mine action operations: the high level of contamination; ongoing conflict and the continued presence of Islamic State; the difficulty in convincing internally displaced persons to delay their return until the ERW threat is addressed; security and access to priority areas; the limited ERW and EOD capacity in Libya; the vast geographical area; and limited governmental and international support.⁷² Security conditions continued to pose a challenge to mine action in Libya.

- 1 Interview with Col. Turjoman, Director, LibMAC, in Geneva, 7 February 2019; and "Libya: The Toxic and Explosive Legacy of Modern Conflict", Presentation by UNMAS, UN National Directors Meeting, Geneva, 12 February 2020.
- 2 Interview with Col. Turjoman, LibMAC, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 3 Human Rights Watch, "Landmines in Libya: Technical Briefing Note", 19 July 2011, at: bit.ly/1PLaFE.
- 4 Human Rights Watch, "Libya: New evidence of landmine use", 5 November 2014.
- 5 Landmine Monitor, "Libya: Mine Ban Policy", at: bit.ly/2Kj5mn8; email from Lutz Kosewsky, DDG, 22 February 2017; and telephone interview with Darren Devlin, DDG, 20 June 2018.
- 6 Interview with Col. Turjoman, LibMAC, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 7 "Libya forces de-mine and clear Sirte after liberation from Isis militants", *The Independent*, 11 August 2016.
- 8 Khalifa Haftar launched Operation Dignity to take Benghazi under his forces' control from what he described as Islamist militants and terrorists in May 2014. See, e.g., "Operation Dignity in east Libya declares full control of Benghazi", *Libyan Express*, 5 July 2017, at: bit.ly/2tXKhJb.
- 9 Landmines in Africa blog, July 2017, at: bit.ly/2YoeCAw.
- 10 "Libya's cities left 're-contaminated' by months of fighting, warn landmine clearance experts", *UN News*, 12 February, available at: bit.ly/322lgg2; and Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Libya: landmines left after armed group withdraws", 3 June 2020, available at: bit.ly/2DIE5AM.
- 11 HRW, "Libya: landmines left after armed group withdraws", 3 June 2020, available at: bit.ly/2DIE5AM.
- 12 "Convention president condemns reported use of mines: calls for an immediate cessation of their use", Press release, 1 June 2020; and "UNSMIL condemns the use of Improvised Explosive Devices against the civilians in Ain Zara and Salahudin in Tripoli", UNSMIL, 25 May 2020, available at: bit.ly/38Cnb7.
- 13 "Libya: shocking new evidence of retaliatory attacks on civilians", Amnesty International UK, 5 June 2020, available at: bit.ly/3f9WiPN.
- 14 "Libya: The Toxic and Explosive Legacy of Modern Conflict", Presentation by UNMAS, UN National Directors Meeting, Geneva, 12 February 2020.
- 15 Emails from Abdullatif Abujarida, LibMAC, 20 February and 9 March 2017.
- 16 Email from Lance Malin, Chief, UNMAS Libya, 11 September 2018.
- 17 "Lives and Limbs Shattered by Libya Mines", *Asharq Al-Awsat*, 5 April 2018.
- 18 UNMAS, "Programmes: Libya", accessed 23 March 2020, at: bit.ly/2WMTzTk.
- 19 LibMAC website, accessed 23 March 2020, at: bit.ly/2JqVr0S.
- 20 Email from Jakob Donatz, Associate Programme Officer, UNMAS, 21 June 2018.
- 21 Email from Roman Turšič, Head of Implementation Office Libya/Afghanistan, ITF, 26 February 2017; and interview with Col. Turjoman, LibMAC, in Geneva, 10 January 2017.
- 22 ITF, "Annual Report 2019", pp. 19 and 76.
- 23 Ibid., p. 76.
- 24 UNMAS, "Programmes: Libya", accessed 23 March 2020, at: bit.ly/2WMTzTk; and emails from Lyuba Guerassimova, Programme Officer, UNMAS, 28 February 2017; Dandan Xu, Associate Programme Management Officer, UNMAS, 12 July 2017; and Jakob Donatz, UNMAS, 21 June 2018; and Report of the Secretary-General on UNSMIL, UN doc. S/2018/140, 12 February 2018, p. 12.
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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Morocco should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Morocco should continue to submit voluntary APMBC Article 7 reports. It should provide greater detail on the extent of mine contamination and report on progress according to international standards for land release methodology.
- Morocco should establish a timeline for completing clearance of all mined areas on territory under its jurisdiction or control.
- Morocco should ensure freedom of access and unhindered movement of all UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) personnel and take all necessary measures to facilitate the conduct of demining.
- Morocco is strongly encouraged to provide minefield records to other relevant stakeholders to facilitate survey and clearance of affected areas.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Morocco has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The exact extent of contamination from mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the area of Western Sahara controlled by Morocco, on the west side of the Berm,¹ is not known. In the past, Morocco declared, highly improbably, that a total of 120,000km² of area was contaminated,² although the threat is undoubtedly significant.

Morocco's contamination is a result of the conflict between the Royal Moroccan Army (RMA) and Polisario Front forces over Western Sahara. Morocco has reported having registered and mapped the minefields it has laid, and has pledged to clear them as soon as the conflict over Western Sahara is over.³

Morocco reported in its latest voluntary APMBC Article 7 transparency report covering 2019 that the following provinces were mine affected: Tata, Akka, Aousserd, Assa-Zag, Boujdour, Dakhla, Laayoune, Smara, and Tan Tan.⁴ In its corresponding Article 7 report covering 2018, Morocco had reported that 10 localities within these provinces contain mines: Bir Anzarane, Douiek, Gerret Auchfaght, Gor Lbard, Gor Zalagat, Hagounia, Idiriya, Imlili, Itgui, and Tarf Mhkinza. It claimed these contain contamination as the result of "haphazard" mine laying across the south of Morocco by the Polisario Front in 1975-91.⁵

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Morocco does not have a national mine action authority or a mine action centre. The RMA carries out demining, which it reports is conducted in collaboration with MINURSO.⁶

In 2019, the RMA continued to receive training from the United States (US) Marines on demining and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) techniques.⁷

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Morocco is not believed to have a gender policy in place for its demining operations.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Morocco does not use the Information Management System for Mine Action.

PLANNING AND TASKING

It is not known how Morocco plans its demining operations.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

Morocco appears to use only manual demining techniques, which is not efficient given the size and type of terrain being released.

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Morocco has not adopted national mine action legislation or standards, but has reported that "normal safety and environmental protection standards have been followed" in clearance of mines and ERW.⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

All mine clearance in Morocco is conducted by the RMA. In 2019, it reported that 13 demining modules and 165 demining detachments were deployed and responded to 54 interventions during the year.⁹

Previously, in 2010, Morocco declared it had employed 10,000 deminers, though only 400 detectors were at their disposal at that time.¹⁰ This raised serious questions both about the procedures being used and the accuracy of clearance figures being reported.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Morocco has not reported in detail on its release of mined areas in recent years, nor given any indication of implementing land release methodology. The figures it does provide are not credible and should be taken as an indication of land released or declared as clear of contamination rather than land physically cleared.

In its voluntary Article 7 report covering 2019, Morocco reported "clearance" of a total area of 301km², with the destruction of 23 anti-personnel mines, 21 anti-vehicle mines, and 511 items of ERW.¹¹ This compares to 2018 when Morocco reported "clearance" of a total area of 313.4km², with the destruction of 232 anti-personnel mines, 18 anti-vehicle mines, and 574 items of ERW.¹² Morocco also reported that there were 25 casualties due to mines in 2019, the highest number since 2015.¹³

In his October 2019 report to the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary-General reported that, from 1 March to 31 July 2019, the RMA claimed to have cleared more than 98km² of land west of the berm, with the destruction of 441 items, consisting of 415 items of unexploded ordnance, 17 anti-personnel mines, and 9 anti-vehicle mines.¹⁴ Previously, in his April 2019 report, the UN Secretary-General noted that the RMA had reported "clearing" more than 126km² of land to the west of the berm with the destruction of 679 items, including 614 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO), as well as 53 anti-vehicle and 12 anti-personnel mines during the period 3 October 2018 to 1 April 2019.¹⁵ No further details were provided.

Morocco has reported that since 1975 and through the end of October 2019, a total of 96,727 mines, of which 49,325 were anti-personnel mines, along with 20,543 items of ERW had been destroyed and a total of almost 5,561km² was cleared during demining operations.¹⁶

Morocco initiated major demining efforts in 2007, following an increase in the number of incidents. In April 2016, Morocco reported plans to clear mines from along the Berm. The units to be deployed were reportedly those trained by the US Marines.¹⁷

Morocco is not a State Party to the APMBBC, but nonetheless has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible. Morocco has stated on numerous occasions its determination to voluntarily comply with the provisions of the APMBBC, including completion of stockpile destruction of anti-personnel mines and demining. It has provided annual voluntary Article 7 reports to the APMBBC regularly over the past decade and attends APMBBC meetings as an observer. It has not, however, indicated when it might complete mine clearance.

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- 1 The Berm refers to the defensive wall built by Morocco in 1982–87 to secure the north-western corner of Western Sahara. It is constituted of earthen walls some three metres in height. Morocco controls the area located on the west side of the Berm.
 - 2 Statement of Morocco, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 25 May 2009.
 - 3 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D; Statement of Morocco, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.
 - 4 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
 - 5 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D. Idiriya is spelled "Jdiriya" in the 2018 report. From 2015, the area of Glibat Jadiane, which had been listed as contaminated in earlier years, was no longer included on the list of mined areas.
 - 6 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
 - 7 AFRICOM, "Humanitarian Mine Action increases demining capacity in Morocco", 2 May 2019, at: bit.ly/2LitXKS.
 - 8 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form D.
 - 9 Statement of Morocco, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
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 - 13 Voluntary Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.
 - 14 "Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara", UN doc. S/2019/787, 2 October 2019, para. 48.
 - 15 "Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara", UN doc. S/2019/282, 1 April 2019, para. 48.
 - 16 Statement of Morocco, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
 - 17 "Morocco to Deploy Highly Qualified Team to Remove Sahara Landmines", *Sahara Question*, 25 March 2016, at: bit.ly/2LU9d4.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

There were positive developments in mine action in Myanmar during 2019 and in early 2020, including preliminary steps by the government towards establishing a national mine action authority (NMAA) and approval of Myanmar's first national mine action standard on the marking of hazardous areas. But although non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are permitted to conduct non-technical survey, which was ongoing as of writing, they are not yet authorised to conduct mine clearance, an activity that remains under the sole remit of the Myanmar army (Tatmadaw).

The Government of Myanmar has recognised the importance of mine action in helping ensure the safe return or resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs), as part of its National Strategy on Resettlement of IDPs and Closure of IDP Camps, which was launched in November 2019. The planned return of IDPs imposes upon the Myanmar authorities the need to accelerate mine action coordination and activities to help ensure that areas of return are safe or that at a minimum mined areas have been clearly delineated and marked and risk education conducted.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Myanmar should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Myanmar has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- The Myanmar army (Tatmadaw) and armed groups should stop all use of anti-personnel mines.
- Myanmar should accelerate non-technical survey, marking of hazardous areas, and permit accredited operators to conduct clearance and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD).
- Myanmar should accelerate efforts to establish a NMAA to plan and coordinate comprehensive mine action to meet humanitarian needs.
- Myanmar should ensure that areas planned for IDP returns are safe or that at a minimum, mined areas have been clearly delineated, perimeter-marked and fenced, and risk education conducted.
- The authorities, NGOs, and other implementing partners, should continue to develop and approve National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), particularly for non-technical survey, technical survey, and clearance.
- A centralised information management database should be established, into which data collected on mined areas should be entered.
- Myanmar should support the mobilisation of technical capacity by ensuring that no taxes are imposed on mine action equipment (such as personal protective equipment (PPE) and detectors) and vehicles that are imported by international operators.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Myanmar is heavily mine-affected as a result of conflicts between the Myanmar army and numerous non-state armed groups affiliated with ethnic minorities. The violence in Myanmar started after the country's independence in 1948 and is ongoing, with anti-personnel mine continuing to be laid.¹ Mined areas are in areas of the country close to Myanmar's borders with Bangladesh, China, and Thailand, and pose a particular threat in the north and east of the country.

There is no accurate estimate of the extent of mine contamination. The government of Myanmar has said that while it is very difficult to have a complete picture of contamination, data shows that 9 out of the 14 states and regions are contaminated with landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW).² Although landmine casualty data is not systematically collected in Myanmar, of the recorded incidents in recent years, Kachin and Shan states have seen the highest number of casualties.³

The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, established by the United Nations Human Rights Council, reported in September 2019 that northern Myanmar is “heavily contaminated with landmines” and that the parties to the conflict, including the Tatmadaw, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA); the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS, formerly referred to as the Shan State Army South (SSA-S); and the Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP, formerly referred to as the Shan State Army North (SSA-N), all continue to lay landmines and use improvised explosive devices (IEDs).⁴

In September 2018, the Fact-Finding Mission had reported that mines had been laid by the Tatmadaw soldiers along the border with Bangladesh in the lead-up to and following operations targeting fleeing Rohingya civilians and seeking to prevent those who had already left from returning. In April 2017, it was reported that the Myanmar and Bangladesh governments had agreed to remove mines and IEDs from the border area. By August, however, the Tatmadaw was laying mines along the border, not removing them, and in September, Bangladesh formally complained to Myanmar about the latter’s emplacement of mines.⁵

Continued use of mines has occurred despite the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in October 2015 between the Government of Myanmar and eight ethnic armed groups (with a further two signing the agreement in 2018), which committed all parties to end the use of landmines and cooperate on mine-clearance operations.⁶

Non-technical survey conducted by international NGOs and their partner organisations in recent years is starting to provide a better idea of the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination in areas in which they operate, but due to sensitivity on the part of ethnic groups and the authorities, data are not always openly accessible or centrally reported.

Anti-personnel mines laid by the Tatmadaw are mostly produced in state-owned factories.⁷ Ethnic armed groups acknowledge use of anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature as well as of a number of anti-vehicle mines, but unconfirmed reports have suggested groups in the north have also obtained Chinese factory-made Type 72 anti-vehicle mines.⁸

In a statement delivered at the Fourth Review Conference of the APMBC in Oslo in November 2019, the Government of Myanmar said, “Myanmar will continue to promote the full stop in the use of anti-personnel mines by all parties to the conflict” and that it was “working hard to strengthen the knowledge of and the respect towards international humanitarian law among all parties to the conflict.”⁹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The government set up a Myanmar Mine Action Centre under the Myanmar Peace Centre (MPC) in 2012 with support from Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA), but the centre was never fully staffed. The MPC was dissolved at the end of March 2016 and replaced by a National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, which reports to the head of government, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi.¹⁰

In 2019 and early 2020, Myanmar was making welcome progress towards establishing an NMAA, which is needed to strengthen its humanitarian mine action programme. The government told the Fourth APMBC Review Conference in November 2019 that “Myanmar will as soon as feasible establish the needed national legislation to establish a national mine action authority.”¹¹

An initial workshop on how Myanmar can establish an NMAA to lead and manage a humanitarian mine action programme was hosted by Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw in October 2019, attended by the Tatmadaw, humanitarian mine action NGOs in Myanmar, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC), the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and several ambassadors.¹² Discussions focused on which ministries would form part of a future NMAA and the mechanisms for establishing the Authority. The Attorney General’s Office reportedly advised that establishment of a NMAA, including its mandate, terms of reference, and budget would need to follow the national legal process, which could take time, especially in the absence of sufficient political will and pressure to fast-track the process.¹³ On 3 January 2020, an interministerial meeting took place, attended by 14

different ministries, including the Ministry of Defence, during which it was agreed in principle to establish an NMAA and for a governmental task force/working committee to be established to begin the process.¹⁴

A second international workshop in January 2020 discussed how Myanmar can establish an NMAA in Myanmar. It was attended by the GICHD and the Norwegian Presidency to the APMBC, but NGO clearance operators were not invited.¹⁵

The need to accelerate the establishment of an NMAA is all the more pressing in light of the government’s plan to close IDP camps. There are reported to be more than 140 camps, with a total population of more than 160,000 in 15 townships in four states.¹⁶ The government of Myanmar launched the “National Strategy on Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Closure of IDP Camps” in November 2019.¹⁷ The plan identifies the need for landmine clearance to enable IDPs to return to their villages of origin, but does not provide any further details of how and when such clearance will take place. At the Fourth APMBC Review Conference in November 2019, Myanmar said publicly that “that mine action is a precondition for safe return and resettlement of IDPs, and sustainable and durable solutions”; that the government is “now currently finding practical ways to move forward to closing the IDP camps using this national strategy”; and that it “has an aim to start humanitarian demining in non-conflict areas as a part of this camp closure strategy.”¹⁸ Several senior government officials have similarly reportedly expressed support for the need for mine clearance and other mine action activities in areas identified for IDP returns.¹⁹

International NGO operators are advocating for camp closures to be conducted in a safe, voluntary and dignified manner, and for mine action to form an essential part of the planning and activity implementation process of IDP returns. In particular, non-technical survey and hazard marking conducted to international standards are urgently needed in potential resettlement areas, to define and demarcate hazardous areas and to verify safe areas; and should be a pre-requisite step prior to IDPs returning to suspected mined areas.²⁰ According to Mines Advisory Group (MAG), there have already been reported accidents involving recent IDPs that had recently returned to their village of origin in Kachin state.²¹

Many parts of Myanmar are still in armed conflict and part of the timeline for the return of IDPs, depends on progress in the peace process with the ethnic armed groups.²² According to a briefing by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in March 2020, in western Myanmar, the return of IDPs is "hindered by ongoing fighting" and "newly laid anti-personnel mines and improvised explosive devices pose additional risks."²³ Kachin is a priority state in the IDP camp closure strategy, but the KIA has not yet signed the ceasefire agreement with the government. However, in negotiation with the government, a mandate has been given to Kachin church leaders to act on behalf of non-state armed groups with regard to IDP resettlement.²⁴ MAG (through joint deployments with Kachin humanitarian organisations) has conducted baseline and remote baseline survey in Kachin state, targeting 59 villages identified for IDP return or resettlement. The resulting report published in 2020, revealed that 90% of the villages surveyed had reported some evidence of contamination by landmines or unexploded ordnance (UXO), with 70% of the villages reporting direct evidence of contamination. The report highlights the need for the Myanmar government to make humanitarian mine action a prerequisite for any IDP return.²⁵

Discussions continued in early 2020 between humanitarian operators and the national authorities regarding possible survey and clearance in relation to the IDP camp closure strategy,²⁶ but had been suspended as at March 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁷ According to online sources, some mine clearance has been undertaken by the military as part of an initiative to facilitate the return of IDPs, but there are serious doubts as to the standard to which this mine clearance has been conducted.²⁸ Similarly, the Independent International Fact Finding Mission expressed concerns "about reports that some demining operations conducted by the Tatmadaw may have failed to meet relevant quality standards and did not include agricultural land surrounding residential areas."²⁹ The Tatmadaw has historically seen mine clearance as solely its own task.

The Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement between the Government and 10 ethnic armed groups also included a dedicated provision on demining, and the government of Myanmar highlights that mine action is a precondition for lasting peace.³⁰ That said, armed conflict is ongoing in many parts of the country and a number of armed groups have not yet signed the ceasefire agreement.³¹

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) co-chair the Mine Risks Working Group (MRWG), which was set up in 2012 and comprises 10 ministries, 41 international and national organisations, and 4 state-level coordination agencies (in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, and Shan states).³² In 2018–19, the MRWG was guided by a strategic work plan whose six main priorities are: inter-ministerial and inter-agency coordination mechanisms; mine risk education (MRE); victim assistance; data collection and information management; advocacy; and land release operations, including non-technical survey.³³ The MRWG is said to convene regularly (on a quarterly basis) and the meetings are well attended, with active participation from state and union level government representatives, and mine action NGOs.³⁴ Along with UNICEF, Humanity and Inclusion (HI) co-chairs the Victim Assistance Technical Group (VATG), a subgroup of the MRWG.³⁵

There is also an informal Non-Technical Survey Working Group (NTSWG), which was an ad-hoc group established in late 2018 as an offshoot of the MSWG. The working group was initially held in Yangon and comprised only humanitarian actors, but was subsequently moved to Nay Pyi Taw and expanded to include the Department of Rehabilitation, the Tatmadaw, and additional mine action organisations.³⁶ Since October 2019, the NTSWG has met quarterly, chaired by the Department of Rehabilitation, with the second meeting in January 2020.³⁷ Through the NTSWG, mine action NGOs and their partners were able to successfully advocate for permission to mark and fencing of hazardous areas, and jointly review and approve the national standards on marking in early 2020.³⁸

Myanmar is also working closely with the ASEAN and the ARMAC, enhancing technical cooperation in mine action.³⁹ In addition, Danish Demining Group (DDG) is helping to develop the capacity of both the national and the regional authorities by conducting humanitarian mine action sensitisation workshops with them.⁴⁰

In 2018, operators facilitated workshops and cooperative visits between government delegates from Myanmar and neighbouring countries. This included a study tour to Cambodia in collaboration with the ARMAC and the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) where delegates learned about land release, national standards, Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs), and information management, as well as about Cambodia's experience in adhering to the APMBC.⁴¹ A similar trip to Thailand took place in 2019.⁴²

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

DDG reported having a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan. It also disaggregates relevant mine action data by sex and age, and has gender-balanced survey and community liaison teams to help ensure women and children in affected communities are consulted as part of its survey and community liaison activities in Myanmar. There is equal access to employment for women and men at DDG, and in Kayah state in 2019, DDG's two most senior staff managing non-technical survey were women. Overall, approximately 40% of DDG managerial/supervisory level positions in Myanmar are held by women.⁴³

The HALO Trust has a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan specific to its work in Myanmar. HALO consults all gender and age groups, including women and children, during non-technical survey and community liaison, and its survey and community liaison teams are gender-balanced as far as possible. HALO disaggregates relevant mine action data by gender and age.⁴⁴

There is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in HALO survey and community liaison teams in Myanmar. Of HALO Trust's 26 operational staff in Myanmar, 10 are women; and of the 16 managerial/supervisory roles, 5 are women.⁴⁵

HI rolled out a newly released gender/age/disability policy in 2019, in which specific markers are assessed and followed up on throughout the duration of HI projects, helping to improve inclusion of vulnerable persons. HI disaggregates relevant mine action data by gender and age and has an equal employment opportunity policy, which includes giving persons with disabilities an equal chance to apply for HI positions. Of HI's employees in Myanmar, 3.7% are persons with disabilities. HI did not conduct non-technical survey in 2019, but of its overall programme in Myanmar, 11 out of 18 managerial positions (61%) are held by women.⁴⁶

MAG has a gender and diversity policy and its implementation plan in Myanmar is focused on gender balanced community liaison teams, equal participation by women in all MAG activities, and gender and age disaggregated data.⁴⁷ MAG does not discriminate anyone based on gender, sex, age, ethnicity or religion, and there are equal employment opportunities for women and men. A total of 43% of personnel in MAG's Community Liaison Field Teams are female (50% of community liaison officers; 67% of community liaison team leaders; and 25% of community liaison supervisors); and a total of 44% of all MAG staff employed at managerial level or supervisory positions in Myanmar are female.⁴⁸ Women are always consulted during baseline survey (BLS) and non-technical survey by MAG, and to help ensure this, the organisation asks village leaders to gather a mixed group of local women and men to avoid the tendency for village leaders to only recommend local men for consultation.⁴⁹ All MAG's community liaison teams are gender balanced and consist of one male and one female community liaison officer.⁵⁰

NPA has a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan, and relevant mine action data is disaggregated by sex and age. NPA consults with women and children during its non-technical survey and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) operations in Myanmar. All non-technical survey teams are at least 50% female, and teams are fluent in the local languages of the area of operations.⁵¹ There is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in NPA survey teams in Myanmar, with women making up 50% of the NPA and partner organisation survey staff, and 20% of leadership roles.⁵²

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

As at April 2020, there was no centralised mine action information management database in Myanmar,⁵³ but it is hoped that this will be set up once an NMAA has been established.⁵⁴ Issues around conflict sensitivity pose potential challenges for such a database, which would require input from the joint parties to the ceasefire.

DDG uses the Fulcrum information management system.⁵⁵

MAG is working closely with other mine action stakeholders on the development of a data sharing platform in Myanmar, in which findings from the baseline survey and non-technical survey could be shared among all humanitarian mine action organisations. It is hoped that this will serve as a centralised database to assist coordination and tasking by the national authorities.⁵⁶

The HALO Trust's information management system is Fulcrum, with data recorded in Microsoft Access.⁵⁷ MAG is using 'Survey123' for data collection and ArcMAP for mapping and GPS services, both provided by ArcGIS. In 2020, MAG planned to upgrade its information management systems by switching to MAG's new global IM system which is on the ESRI platform and is called Operations Management Information Systems.⁵⁸

NPA Myanmar and its partner organisations also use "Survey123" in the collection of non-technical survey information and all survey data is recorded digitally, including polygon mapping directly via "survey123", with hard copy sketch maps drawn as a backup. This enabled "live" quality control (QC) checking by NPA Myanmar's information management officer.⁵⁹

PLANNING AND TASKING

Currently there is no national mine action legislation in Myanmar, but the government has reported that it plans to elaborate and adopt the required national legislation to establish an NMAA, "as soon as feasible".⁶⁰

HALO Trust follows a systematic work plan for its non-technical survey, while also prioritising credible reports received of local contamination.⁶¹

The first stage of MAG's task prioritisation is based on desk research using the "Village Situation Analysis" tool, through which data is gathered on all villages within MAG's operational areas, including information on conflict, accidents, victims, and access. This information is used alongside MAG's operational database to target activities.⁶²

MAG conducts two types of survey in Myanmar: the BLS and non-technical survey. The BLS is a basic preliminary assessment that offers a rapid snapshot of contamination in a particular area, based on focus group discussions and data from community members. On completion of a local BLS, villages are assigned one of three colour categories: red, which represents a high confidence of contamination (direct evidence of contamination is reported); amber, which represents low confidence of contamination (indirect evidence of contamination is reported); and grey, which indicates there was no evidence of contamination at the time of the survey. This categorisation forms the basis for MAG's prioritisation of non-technical survey.⁶³

In 2019, MAG also undertook "remote BLS" within the IDP camps and villages with a large proportion of displaced people, in the states of Kachin and northern Shan.⁶⁴ Remote BLS is a similar process to regular BLS, but involves focus discussion groups and interviews with IDPs about

the mine contamination situation in their place of origin. This is a helpful tool in the Myanmar context, where many IDPs frequently return to their village to check on their agricultural lands and to scavenge and hunt for food. Whenever possible, MAG triangulates information by doing multiple remote baseline surveys in different IDP camps to gain more information about contamination in villages of origin. However, due to the conflict situation and political complexity in Myanmar, it is often not possible to follow up with non-technical survey, in which case MAG relies on the results from the remote BLS. In addition, MAG prioritises baseline survey based on villages identified for IDP returns, in order to gather information about safety threats before IDP returns begin to these villages.⁶⁵

MAG's non-technical survey is a more detailed survey that more accurately identifies the location of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) and confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), enabling MAG to create polygons, identify EOD spot tasks, and generate hazardous area reports which can be shared with local communities and key stakeholders. Non-technical survey is prioritised in villages categorised as red through the BLS, followed by those classed as amber.⁶⁶

NPA prioritises areas for survey using joint input from local stakeholders and communities along with NPA's local partner organisations. Non-technical survey teams conduct both risk education and village baseline assessments involving members of the communities. Risk education sessions are interactive and facilitate a two-way conversation between local communities and NPA/partner team members. Based on community responses, a conflict, accident, and contamination overview of the village is determined through community mapping, after which CHAs and SHAs are identified.⁶⁷

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Historically, Myanmar has not had national standards and therefore operators have followed the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and their own SOPs. However, progress is now being made, with Myanmar's first national standard on marking, which was approved by the government in January 2020. Progress is being made to elaborate and get approval for a national standard on non-technical survey.

In 2018, operators successfully advocated for the Government of Myanmar to include physical marking (with warning signs) and fencing of SHAs and CHAs as part of the non-technical survey process. The central government now approves marking of polygons, though local authorities are also involved in the approval process.⁶⁸

DDG was not able to mark the hazardous areas it identified in 2019, but many were identified along electricity cable base structures, which were already fenced off to prevent people from entering. DDG also donated fencing material for hazardous areas identified to the Ministry of Electricity and Energy in Kayah state.⁶⁹

The HALO Trust reported that permission had been granted for marking of hazardous areas by authorities in both north Shan and Kayin states, provided that the village chief is in

agreement. In 2019, HALO marked 17 hazardous areas with warning signs in the local languages in both states.⁷⁰

As at April 2020, MAG had not commenced "fencing/marking" operations in Myanmar, but expected to do so during the year. Unfortunately, as at the time of writing, the COVID-19 pandemic had brought efforts to a standstill for the immediate future. As and when MAG does commence marking, it plans to do so in accordance with IMAS and so will require PPE and technical equipment. Deployment of teams will be dependent on the importing the necessary PPE.⁷¹

NPA was unable to conduct any marking due to the sensitivity of the areas in which it conducted non-technical survey in 2019.⁷²

A standard for non-technical survey is also being elaborated by the NTSWG, and it was hoped the working group would approve the standard soon.⁷³

There has, however, yet to be progress in elaboration of national standards for technical survey or for clearance; activities that humanitarian mine action organisations were not yet permitted to conduct in Myanmar, as at April 2020.⁷⁴

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Six international demining organisations have offices in Yangon and some provincial locations: DanChurchAid (DCA), DDG, The HALO Trust, HI, MAG, and NPA. None of the humanitarian demining organisations in Myanmar is yet permitted to conduct clearance, EOD, or technical survey; as at May 2020 they were only permitted to conduct non-technical survey, risk education, and community liaison.

Tatmadaw engineers have reportedly conducted some military mine clearance but operations are neither systematic nor have they been formally recorded, and there is concern regarding quality and standard to which clearance is conducted.⁷⁵

In 2019, DDG deployed two non-technical survey teams in Kayah state, as well as community liaison and community mapping in Kachin and north Shan states. DDG's non-technical survey and community liaison capacity remained constant in 2019 compared to the previous year, and DDG also worked with civil society partners, but only in risk education. DDG planned to expand its non-technical survey operations into Kachin and north Shan states in 2020.⁷⁶

In 2019, the HALO Trust continued to conduct non-technical survey in north Shan and Kayin states, although the intensity of fighting prevented some survey work in north Shan.⁷⁷ HALO employed seven teams in 2019, all capable of conducting non-technical survey and MRE. In addition, HALO Trust continued to operate with two local partners in north Shan state, which increases access to ethnic Kachin and Shan communities.⁷⁸ From April 2020, the number of HALO Trust teams had been reduced by two and there was ongoing uncertainty regarding capacity for the remainder of the year, due to the impact of COVID-19.⁷⁹

In 2019, HI's efforts in Myanmar were focused on leading the development of Victim Assistance in Myanmar and HI did not conduct non-technical survey. In 2020, however, it deployed a team to conduct risk education in schools in Kachin State and was planning to start non-technical survey in Kachin State once access to villages allows. As at May 2020, access was restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸⁰

In 2019, MAG's non-technical survey and community liaison capacity consisted of nine community liaison teams and three implementing partner teams, with a total of 26 community liaison staff as at the end of 2019. This was roughly the same capacity as the previous year, but with a slight decrease in MAG's own teams and an increase in partner organisation teams. The three civil society implementing partners were contracted to conduct risk education and BLS in Kayah, Kachin, and northern Shan state.⁸¹

In 2019, NPA was focusing on three areas of work: national ownership and capacity development, non-technical survey and risk education with civil society partners, and emergency response by local and national partners.⁸² NPA conducted non-technical survey with two local civil society partners in the Bago, Tanintharyi region, and Mon state, during which NPA provided training and technical support to the partner organisations and experienced NPA team leaders accompanied partner teams during non-technical survey operations. Together with its civil society partners, NPA deployed three non-technical survey teams and three EOP/conflict preparedness and protection (CPP) teams in 2019.⁸³ NPA expected to increase capacity to four non-technical survey teams in 2020.⁸⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

As in previous year, no land release took place in 2019 as humanitarian mine action operators are not permitted to conduct clearance or technical survey by either the government or ethnic minority authorities. Since 2018, operators have been authorised to conduct non-technical survey to identify mined areas, in addition to conducting risk education and community liaison activities which they were already undertaking. NGO operators are not permitted to conduct EOD of any explosive ordnance discovered during survey operations.

SURVEY IN 2019

In 2019, DDG identified two SHAs totalling 68,959m² and one CHA totalling 15,806m², all in Kayah state.⁸⁵

In 2019, HALO Trust identified a total of 1,282,515m² of mined area in north Shan and Kayin states, including 17 CHAs totalling 811,946m².⁸⁶ This is an increase in mined area identified on the year before, due to an increased number of non-technical survey teams deployed to north Shan state, where hazardous areas tend to be larger.⁸⁷

In 2019, MAG conducted 88 non-technical surveys in Myanmar, comprising 40 hazardous area reports and 48 EOD spot task reports, mainly in Kayah state (see Table 1).⁸⁸

Table 1: MAG non-technical survey in 2019⁸⁹

State	Operator	Hazardous area reports	EOD spot task reports
Kayah	MAG	35	37
Southern Shan	MAG	2	5
Kayin	MAG	0	2
Tanintharyi region	MAG	3	4
Totals		40	48

In 2019, MAG identified 39 SHAs totalling 622,524m² in Kayah and southern Shan states, and the Tanintharyi region; and 3 CHAs totalling 2,387m² in Kayah state (see Table 2). As at April 2020, none of these areas has yet been marked.⁹⁰

Table 2: Anti-personnel mined area by state (identified by MAG, as at end 2019)⁹¹

State	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Kayah	3	2,387	34	532,771
Shan	0	0	2	567
Tanintharyi Region	0	0	3	89,177
Totals	3	2,387	39	622,515

In 2019, NPA identified a total of eight SHAs across Bago, Tanintharyi, and Mon, totalling 213,659m², and one CHA of 16,614m² in size, in Bago region.⁹²

CLEARANCE IN 2019

No clearance of anti-personnel mines or other ordnance by international NGOs was permitted by the authorities in 2019.⁹³

- 1 "UNHCR concerned at mounting civilian casualties and displacement in western Myanmar", Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Press briefing, Geneva, 27 March 2020, at: bit.ly/365w0dF.
- 2 Presentation by U. Myo Set Aung, Director, MSWRR, UN National Mine Action Directors Meeting, Geneva, 7-10 February 2017; and interview with Win Naing Tun, Director-General, Department of Rehabilitation, MSWRR, in Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 3 "Report of the Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar", UN doc. A/HRC/42/CRP.5., 16 September 2019, p. 155.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 155-58.
- 5 "Report of the Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar", UN doc. A/HRC/39/CRP.2, 17 September 2018, pp. 285-86.
- 6 Ibid., p. 94.
- 7 These locally manufactured mines include copies of Russian PMNs (locally designated MM-2), POMZ fragmentation mines (designated MM-1), and United States M14 anti-personnel mines. LTM-76 bounding fragmentation mines, based on British or Indian designs, have been found around electrical pylons.
- 8 Information provided by mine action stakeholders on condition of anonymity, 2018.
- 9 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019.
- 10 Roger Fasth and Pascal Simon, "Mine Action in Myanmar", *Journal of Mine Action*, Issue 19.2, July 2015.
- 11 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019.
- 12 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019; emails from Bekim Shala, Country Director, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), 13 April 2020; Geoff Moynan, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020; and "Multi-stakeholder workshop on establishing a National Mine Action Authority in Myanmar", ARMAC, 30 October 2019, at: bit.ly/2An5L6H.
- 13 Email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 14 Interview with Win Naing Tun, Department of Rehabilitation, MSWRR, Geneva, 14 February 2020; and email from Kyaw Lin Htut, Programme Manager, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 15 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019; and email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 16 "Workshop on National Strategy for Closure of IDP camps", Ministry of Information, Government of Myanmar, undated, at: bit.ly/2Ww8a7L.
- 17 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 20 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April and 26 May 2020; and MAG, Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC), Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS), and Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN), "IDP Return and Resettlement Sites in Kachin State: baseline Survey Results from DPP-MAG Joint Deployments", undated joint report.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Interview with Win Naing Tun, Department of Rehabilitation, MSWRR, in Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 23 "UNHCR concerned at mounting civilian casualties and displacement in western Myanmar", UNHCR press briefing, Geneva, 27 March 2020, at: bit.ly/365w0dF.
- 24 Interview with Win Naing Tun, Department of Rehabilitation, MSWRR, in Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 25 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April and 26 May 2020; and joint report by MAG, KBC, KMSS, and WPN, "IDP Return and Resettlement Sites in Kachin State: baseline Survey Results from DPP-MAG Joint Deployments", undated.
- 26 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020; Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020; and Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 27 Email from Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 28 Fortify Rights, "Myanmar: Ban landmines, lift travel restrictions on Aid Groups", News release, 14 May 2020, at: bit.ly/2AzmcND.
- 29 "Report of the Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar", UN doc. A/HRC/42/CRP.5, 16 September 2019, p. 158.
- 30 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019.
- 31 Interview with Win Naing Tun, Department of Rehabilitation, MSWRR, in Geneva, 14 February 2020.
- 32 UNICEF, "Landmines and explosive remnants of war threaten children and communities across Myanmar", 4 April 2018.
- 33 UN Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, "Myanmar 2019".
- 34 Interview with Win Naing Tun, Department of Rehabilitation, MSWRR, Geneva, 14 February 2020; and emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020; 13 April 2020; Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020; Fabrice Vandeputte, HI, 8 May 2020; Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020; and Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.

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- 35 Email from Fabrice Vandeputte, HI, 8 May 2020.
- 36 Interview with Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, Geneva, 14 February 2020; and emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020 and Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 37 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020; Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020; and Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 38 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020 and Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 39 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019.
- 40 Email from Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 41 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 16 August 2019; and Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 21 August 2019 and 3 April 2020.
- 42 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019.
- 43 Email from Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 44 Email from Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Email from Fabrice Vandeputte, HI, 8 May 2020.
- 47 Email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 Email from Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020; Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020; and Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 54 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020; Fabrice Vandeputte, HI, 8 May 2020; Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020; and Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 55 Email from Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 56 Email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 57 Email from Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 58 Email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 59 Email from Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 60 Statement of Myanmar, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 25-29 November 2019.
- 61 Email from Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 62 Email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April and 26 May 2020; and joint report by MAG, KBC, KMSS, and WPN, "IDP Return and Resettlement Sites in Kachin State: baseline Survey Results from DPP-MAG Joint Deployments".
- 66 Email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 67 Email from Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 68 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 16 August 2019 and 26 May 2020; and Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 21 August 2019.
- 69 Email from Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 70 Email from Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 71 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April and 26 May 2020.
- 72 Email from Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 73 Interview with Hemi More, Government of New Zealand, Geneva, 13 February 2020; and email from Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 74 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020; Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 20 May 2020; and Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 75 "Report of the Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar", UN doc. A/HRC/42/CRP.5, 16 September 2019, p. 158.
- 76 Email from Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 77 Email from Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 78 Emails from Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 3 September 2019 and 8 May 2020.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Email from Fabrice Vandeputte, HI, 8 May 2020.
- 81 Email from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020.
- 82 Email from Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 21 August 2019.
- 83 Email from Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.
- 84 Ibid.
- 85 Email from Liam Harvey, DDG, 22 May 2020.
- 86 Email from Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April and 26 May 2020.
- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 Ibid.
- 92 Ibid.
- 93 Emails from Bekim Shala, MAG, 13 April 2020; and Geoff Moynan, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020; and Kyaw Lin Htut, NPA, 3 April 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- North Korea should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, North Korea has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- North Korea should cease all use of anti-personnel mines.
- North Korea should resume mine clearance in the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) as soon as possible and permit independent verification of clearance.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

The extent of North Korea's mine problem is not known. North Korea admitted in 1998 that it had laid mines in the DMZ, a 1,000km² strip of land between the north and south of the peninsula believed to be one of the most densely contaminated areas in the world. Mined areas are reported to be marked and fenced but mines are also believed to have shifted as a result of flooding and landslides.¹

North and South Korea completed clearance of the Joint Security Area (of the DMZ) in Panmunjom in October 2018 under an agreement on measures to ease tensions. Additional clearance was conducted in late 2018 around Arrowhead Hill (also known as Hill 281) in Cheolwon, Gangwon province, under a pilot joint operations project to recover human remains.² No other land release is known to have occurred.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

North Korea has no functioning mine action programme.

In September 2018, the North Korean and South Korean Ministers of Defence signed a military agreement, the Panmunjom declaration, which mandated North Korea, South Korea, and the United Nations Command (UNC) to "remove all mines in the Joint Security Area (of the DMZ) in Panmunjom within 20 days, beginning on October 1, 2018".³ Diplomacy intended to improve relations between North and South in 2019 did not lead to any additional action.

Following a request from North Korea to the UNC, the Korean People's Army engineers received training on use of US detectors using ground penetrating radar for tackling box mines.⁴ US army engineers trained South Korean army engineers who in turn provided the training to the Korean People's Army.⁵

LAND RELEASE

South Korean officials confirmed on 22 October 2018 that clearance of the Joint Security Area in Panmunjom by North and South Korea had been completed.⁶ Officials said North Korea had notified the government it had cleared 636 mines while South Korea found none.⁷ At the request of the Korean People's Army, South Korean troops trained by the US Army conducted the clearance of one area on the northern side of the JSA that was heavily contaminated by box mines working with US-supplied Minehound dual purpose detectors.⁸ The north also reportedly cleared a 1.3km-long mine belt in the Arrowhead Hill region.⁹ Reviving tensions between North Korea and the United States in 2019 held back further progress in demining.

1 Statement of North Korea, United Nations (UN) General Assembly, New York, 4 December 1998, UN doc. A/53/pv79, pp. 8–9; Choe Sang-Hun, "Koreas start clearing landmines at DMZ in effort to ease tensions", *New York Times*, 1 October 2018.

2 Song Young-moo and No Kwang Chol, "Agreement on the Implementation of the Historic Panmunjom Declaration in the Military Domain", National Committee on North Korea, 19 September 2018, Annex 2, p. 7, at: bit.ly/2XXbuXd; and "Korean leaders sign agreement for North Korea to take further steps to denuclearize", *ABC News*, 20 September 2018, at: abc7.ws/2XZM0bq.

3 "Agreement on the Implementation of the Historic Panmunjom Declaration in the Military Domain", 19 September 2018, Annex 2, p. 7; and "Korean leaders sign agreement for North Korea to take further steps to denuclearize", *ABC News*, 20 September 2018.

4 Presentation by Col. J. P. Lloyd, Command Engineer, UNC, Side event at the National Directors' Meeting, Geneva, 11 February 2020.

5 Emails from Col. John P. Lloyd, UNC, and Maj. Mark S. Born, UNC, 14 April 2020.

6 "Koreas finish removing land mines from border village", *Associated Press*, 22 October 2018, at: bit.ly/2GhPFVn.

7 "Two Koreas Complete Mine Removal in JSA", KBS World Radio, 19 October 2018, at: bit.ly/2XT18Kk; "Minister: N. Korea eliminated 636 mines from Panmunjom area," *Yonhap*, 12 November 2018, at: bit.ly/2Nbv2Fc.

8 Emails from Col. John P. Lloyd, UNC, and Maj. Mark S. Born, UNC, 14 April 2020.

9 PowerPoint presentation by Maj. Gen. (ret.) Han Cheol Ki, Side event to the Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 24 May 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Pakistan should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Pakistan has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

The extent of anti-personnel mine contamination in Pakistan is not known. Pakistan remains affected by mines and other explosive ordnance resulting from the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (1979–89) and three wars with India, as well as from more recent and continuing conflicts in areas bordering Afghanistan, including, in particular, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

In 2019, Pakistan reiterated past statements that, “Pakistan at present faces no problem of uncleared mines since no mines have been laid by [the] Pakistan Army after escalation of 2001–2002 on Pakistan’s Eastern Border”.¹ Previously it had elaborated that mines laid during the tensions in 2001–02 were all cleared and that no mines have since been laid.²

In 2018, Pakistan stated that non-state armed groups (NSAGs) have employed improvised explosive devices (IEDs) including mines during attacks.³ Pakistan again reported the use of IEDs in 2019 by NSAGs had resulted in casualties,⁴ stating also that “terrorists carried out 349 IED attacks involving use of mines as well”.⁵ In fact, according to media reports across Pakistan in 2018–19, civilian mine casualties were from mines of an improvised nature laid by NSAGs, from mines laid by troops along the Line of Control (LoC) between India and Pakistan, and from mines and other explosive hazards in South Waziristan (in an area that had been cleared and declared safe by the military).⁶

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Pakistan has no formal civilian mine action programme. Pakistani military engineering units have been responsible for mine clearance in conflict zones, while the Frontier Constabulary has conducted mine clearance in contaminated areas of Baluchistan, FATA, and other conflict zones in the North-West Frontier Province.

LAND RELEASE

There are no reports of formal survey or clearance of mined area in 2019.

According to a media report, on 15 December 2018 an unnamed senior security official said that 22 demining teams were being formed by the Pakistani Army to defuse and remove IEDs and mines in the North Waziristan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in the FATA. These deminers would be in addition to the reported 43 teams already working in the seven former tribal districts.⁷

In a statement delivered at Fourth Review Conference of the APMBC in November 2019, Pakistan said that: “The use of landmines is exclusively by the military for defence purposes”. Pakistan also acknowledged that although it was occurring at [a] “much lower scale now, Pakistan has itself been a victim of the use of landmines, including as IEDs by terrorists and non-state actors. Notwithstanding their use by terrorists. Pakistan security forces do not use mines for the maintenance of internal order and law enforcement in counter-terrorism operations.”⁸

Pakistan reported a total of 187 attacks causing casualties due to IEDs “all over the country”, but did not disaggregate the type of IED or specify the proportion that were victim-activated.⁹

1 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.

2 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2018), Form B; and Statement of Pakistan, 16th Meeting of the States Parties to the APMBC, 18–21 December 2017.

3 CCW Amended Protocol V Article 13 Report (covering 2018), Form E.

4 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.

5 Ibid., Form E.

6 See, e.g., “Two tribal elders killed in Orakzai Agency landmine blast”, The Express Tribune, 15 February 2018, at: bit.ly/2KyGTMc; “Summer brings with it landmines in Azad Kashmir”, Pakistan Today, 6 July 2018, at: bit.ly/2Z033yN; “Landmines killing people in Pakistan’s South Waziristan”, Al Jazeera, 5 February 2018, at: bit.ly/33r8RAG; “Kargil: The forgotten victims of the world’s highest war”, BBC News, 26 July 2019, at: bbc.in/2KKiY3; and “Woman loses her leg to a landmine in South Waziristan”, Samaa Digital, 5 April 2019, at: bit.ly/2ZDe0JQ.

7 “Pakistan: IEDs and Continuous Haemorrhage – Analysis”, Eurasia Review, 24 July 2019, at: bit.ly/31xt1qW.

8 Statement of Pakistan, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 29 November 2019.

9 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Russia should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Russia has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

There is no accurate estimate of the extent of mine contamination but Russia is heavily contaminated with mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) as a result of the Second World War, the two Chechen wars (1994–96 and 1999–2009), and armed conflicts in the Caucasian republics of Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Kabardino-Balkaria.

Anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines were used extensively in the two major conflicts in Chechnya. Estimates of the extent of contamination vary greatly because no systematic effort has been undertaken to assess the scope or impact of the problem.¹ In 2010, Russia's deputy prime minister and presidential special envoy to the Caucasus, Aleksandr Khloponin, claimed that mines affected 14km² of land and posed a major obstacle to development.² In contrast, Chechen officials and human rights organisations have previously estimated that 245km² of land was mined, including 165km² of farmland and 73km² of woodland.³

In January 2017, a commander in the Russian Armed Forces reportedly told press agency Interfax that more than 100km² of land remained to be cleared in Chechnya, and a further 20km² in neighbouring Ingushetia.⁴ According to the online media report, areas cleared to date had nearly all been in lowland Chechnya and remaining mined area is in more mountainous terrain, complicating demining efforts.⁵

As at 2011, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 3,132 civilians, including 772 children, had been killed (731) or wounded (2,401) by mines and ERW in Chechnya since 1994. Data collection, which was conducted by a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) partner Voice of the Mountains, was suspended in January 2011, due to lack of funding.⁶

ALLEGED USE OF MINES IN CRIMEA IN 2014

Reports of minefields emplaced to demarcate border areas after Russia's annexation of the Crimea, appear to have concerned either "phoney minefields" or areas containing trip-flares. Trip-flares are not covered by the APMBC.⁷

On 8 March 2014, the Israeli newspaper *Harts* reported that "Russian combat engineers were seen placing mines in the land bridge connecting the [Crimean] peninsula to the mainland in order to foil any Ukrainian attempt to retake Crimea."⁸ The photographer Evgeny Feldman of the Russian publication *Novaya Gazeta* photographed an apparent minefield laid near a road leading into Crimea and close to the villages of Chongar and Nikolaevka, in Kherson province of Ukraine. The photographs show a line of mounds of earth in a field and "Danger Mines" warning signs.⁹ Other photographs, shared with Human Rights Watch by a photo-journalist, showed an area near Chongar marked with "Danger Mines" signs and evidence of stake-mounted, tripwire-initiated flares in the ground, also known as "signal mines".¹⁰

Members of the local population informed Ukrainian partners of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) that Russian Special Forces operating in Kherson province had laid mines, but it was not possible to confirm the reports, including whether any mines laid were anti-personnel or anti-vehicle.¹¹ On 7 March 2014, Ukrainian media reported that the Russian military had laid mines around the main gas line into Crimea, but this allegation has not been independently verified.¹²

At a meeting of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) in April 2014, Ukraine alleged Russian use of TM-62 anti-vehicle mines and unidentified anti-personnel mines in Kherson province just north of Crimea.¹³ At the same CCW meeting, Russia denied using anti-personnel mines, asserting "the Self Defence forces of Crimea, before the referendum, placed the minefields with relevant markings, around Chongar". Russia said, "they placed only signal mines and put proper signage around the fields".¹⁴

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is no formal civilian mine action programme in Russia and no national mine action authority. Mine clearance is carried out by Federal Ministry of Defence engineers, demining brigades of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and by the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES), through its specialised demining units (EMERCOM Demining and the "Leader" Center for Special Tasks).¹⁵

Russia reported that its armed forces established an International Demining Action Centre in 2014. The Centre serves as a base for specialist training in detection and clearance of explosive devices, demining, and operation of mobile robotic tools, and does not function as a mine action centre (MAC) as the term is generally understood in mine action.¹⁶

In 2019, Russia reported that 5,960 military personnel were involved in clearance operations in the Russian Federation and overseas, including 148 mine clearance teams.¹⁷

LAND RELEASE

Russia reported clearing more than 614km² of mine and ERW-contaminated area inside the Russian Federation and abroad in 2019, with 151,203 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) found and destroyed.¹⁸

The main tasks of Russia's engineering troops in 2019 included clearance in Chechnya and Ingushetia.¹⁹

- 1 UNMAS, "Portfolio of Mine Action Projects 2009", New York, 2008, p. 284.
- 2 "Medvedev emphasizes vision of Chechnya's future with personal visit", *Russia Today*, 14 June 2010, at: bit.ly/33H4Bg0.
- 3 "MoE sappers to demine arable land in Chechnya", *Caucasian Knot*, 3 April 2009, at: www.kavkaz-uzel.ru; "In Chechnya MES deminers destroyed 25 explosive devices", *Caucasian Knot*, 5 October 2009; and "Human rights activists: 25,000 hectares of Chechen territory are still mined", *Caucasian Knot*, 7 May 2008.
- 4 "Landmine threat in Chechnya still prevalent", *OC Media*, 23 January 2017, at: bit.ly/33Hxf0T.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Email from Eliza Murtazaeva, Project Officer, Child Protection, UNICEF Vladikavkaz, 2 May 2011.
- 7 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II defines a phoney minefield as "an area free of mines that simulates a minefield. The term 'minefield' includes phoney minefields." Art. 2(8), CCW Amended Protocol II.
- 8 A. Pfeffer, "Shots fired to warn off European monitors from Crimea", *Haaretz*, 8 March 2014, at: bit.ly/33CeEDv.
- 9 "Between Crimea and Ukraine there are already minefields, armoured vehicles and army camps", *Novaya Gazeta*, 8 March 2014, at: bit.ly/2H9CehE.
- 10 Landmine Monitor, Mine Ban Policy Ukraine; and "email from George Henton to HRW", 10 March 2014.
- 11 ICBL, "Reports of Russian landmine use in Crimea requires immediate response", Geneva, 10 March 2014, at: bit.ly/20XjAzL.
- 12 ICBL, "Reports of Russian landmine use in Crimea requires immediate response", Geneva, 10 March 2014, at: bit.ly/20XjAzL.
- 13 Presentation by Dr Kateryna Bila, Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Implementation of the Protocol II by Ukraine", CCW Amended Protocol II Meeting of Experts, Geneva, 1 April 2014.
- 14 Statement of Russia, CCW Amended Protocol II Meeting of Experts, Geneva, 1 April 2014.
- 15 See, e.g., "It is planned to establish special groups for demining of lands within MES", *Caucasian Knot*, 23 July 2009; and "Autumn demining is completed in Chechnya", *Vesti Kavkaza*, 28 October 2009.
- 16 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report, Form B, 31 March 2015; and meeting with Andrey Grebenshchikov, First Secretary, Department for Nonproliferation and Arms Control, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Geneva, 9 April 2015.
- 17 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2019), Form A; and CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.
- 18 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (covering 2019), Form B.
- 19 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2019), Form G.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The Republic of Korea (ROK, South Korea) should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, South Korea has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- South Korea should establish a mine action authority to assume responsibility for planning and implementing mine clearance.
- South Korea should enact long-considered legislation permitting mine clearance by accredited civilian demining organisations.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

The Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) and the Civilian Control Zone (CCZ), immediately adjoining the southern boundary of the DMZ, remain among the most heavily mined areas in the world due to extensive mine-laying during the Korean War and in the 1960s, in 1978, and in 1988.

A National Defence Committee report in 2010 said that South Korea had 1,309 mined areas covering about 118km², including 1,100 "planned" mined areas affecting 20km² and some 209 unconfirmed mined areas covering almost 98km².¹

A report presented to a side event at the 2019 APMBC Intersessional Meetings showed the number of mined areas as almost unchanged at 1,308 containing an estimated 828,000 mines (see Table 1).² According to information provided by the Army's Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2018, 380,000 of these mines were emplaced in 786 sites within the DMZ.³ Mined areas in the DMZ include 771 emplaced minefields which are mapped and 15 undocumented mined areas covering a combined total of 10.03 km². CCZ contamination includes 257 defined mined areas and 176 undocumented sites covering a combined total of 114.79 km².⁴

Table 1: Confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) in South Korea⁵

	Controlled Protection Zones				
	Total	DMZ	CCZ	Restricted Protection Zones	Rear area
No. of sites	1,308	786	433	22	67
No. of mines	828,000	380,000	389,000	50,000	9,000

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The southern half of the Demilitarized Zone is controlled by South Korea but under the Armistice Agreement the area between the Demarcation Line and the Southern Line Limit is under the jurisdiction of the United Nations Command (UNC) and any mine clearance activities are conducted with UNC approval.

Mine action in the Civilian Control Zone (between the SLL and the Civilian Control Line) and the rest of South Korea is overseen by the Ministry of National Defence and conducted exclusively by South Korean army engineers. There is no national mine action authority or mine action centre in South Korea. Government ministries have discussed creation of a national mine action authority but as of April 2020 had not decided to proceed and the idea reportedly remains in its infancy.⁶ Although only the South Korean army is permitted to conduct clearance, General Robert Abrams, Commander of US forces and the UNC, has reportedly explored the possibility of bringing in international non-government organisations as advisers.⁷

In September 2018, it was reported that the South Korean army had called for the establishment of an agency dedicated to removing mines in the DMZ with responsibility for planning and implementing clearance.⁸ No action to implement the proposal had been reported by the start of 2020.

South and North Korea agreed in the Panmunjom Declaration of April 2018 to transform the DMZ into a peace zone. Under the Pyongyang Joint Declaration signed in September 2018 the two countries agreed to expand the cessation of hostilities into the removal of the danger of war across the peninsula. They also signed an Agreement on the Implementation of the Historic Panmunjom Declaration, which provided for clearance of all mines and other explosive devices from agreed areas with a view to the joint recovery of remains of soldiers killed in the Korean War. The agreement specified that clearance operations would be conducted for four hours a day in designated times using agreed equipment and that the perimeter of cleared areas would be marked.⁷

South Korea's Ministry of Defence submitted a bill to parliament in 2013 that would allow civilian organisations to remove mines laid during the Korean War.¹⁰ As at February 2020, South Korea's National Assembly had not passed the bill.

LAND RELEASE

Under the Panmunjom implementation agreement, South Korean army engineers conducted clearance operations in the southern part of the Joint Security Area of the DMZ in October 2018 without finding any mines.¹¹ They also cleared several areas round Arrowhead Hill in Cheolwon, Gangwon province, to facilitate exhumation of soldiers killed in action during the war. South Korea said it destroyed 27 mines and 1,479 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO).¹²

In 2019, around 500 ROK army engineers completed demining of 102,688m² of the DMZ around Arrowhead Hill, clearing 255 mines and 5,754 items of UXO.¹³ UNC said clearance was conducted according to international mine action standards (IMAS).¹⁴

South Korean army engineers also continue to clear mined areas south of the CCL. South Korea's last Article 13 transparency report under Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which was submitted in 2019, recorded army clearance of nearly 2km² in 2018 with the destruction of 10,207 mines.¹⁵ Since 2005, the army has reportedly cleared 49 mined areas south of the CCL.¹⁶

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- 1 "Find One Million: War With Landmines", *Korea Times*, 3 June 2010.
 - 2 PowerPoint presentation by Maj.-Gen. Han Cheol Ki (ret.), Side event to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 24 May 2019.
 - 3 Republic of Korea Joint Chiefs of Staff (ROK JCS), cited in "Mine Action in the Korean Peninsula", unpublished paper by Eum Soohong, member, Korean Campaign to Ban Landmines, September 2019.
 - 4 Presentation by Col. J. P. Lloyd, Command Engineer, UNC, GICHD side-event to the UN National Directors' Meeting, Geneva, 11 February 2020.
 - 5 ROK JCS, cited in "Mine Action in the Korean Peninsula", September 2019.
 - 6 Interview with Cho Jai Kook, Coordinator, Korea Campaign to Ban Landmines, and Eum Soohong, KCBL, in Geneva, 13 February 2020.
 - 7 Presentation by Col. J. P. Lloyd, UNC, GICHD side-event to the UN National Directors' Meeting, Geneva, 11 February 2020.
 - 8 "Army calls for establishment of land mine removal center", Yonhap, 4 September 2018, at: bit.ly/2xOVUCj.
 - 9 "Agreement on the Implementation of the Historic Panmunjom Declaration in the Military Domain", Annex 2, 19 September 2018.
 - 10 "S. Korea pushes to allow civilians to remove land mines", Yonhap, 14 November 2013.
 - 11 "Two Koreas' demining operations in the Joint Security Area near end", Yonhap, 19 October 2018, at: bit.ly/3fuFawl.
 - 12 PowerPoint presentation by Maj.-Gen. Han Cheol Ki (ret.), Side event to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 24 May 2019.
 - 13 Statement by Lee Soonsung, Deputy Director, Arms Control Division, Ministry of National Defence, ROK, at the UN National Directors' Meeting, Geneva, 1 February 2020.
 - 14 Presentation by Col. John Lloyd, UNC, GICHD side-event to UN National Directors' Meeting, Geneva, 11 February 2020.
 - 15 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (for 2018), Form B.
 - 16 UNC-ROK PowerPoint presentation at GICHD side-event to UN National Directors' Meeting, Geneva, 11 February 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Syria should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Syria has obligations under international human rights law to clear mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Syria should establish a mine action authority and expedite access for international demining organisations to facilitate a credible humanitarian demining programme.
- Syria should initiate a programme of mine survey and clearance as soon as possible and take other measures to reduce the risk to civilians of mines and explosive remnants of war.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

Syria is heavily contaminated by mines and mines of an improvised nature used extensively by parties to the country's eight-year-old conflict. It also has mined areas left by successive Arab-Israeli wars since 1948.

The extent of contamination is not known. The United Nations (UN) estimated in 2019 that mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) affected 2,563 communities and 11.2 million people and that it recorded an average of 184 explosive incidents every day.¹ Human rights groups reported heavy civilian casualties from mines and ERW in many governorates in 2019 and 2020, further attesting to the density of the contamination.²

The Syrian government reportedly laid mines along borders with Turkey and Lebanon in 2012 and Turkish authorities claimed five years ago that between 613,000 and 715,000 mines had been planted along the Turkish-Syrian border, making clear they were not emplaced by Turkish forces.³ In Manbij, close to the Turkish border, heavy casualties from mines, including those of an improvised nature, occurred after Kurdish forces pushed out Islamic State in mid-August 2016 and were still occurring as a result of continuing conflicts in 2019.⁴ Islamic State heavily mined the approaches to Manbij and around the Tishreen dam to the east of it, using young boys disguised as shepherds to lay the mines, the UN Commission of Inquiry monitoring the conflict in Syria reported in March 2017.⁵

In Aleppo and neighbouring Idlib governorates, volunteers similarly report mines and other explosive devices planted in agricultural fields, next to roads, inside villages, and around schools and hospitals.⁶ Rebel forces which subjected the towns of Foua and Kfraya to years of siege are said to have left hundreds of mines in surrounding fields as well as individual explosive devices in many homes.⁷

Further south in Hama and Homs governorates, open-source reports of mine casualties, although unconfirmed, are suggestive of significant contamination left by all sides during years of conflict.⁸ The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that between 24 February and 17 March 2019 it documented the death of 44 people in mine and improvised explosive device (IED) explosions in Deir Ezzour, Homs, and Hama. It also documented casualties from mines, including those of an improvised nature, around towns in the southern province of Dara.⁹

From Raqqa, former capital of the self-proclaimed Islamic State caliphate, to Hassakeh governorate in the north-east, and south to Deir Ezzour and Barghuz (the last remaining Islamic State stronghold overrun in May 2019), retreating Islamic State forces left massive contamination of mines of an improvised nature and other improvised devices. These have taken a heavy toll on returning civilians: non-governmental organisation (NGO) Médecins sans Frontières reported that the number of victims of mines and other explosive devices it treated in north-east Syria doubled between November 2017 and March 2018. Half of them were children. Its patients reported discovering mines and booby-traps on roads, beside fields, on rooftops, and under staircases, as well as rigged devices placed in common household items from refrigerators and air conditioners to televisions and cooking pots.¹⁰

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Syria does not have a national mine action authority or a national programme for survey and clearance. Mine action has been conducted by a wide range of organisations, largely determined by the forces controlling different regions.

In areas under government control, these have included mainly Russian and Syrian military engineers and civil defence organisations. International and national demining organisations conducted clearance in north-east Syria controlled by the Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces. Turkey reported its security forces cleared mines and IEDs in areas of northern Syria it occupied in October 2019.¹¹

Russia deployed several hundred military deminers from its Armed Forces Demining Centre from 2017 onwards, conducting clearance with manual teams supported by mine detection dogs and Uran-6 mine detection robots. Russian troops also provided training courses for Syrian army engineers at Hmeimim air base and at training centres established in 2017 in Aleppo and Homs. By the start of January 2018, Russian armed forces reported they had trained 900 Syrian engineers.¹²

Russia started to withdraw troops, including deminers, from Syria in 2018 but its Ministry of Defence continued to report mine clearance and EOD in Syria in 2020.¹³ Russia appealed to other countries in 2018 to provide support. Armenia responded by sending an 83-man team to Syria in February 2019, planning to focus its work on the northern governorate of Aleppo.¹⁴ Armenia rotated a new team to replace the first after four months.¹⁵

National operators included Syrian Civil Defence (SCD), widely reported as White Helmets, which worked with six clearance teams and three community liaison/survey teams in north-west Syria in 2019. Three clearance and two survey teams operated in Idlib province, a focal point of conflict in 2019, with two clearance teams and one survey team working in Aleppo and one clearance team in Hama province. Teams mostly destroyed cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other unexploded ordnance tackling a wide range of unexploded ordnance (UXO). In January 2019 five SCD staff took part in a two-week course delivered remotely in humanitarian response to IEDs focusing on search, identification and threat assessments to increase team safety in their daily search and rescue activities.¹⁶

AFAK, a Syrian NGO working in partnership with The HALO Trust, conducted clearance in the southern provinces of Dar'a and Quneitra in the early part of 2019 until a Syrian army offensive took control of the area.¹⁷

In areas outside government control in the north east, humanitarian demining organisations and commercial companies have conducted large-scale clearance in areas recaptured from Islamic State. Tetra Tech worked operated in Raqqa, Deir Ezzour, and, after its recapture in 2019, in Barghuz. Funded by the United States (US) Department of State, Tetra Tech focused on critical infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, water pumping stations, and electricity generating plants. A small national organisation, Roj Mine Control Organization (RMCO), was conducting clearance in north and north-east Syria but reportedly sustained heavy casualties among its deminers attempting clearance of improvised devices.¹⁸

The UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Syrian government in July 2018 under which it deployed two staff to Damascus in October 2018. After meeting Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mikdad in Damascus in October 2019, UNMAS Director Agnes Marcaillou reported the government had agreed to the involvement of international demining organisations. They would be registered by the government and coordinated by UNMAS, which stated that discussions were underway on plans for survey, marking, and clearance.¹⁹ As of May 2020, however, no international demining organisations had registered with the government and UNMAS remained focused on training Syrian partners for risk education and community survey. Between January and July 2019 teams had surveyed 365 areas in Aleppo, northern Hama and Idlib governorates, marking 370 explosive items.²⁰

In January 2019, UNMAS started a first risk education training course for 26 Syrian personnel, of whom 16 were women.²¹ Since then, risk education has expanded, including through joint initiatives with UNICEF.²²

Russia announced in March 2019 it would provide funding of US\$1 million to support UNMAS's activities in Syria.²³ In April 2019, UNMAS announced a "Humanitarian Mine Action Support to Syria (31 March 2019–31 March 2020)" project, supported by a \$1.4 million grant from Japan, which is expected to deliver risk education to 43,000 people and conduct contamination impact surveys in 85 communities, as well as marking and fencing off explosive hazards.²⁴

LAND RELEASE

Syria's continuing conflict prevented progress towards a coordinated national programme of mine action. Comprehensive information on outcomes of survey and clearance in any areas was unavailable.

Syrian deminers were reported to have cleared mines and explosive devices in areas recaptured from opposition armed groups. Among tasks continuing in 2020 was clearance of the Damascus-Aleppo highway.²⁵ Armenia's Centre for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise reported that by April 2020 the Armenian army engineers had cleared 147,697m² and destroyed more than 300 mines.²⁶ An Armenian deminer was injured in the explosion of a mine or IED in March 2019 resulting in amputation of a foot.²⁷ Demolitions of cleared items are conducted by the Syrian military.²⁸

Humanitarian mine action in north-east Syria halted after President Trump's October 2019 announcement of US withdrawal from Syria and Turkey's October 2019 invasion and occupation of parts of northern Syria and the move of Russian troops into northern Syria. Some clearance operations had reportedly resumed by early 2020 but the extent was unknown.

Tetra Tech had operated with approximately 400 personnel in the north east in 2018 but after President Trump's December 2018 announcement of the US intention to withdraw from Syria it reduced capacity from seven multi-task teams. In 2019, it was working with two multi-task teams and two risk education teams until halting operations in October. After suspending Syria operations, the programme closed temporarily in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁹

- 1 Statement by Agnes Marcaillou, Director, UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS), to the UN Security Council, New York, 24 October 2019.
- 2 See for example "Syria: Bachelet warns of 'ticking time-bomb' as civilian casualties mount," Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 8 May 2020; "The explosion of a landmine of the war's remnants north of Hama kills and injures 5 persons raising to 137 the number of people who were killed in explosions of landmines and IEDs throughout Syria in 7 months," Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, 16 September 2019.
- 3 "Syria: Army planting banned landmines", Human Rights Watch, 13 March 2012, at: bit.ly/2Ybz9rK; "Thousands of landmines planted along Turkish-Syrian border", *Middle East Monitor*, 21 November 2013, at: bit.ly/2Mt7eFE.
- 4 See, e.g., "Rural Aleppo: explosions on the rise in Manbij City", *Enab Baladi*, 2 February 2019 at: bit.ly/2MoBbxq; O. Haj Kadour, "Bus blown up by landmine in Syria's Manbij: 1 dead, 5 injured", *Agence France Presse*, 2 February 2019.
- 5 Conference Paper by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, UN doc. A/HRC/34/CRP.3, 10 March 2017, para. 90.
- 6 "Syrian volunteers risk lives to clear landmines", *Aljazeera*, 8 April 2016, at: bit.ly/2K2J8Hn.
- 7 "Inside Foua: A Shi'a town in the eye of the Syrian storm", *Middle East Eye*, 19 August 2018.
- 8 See, e.g., "5 killed, 6 injured in landmine blast in Hama countryside", IRNA, 3 September 2018; and "4 Civil Defence workers killed clearing landmines in northern Homs", *Zaman al Wasl*, 18 May 2018.
- 9 "In three successive weeks, the landmines that the organization planted to protect itself kill 44 citizens, mostly women and children, and injure tens others in different Syrian areas", Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, 17 March 2019, at: bit.ly/2LMbjMy.
- 10 "Syria: patient numbers double in northeast as more people return home to landmines", *MSF*, 3 April 2018, at: bit.ly/2SKJUQB.
- 11 "Turkey destroys hundreds of mines, IEDs in Syria", Anadolu Agency, 9 January 2020. It said the Turkish Ministry of Defence reported destroying 891 landmines and 1,660 IEDs.
- 12 "Russian military boosts qualified Syrian sappers to demine war-ravaged country", *Tass*, 9 January 2018.
- 13 See, e.g., "The Leramun district of the Syrian city of Aleppo will be cleared of explosive devices by the end of April," Report, Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides, 27 April 2020. The report did not state who conducted the clearance. The centre said engineers had cleared over 3,000 hectares (30km²), 3,112 buildings and 273 kilometres of roads, destroying 34,000 explosive items, including 5,400 IEDs, but did not say in what period of time.
- 14 "Russia calls for international support for demining efforts in Syria", *Xinhua*, 7 July 2018; and "Armenia sends deminers to Syria as part of Russia-backed mission", *Radio Free Europe*, 10 February 2019, at: bit.ly/2K1glxo.
- 15 "Armenia sends another group of sappers, medics, to Syria", *Radio Free Europe*, 5 June 2019, at: bit.ly/2ym8SaY.
- 16 Email from Michael Edwards, Explosive Hazards Operations Manager, Mayday, 25 May 2020.
- 17 Email from Adam Boyd and Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 18 May 2018; and HALO Trust, "Survey and Explosive Hazard Removal in Dar'a and Quneitra Governorates, Southern Syria", undated but 2018; and interview with Tim Porter, Director of Programmes, HALO Trust, in Geneva, 5 February 2019.
- 18 S. Kajjo, "Landmine removal crucial in post-IS Syria", *Voice of America*, 3 April 2019; and interview with operators, Erbil, Iraq, May 2019.
- 19 Statement by Agnes Marcaillou, Director, UNMAS, to the UN Security Council, 24 October 2019.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 "Syria, UN Mine Action Service, Sign MoU", Syrian Arab News Agency, 8 July 2018, accessed at bit.ly/2Hjenwl; and interview with Gilles Delecourt, Senior Programme Manager, UNMAS, in Geneva, 7 February 2019.
- 22 Email from UNMAS, 5 September 2020.
- 23 "Russia allocates \$1 million to UN for demining of Syrian territories", *Tass*, 15 March 2019.
- 24 UNMAS, "Japan contributes to humanitarian mine action in Syria", 15 April 2019.
- 25 "Army engineering units dismantle landmines and IEDs planted by terrorists on Aleppo-Damascus highway," *Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA)*, 15 February 2020.
- 26 Statement marking International Day of Mine Awareness, Armenia's Centre for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise website, 4 April 2020, available at: bit.ly/2WRuurh.
- 27 "Armenia sapper wounded in Syria landmine explosion, foot amputated", *News.am*, 8 March 2019, at: bit.ly/2YfQkbS; "Armenian sapper in Syria seriously wounded while clearing mines", *Radio Free Europe*, 8 March 2019 at: bit.ly/2YIRHkk.
- 28 "Armenian humanitarian mission demines 34,693 sq. m. territory in Syria", *Aysor.am*, 1 July 2019 at: bit.ly/2K2JzBv.
- 29 Interview with Gareth Hawkins, Syria CWD Chief of Party, Tetra Tech, Erbil, 10 May 2019; and email, 11 May 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Uzbekistan should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Uzbekistan has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Uzbekistan should be more transparent in detailing the extent of its mine contamination and clearance operations.

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE CONTAMINATION

Uzbek forces have laid mines along its international borders at various times, including on its borders with Afghanistan in 1998, with Kyrgyzstan in 1999, and with Tajikistan in 2000. While Tajikistan and Uzbekistan settled most of their 1,283km-long border dispute following the collapse of the Soviet Union, certain areas have not yet been delineated and therefore the exact location of mined areas is not known.¹ In 2010, the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki-moon, criticised as “unacceptable” Uzbekistan’s emplacing of mines along parts of its border that have not been delineated.²

Soviet troops also laid mines on the Uzbek-Afghan border. Uzbekistan had reportedly cleared 95% of the minefields along the Tajik border by the end of 2007 in demining operations conducted by Uzbek army deminers in cooperation with Tajik border troops.³

The first ever state visit of the President of Uzbekistan to Tajikistan took place in March 2018, and several agreements were signed between the two countries, including one on demarcation of the separate regions of the Tajik-Uzbek border. According to online media, during the visit the heads of the two states agreed that the common border would be cleared of landmines by the end of 2019.⁴ Online media sources reported that by October 2018 demining along the border had started.⁵ Mine clearance along the border, conducted by Uzbekistan, was reportedly completed by January 2020;⁶ the Uzbek and Tajik authorities then moved from delimiting their border to demarcation.⁷

In 2005, media reports cited Kyrgyz officials in Batken province as saying Kyrgyz border guards had checked previously mined areas of the border around the settlements of Ak-Turpak, Chonkara, and Otukchu, which had been cleared by Uzbek deminers, and confirmed that they were free of contamination.⁸ According to the most recent information available (2005), Uzbekistan has no plans to clear mines laid on its 150km border with Afghanistan.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is no functioning mine action programme in Uzbekistan.

LAND RELEASE

There are no detailed reports of survey or clearance output in 2019, but according to online media sources in January 2020, mine clearance on the Uzbek side of the border with Tajikistan has been completed.⁹ Mine clearance was reportedly carried out exclusively by Uzbekistan and assistance from Tajikistan was refused, as the clearance conducted was exclusively on Uzbek territory.¹⁰

1 Email from Mubabbat Ibrohimzoda, Director, TNMAC, 25 April 2018.

2 “Ban calls Uzbekistan land mines ‘unacceptable’”, *The Hindu*, 6 April 2010, at: bit.ly/2Z3WYgN.

3 Email from Jonmahmad Rajabov, Director, Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (TMAC), 16 February 2009; Tajikistan Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Article 7 Report, “General situation”, 3 February 2008, p. 3; and “Uzbekistan started demining on Tajik border”, *Spy.kz*, 23 October 2007.

4 “Uzbekistan reportedly completes demining work on Tajik border”, *The Diplomat*, 10 January 2020.

5 “Putting an end to 20 years of death along the Tajik-Uzbek Border”, *RFERL*, 13 October 2018; and “Report: Tajik-Uzbek Border Cleared of Mines”, *RFERL*, 6 January 2020.

6 “Uzbekistan reportedly completes demining work on Tajik border”, *The Diplomat*, 10 January 2020; “Uzbekistan, Tajikistan to finalise border demarcation”, *Azernews*, 7 January 2020; and “Uzbekistan completes demining of border with Tajikistan, say officials”, *Central Asia News*, 4 February 2020.

7 “Uzbekistan reportedly completes demining work on Tajik border”, *The Diplomat*, 10 January 2020; and “Uzbekistan, Tajikistan to finalise border demarcation”, *Azernews*, 7 January 2020.

8 IRIN, “Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan: Landmine threat along Uzbek border removed”, at: www.irinnews.org.

9 “Uzbekistan reportedly completes demining work on Tajik border”, *The Diplomat*, 10 January 2020.

10 *Ibid.*

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Vietnam's national programme is in the process of developing its legal framework, structure, policies, and standards. With the adoption of a new national mine action decree in 2019, followed up with a more detailed Guiding Circular in February 2020, the Vietnam National Mine Action Centre (VNMAC) has now been officially empowered to start coordinating mine action in Vietnam. Progress is being made towards establishing a fully functioning national information management database and quality management (QM) capacity, and there were plans to update national mine action standards in 2020 to bring them more in line with the international mine action standards (IMAS).

However, VNMAC's primary focus is on cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), and there is a lack of clarity as to what extent mine clearance will benefit from the mine action structures and systems being established in Vietnam.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Vietnam should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Despite not yet being a State Party to the APMBC, Vietnam has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Vietnam should elaborate up a strategic plan for addressing anti-personnel mine contamination.
- Vietnam should publish a detailed assessment of remaining mined areas.
- Vietnam should publish annual reports on its progress in the survey and clearance of mined areas.
- National Technical Regulations (QCVNs) and National Mine Action Standards (TCVNs) should be updated in line with IMAS, including with regards to addressing anti-personnel mine contamination.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Vietnam's mine problem is certainly small compared with contamination from ERW, though the full extent of its mined area is unknown. A survey published in 2018 reported the presence of anti-personnel mines in 26 of 63 cities and provinces but gave no further details.¹

Most mines were left by conflicts in the 1970s with neighbouring Cambodia and China, and affect areas close to its borders with those countries.² Clearance had been reported by Vietnam along its northern border with China in the 1990s and since 2004, but mined areas further inland are believed to persist.³ It was reported in 2013 by Vietnam's Military Engineering Command that clearance had been completed in the Cambodia border areas.⁴ Many ports and river deltas were mined extensively during the armed conflict with the United States and were not completely cleared when it ended. A number of sea mines have been found on the coast.⁵ Some mines have also been found around former US military installations.⁶

Vietnam also has extensive contamination from CMR and other ERW (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Vietnam for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

VNMAC was established in 2014 by Prime Ministerial decision (No. 738 of 2013) to strengthen the direction of mine action and provide a focal point for mine action operations, although management and operations continued to depend largely on the Armed Forces.

In a positive development, Vietnam's mine action programme is now undergoing significant restructuring, following the Decree on the Management and Implementation of Mine Action Activities, issued in February 2019 (Decree No. 18) and subsequent approval of a Guiding Circular which came into effect in February 2020 (Guiding Circular No. 195).⁷

Under Decree No. 18, while the Ministry of National Defence (MoD) will continue to elaborate and preside over the national mine action programme, as the lead authority, in coordination with other relevant ministries and sectors,⁸ VNMAC will, under the direction of the Prime Minister and management of the MoD, "monitor, coordinate and implement mine action tasks".⁹ Guiding Circular No. 195, which details a number of articles and methods regarding implementation of the Decree, also officially appoints VNMAC as the national coordinator of mine action activities in Vietnam.¹⁰ Therefore, this is an important period for VNMAC, as the national programme develops its legal framework, structure, policies, and standards.

Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), PeaceTrees Vietnam (PTVN), and Golden West all provide capacity development support in Vietnam (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Vietnam for more details).¹¹

While there is still a need for greater transparency from VNMAC, international mine action organisations reported that their coordination and collaboration with VNMAC improved throughout 2019, most notably with VNMAC's engagement with the Landmine Working Group (LWG). The LWG, which is co-chaired by NPA and the International Centre (IC), is a platform for humanitarian mine action stakeholders in Vietnam to meet quarterly to share and discuss updates that impact the sector, although in 2019 the LWC only met twice and the first LWC meeting of 2020 took place in July.

In 2019, VNMAC participated and engaged in this forum, specifically calling on LWG members to help it develop Decree No. 18 and Guiding Circular No. 195.¹² During 2020, the LWG was due to be involved in the planned update to the national regulations and standards. International operators hope that VNMAC will use the LWG forum for collective discussions on continued improvements in coordination and collaboration of mine action in Vietnam.¹³

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

As at June 2020, Vietnam had not provided information on whether it has a gender policy and implementation plan for mine action or on the proportion of female employees at VNMAC.

International operators Danish Demining Group (DDG), MAG, NPA, and PTVN all report having organisational gender and diversity policies and state that they consult both women and children during community liaison activities with male and female members of community liaison/survey teams. They say they provide equal opportunities during the recruitment process and are working towards gender-balanced employment.¹⁴ For more information see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report for Vietnam.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Data quality and accessibility continues to be a major challenge in Vietnam. VNMAC is responsible for national information management and uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). However, information is not currently shared with mine action operators.¹⁵ The ERW impact survey report released in 2018 noted that "regulations on reporting demining activities have not been strictly followed". Authorities had, however, received clearance data for Ha Tinh and Quang Tri provinces, where international donors have supported operations.¹⁶ VNMAC also receives data from the 2018–20 joint KV-MAP project, between VNMAC, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), and UNDP in Binh Dinh and Quang Binh provinces.¹⁷

However, deficiencies in national-level information management are now starting to be addressed by VNMAC, made possible by Decree No. 18 and Guiding Circular No. 195, which makes clear that VNMAC is responsible for the management and development of the national mine action database. The Director General of VNMAC is responsible for regulating the scope, content, and nature of mine action data that is allowed to be shared and accessed by the information users. As at April 2020, VNMAC was in the process of determining how information management will be collected nationally and shared.¹⁸

A number of data collection forms are used in Vietnam by different mine action actors. However, following the adoption of Guiding Circular No. 195, it is expected that national regulations and standards will be updated to allow for the approval of one set of standardised data collection forms across Vietnam.¹⁹

NPA is working with VNMAC at the national level to establish information management units (IMUs) to collect and collate information from across Vietnam and give transparent access to available data. Throughout 2019, VNMAC's IMU worked to input historical data stored on other databases and available data from the provinces; a process which was expected to be completed in 2020.²⁰

For details on information management at the provincial level, please see Mine Action Review *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report for Vietnam.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Vietnam does not have a strategy specifically targeting anti-personnel mines. Decision 504, approved by the Prime Minister in April 2010, set out a National Mine Action Plan for 2010–25. The plan aimed to “mobilize domestic and international resources in making efforts to minimize and finally create impact-free environment for social economic development.” It called for ERW clearance of 8,000km² between 2016 and 2025.²¹

As at June 2020, there was no national prioritisation system for mine clearance. For details on prioritisation at the provincial level, please see Mine Action Review *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report for Vietnam.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Vietnam has both National Technical Regulations (QCVNs), which are legally binding and similar in content to standing operating procedures (SOPs), and National Mine Action Standards (TCVNs), which despite being standards are considered optional by VNMAC and the MoD.²²

The existing QCVNs and TCVNs are outdated and not in line with IMAS.²³ According to NPA, the current QCVNs are drafted with the MoD in mind and without consideration of other operators' SOPs, equipment use, land release methods, or structure and composition of teams. There are issues with the terminology used in TCVNs; chapters contradict themselves; and they read as a combination of SOPs and standards.²⁴ However, in a positive development, VNMAC planned to update the QCVNs and TCVNs in 2020 to bring them in line with IMAS.²⁵ As part of this process, VNMAC will update the SOP on QM and the SOP on technical and non-technical survey, and although consideration was given as to whether to merge the QCVNs and TCVNs into one document,²⁶ as at August 2020 the QCVNs were being updated separately.²⁷ Work commenced in May 2020, with the aim to complete the required updates by the end of the year, but it will likely take longer to elaborate and approve the new circulars needed. Updates will reportedly be made in consultation with LWG members and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).²⁸

The QCVNs and TCVNs reportedly cover anti-personnel mine operations under the heading mines/ERW clearance, but more work is required in both documents with respect to addressing mined areas.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Most clearance in Vietnam is conducted by the Army Engineering Corps and military-owned commercial companies; coordination for which does not fall under the remit of VNMAC. Outside the central provinces, the current strength and deployment of military-related demining is unknown.

Engineering Command teams were, however, being deployed as part of the KV-MAP project, which was initiated in February 2018 and is being jointly implemented by KOICA, UNDP, and VNMAC in Binh Dinh and Quang Binh provinces.²⁹

International operators active in 2019 included DDG, working in Quang Nam province; MAG, working in Quang Binh and Quang Tri provinces; NPA, working in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue provinces; and PTVN, who have been working in Quang Tri province since 1995. DDG ceased operations in Vietnam in January 2020, due to lack of funding.³⁰ Survey and clearance by the NGO operators are solely focused on contamination from CMR and other ERW, and not anti-personnel mines. For further details on survey and clearance capacity of humanitarian operators, please see Mine Action Review *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report for Vietnam.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

VNMAC has not shared any data on mine clearance activities in Vietnam in 2019 and operators did not report any anti-personnel mined area reduced or cancelled through survey or cleared in 2019.³¹

The Quang Tri Mine Action Centre (QTMAC, and previously known as the Legacy of War Coordination Centre), recorded destruction of nine anti-personnel mines in 2019: one during technical survey and eight during EOD responses. All of the mines discovered and destroyed by QTMAC were isolated mines and were not part of a minefield. This was a decrease compared to the 17 anti-personnel mines destroyed during EOD responses in 2018.³²

MAG reported destroying one anti-personnel mine in 2019, during an emergency EOD task response in Quang Tri Province.³³

A small number of anti-personnel mines were also found and destroyed during clearance operations in 2019, as part of the KV-MAP project.³⁴

Vietnam has not set a deadline for completion of anti-personnel mine clearance. In its national mine action plan for 2010 to 2025 it called for the clearance of 8,000km² of ERW from 2016 to 2025³⁵ but did not specify how much of this, if any, should be mined area.

In the past, the challenge for VNMAC was identifying and implementing the legal framework that would allow mine action stakeholders to support the decision-making process,³⁶ but addressing this should now be possible under the Decree 85 and Guiding Circular 195. It is hoped that their adoption will enable VNMAC to put in place systems and practices to coordinate and strengthen mine action in Vietnam, bringing national standards relating to survey and clearance operations in line with IMAS, and establishing a national information management database accessible to all mine action stakeholders to more accurately determine the extent of CMR contamination; and to set national priorities for clearance.

VNMAC's focus however, is on CMR and ERW, and there is currently a lack of clarity as to what extent anti-personnel mines fall under VNMAC's responsibility.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Golden West is partnering with the GICHD in a Management of Residual Explosive Remnants of War project to study the ERW ageing; develop standards for the collection, cutting, and dissection of ERW; and to draw up and pilot a long-term risk management model.³⁷

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| <p>1 VNMAC, "Report on Explosive Remnants of War Contamination in Vietnam, Based on the Explosive Remnants of War Contamination Survey and Mapping - Phase 1", provided by VNMAC 19 April 2018, p. 38.</p> <p>2 Interview with Sr. Col. Phan Duc Tuan, Deputy Commander, Military Engineering Command, People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), in Geneva, 30 June 2011.</p> <p>3 Information provided by Sr. Col. Phan Duc Tuan, PAVN, in email from Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA), Hanoi, 24 September 2012; and in interview in Geneva, 30 June 2011.</p> <p>4 Interview with Sr. Col. Nguyen Thanh Ban, Head of Bomb and Mine Department, Engineering Command, Hanoi, 18 June 2013.</p> <p>5 Landmine Action, <i>Explosive Remnants of War and Mines Other than Anti-personnel Mines</i>, London, March 2005, p. 181.</p> <p>6 Ibid.</p> <p>7 Email from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020.</p> <p>8 Decree on Implementation and Management of Mine Action, No.18/2019/ND-CP, 1 February 2019.</p> <p>9 Draft Decree on the management and implementation of mine action activities, Hanoi, April 2018.</p> <p>10 Emails from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020.</p> <p>11 For more information see Mine Action Review <i>Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants</i> report for Vietnam.</p> <p>12 Emails from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020.</p> <p>13 Emails from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 23 June 2020.</p> <p>14 For more information see Mine Action Review's <i>Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants</i> report for Vietnam.</p> <p>15 Emails from Resad Junuzagic, NPA, 6 May 2019; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020.</p> <p>16 VNMAC, "Report on Explosive Remnants of War Contamination in Vietnam", Hanoi, 2018, pp. 36-37.</p> <p>17 Email from Nils Christensen, Chief Technical Advisor, UNDP, 20 August 2020.</p> | <p>18 Emails from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020.</p> <p>19 Email from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020.</p> <p>20 Ibid.</p> <p>21 Prime Minister, "Decision on Approval of the National Mine Action Plan Period 2010-2025", Hanoi, 21 April 2010.</p> <p>22 Email from Resad Junuzagic, NPA, 6 May 2019.</p> <p>23 Emails from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020.</p> <p>24 Email from Resad Junuzagic, NPA, 6 May 2019.</p> <p>25 Emails from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020.</p> <p>26 Emails from Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April and 23 June 2020; and Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 24 June 2020.</p> <p>27 Email from Nils Christensen, UNDP, 20 August 2020.</p> <p>28 Emails from Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April and 23 June 2020; and Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 24 June 2020.</p> <p>29 Email from Nils Christensen, UNDP, 20 August 2020.</p> <p>30 Email from Søren Adser Sørensen, Programme Specialist, DDG, 5 May 2020.</p> <p>31 Ibid.; and emails from Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020; and Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020.</p> <p>32 Email from Dinh Ngoc Vu, Vice Director, Dinh Ngoc Vu, Vice Director, Quang Tri Provincial Mine Action Center (QTMAC), 31 August 2020.</p> <p>33 Email from Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020.</p> <p>34 Email from Nils Christensen, UNDP, 20 August 2020.</p> <p>35 Prime Minister, "Decision on Approval of the National Mine Action Plan Period 2010-2025", Hanoi, 21 April 2010.</p> <p>36 Email from Resad Junuzagic, NPA, 6 May 2019.</p> <p>37 Emails from Lee Moroney, Vietnam Country Director, Golden West Humanitarian Foundation, 22 April 2018 and 22 June 2019; and Rob White, Adviser, Strategic Management and Residual Contamination, GICHD, 25 April 2018.</p> |
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OTHER AREAS

The background consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various shades of orange and red. The shapes are primarily triangles and quadrilaterals, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The colors range from a deep, dark red to a bright, vibrant orange. The overall composition is abstract and modern.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- While formal accession to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) is not currently possible for Kosovo, as it is not yet recognised as a state by the depository to the Convention, Kosovo should submit a letter to the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General stating that it intends to fully comply, on a voluntary basis, with the APMBC.
- This should include the submission of a voluntary Article 7 transparency report on an annual basis, as Kosovo has proposed in its Mine Action Strategy 2019–24.
- The Kosovo Mine Action Centre (KMAC) should continue its efforts to ensure timely and efficient clearance of anti-personnel mines, in line with the objectives in its latest mine action strategy and complete clearance by the end of 2024.
- Where necessary, evidence-based survey should be conducted to confirm the presence of mines before embarking on full clearance of mined areas.
- KMAC and international mine action operators should increase their collaboration to seek additional funding and greater financial stability for mine action.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Kosovo is contaminated by mines, cluster munition remnants (CMR), and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), primarily as a result of the conflict between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in the late 1990s, and between Yugoslavia and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states in 1999.¹ At the end of 2019, 35 confirmed mined areas remained, covering almost 1.36km²; including four confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) totalling 425,000m² which contained mixed mine and CMR contamination.²

The end-2019 figure is a significant increase on the 1.2km² of mined area, across 44 CHAs, reported for the end of 2018.³ According to KMAC, the reason for the increase in Kosovo's baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination is that the 1.36km² of mined area includes mixed anti-personnel mine and cluster munition remnant contamination, whereas previously mixed contamination had not been included in the baseline of mined area.⁴

The last comprehensive survey of contamination in Kosovo was in 2013, during which The HALO Trust and KMAC conducted thousands of community surveys and confirmed 130 hazardous areas: 79 mined areas covering an estimated 2.76km² and 51 cluster munition strikes covering an estimated 7.63km².⁵

KMAC believes the current baseline of contamination to be reasonably accurate, evidence-based, and complete, but said there may still be reports by locals in the future of previously unknown areas suspected to be contaminated by mines.⁶

The HALO Trust believes Kosovo's current baseline reflects a relatively accurate picture of the remaining contamination, but suggests that it would benefit from a critical review and further assessment of the existing 2013 survey data. This would inform future targeting of survey and clearance of remaining contamination, in order to achieve completion by the target date of 2024.⁷

Both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines were used during the conflict, in fixed-pattern minefields as well as more randomly in "nuisance" minefields. Many anti-personnel mines had minimal metal content.⁸ Although the total number of mines emplaced during the conflict is not known, the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMACC) reported, as at 31 May 2000, that a total of 7,232 mines had been cleared in the preceding year (3,448 anti-personnel mines and 3,784 anti-vehicle mines).⁹ The UN reported in 2002 that "the problems associated with landmines, cluster munitions and other items of unexploded ordnance [UXO] in Kosovo have been virtually eliminated",¹⁰ but further investigation revealed that considerably more contamination remained to be addressed.¹¹

EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND CLUSTER MUNITION REMNANTS

In addition to contamination from mines, Kosovo is contaminated with CMR (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Kosovo for further information) as well as other ERW. Kosovo Protection Force (KFOR) and Kosovo Security Force (KSF) explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams regularly dispose of ERW in response to information provided by the public and demining organisations.¹²

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In January 2011, the EOD Coordination Management Section became KMAC, responsible for managing survey and clearance of mines and ERW throughout Kosovo. KMAC prepares an annual work plan in cooperation with international demining NGOs and coordinates their operations along with the national demining teams of the KSF. It also coordinates survey, quality assurance, risk education, public information, and victim assistance activities.¹³ KMAC's role and responsibilities as head of the national mine action programme under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence were established and institutionalised by Kosovo's 2012 Law on Humanitarian Demining.¹⁴

In 2019, KMAC had five permanent staff: a Director, a Senior Quality Assurance (QA) Officer, a QA Inspector, a Mine Risk Education (MRE) Officer, and a Public Information Officer.¹⁵

Kosovo's mine action programme is fully nationally owned, with a strong, longstanding commitment from the national government. The dedicated team of permanent national staff have been employed by KMAC since its creation. This has benefitted the programme with the retention of experience and institutional memory.¹⁶

NGO operators in Kosovo report having a constructive and proactive working relationship with KMAC. HALO Trust staff meet with the director of KMAC for monthly coordination

meetings,¹⁷ and, in addition, KMAC's QA officers visit HALO Trust on a quarterly basis to discuss operations planning, along with conducting unannounced weekly field visits to HALO tasks.¹⁸

In 2019, the Kosovo government provided €990,000 in financial support to KMAC, and to the KSF for mine and ERW clearance.¹⁹

Kosovo's current Mine Action Strategy 2019–24 sets out the objective of intensifying resource mobilisation efforts in order to gain greater financial stability.²⁰ While a specific resource mobilisation strategy does not exist, operators reported that coordinated approaches with KMAC were made to potential donors such as the United States and the European Union.²¹

Unfortunately, the misperception persists that mine, CMR, and other ERW clearance in Kosovo was completed in 2001, whereas the reality is that significant contamination remains. Kosovo remains a poor country and needs economic assistance to help it complete clearance in a timely manner, hopefully in less than five years if sufficient support is provided. In 2019, KMAC identified funding and logistical support as the two primary areas where it could most benefit from assistance from international donors and mine action operators.²²

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Kosovo's Mine Action Strategy 2019–24 reflects the commitment of the mine action programme to ensure that gender is taken into consideration in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of all mine action projects, with a view to promoting equality and quality.²³ The Strategy stipulates that all mine action activities and assistance must reflect the needs of different ages and gender in a targeted and non-discriminatory manner, and that mine action and community liaison data are also to be collected and systematically disaggregated according to sex and age.²⁴

Both KMAC and KSF have gender policies in place. KMAC reported that the KSF's gender policy aims to facilitate the consultation of all groups affected by mines and ERW, expressly women and children. Within KMAC, one of its five staff (the MRE Officer) is a woman. A total of 5% of KSF staff employed in operational mine action roles were women, but none is in a managerial or supervisory position.²⁵

Kosovo's mine action strategy recognises the barriers that exist against equal employment in Kosovo society, including significant differences in employment levels between men and women, despite the number of men and women of working age being broadly similar. The Strategy notes that, as at 2019, more than four-fifths of women of working age were not employed in Kosovo's labour market, and less than one in eight women of working age has been employed annually over the past five years. The primary reasons given by women for unemployment are child and family care obligations, which traditionally fall on women in Kosovo society. The Strategy notes the efforts of mine action operators to overcome these challenges and barriers to employment, such as through child care and parental leave, and gender-sensitive recruitment practices that encourage women to apply for

positions traditionally seen as jobs for men. It further recalls the importance of employment of not only multi-gender, but also multi-ethnic survey and clearance teams and the particular benefits of recruitment in areas affected by high unemployment and poor socio-economic conditions.²⁶

In 2018, The HALO Trust developed a gender policy in consultation with the Kosovo Women's Network, an advocacy network of more than 140 member organisations, including women's organisations of all ethnic backgrounds from throughout Kosovo, which was adopted in February. The policy aims both at increasing the recruitment of women, as well as retention of existing female employees.²⁷ In 2019, HALO further developed this policy to include provision for increased family leave and child-care allowances for those taking care of children, in order to remove barriers to women's employment. Through the Dutch Government, HALO Trust contracted the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP, a part of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, GICHD) to conduct gender sensitivity and leadership training in July 2019 to more than 20 managers in the global organisation, to address issues of unconscious bias and inclusion.²⁸

In HALO Trust's Kosovo programme, 17% of employees are women, including in 14% of operational roles in survey and clearance teams, although there were no women in operational management positions in 2019. HALO also ensures that community liaison teams are gender balanced and include senior personnel fluent in relevant languages, to ensure that community liaison activities are inclusive for ethnic or minority groups.²⁹

Although HALO Trust is committed to increasing the number of women in the organisation generally and specifically in management roles, without recruitment or expansion opportunities, this has proved difficult. In May 2019, however, HALO trained and promoted four women to operate Handheld Stand-off Mine Detection System (HSTAMIDS) detectors – a first for the programme. In 2020, HALO was planning to train and promote Assistant Team Leaders, and sees this as an opportunity to increase the representation of women in operational management.³⁰ Relevant mine action data are disaggregated by gender and age, and data collected post-clearance is also disaggregated to ensure the understanding and analysis of impact of mine action activities takes gender into consideration.³¹

According to KMAC, Kosovo's baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination has been established through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men, including, where relevant, from minority groups.³²

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

KMAC uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation version for its national mine action database. Data are disaggregated between mines, CMR, and other ERW.³³ Operators were positive in their assessments of the quality and accessibility of data contained in the database and of KMAC's information management systems in general. Operators report to KMAC on a weekly basis.³⁴ However, there continued to be significant discrepancies between land release data reported to Mine Action Review by clearance operators, compared to data reported by KMAC.

According to its most recent mine action strategy, KMAC intended, as a means to show its commitment to the APMBC, to submit voluntary Article 7 transparency reports on an annual basis.³⁵ In disappointing news, KMAC subsequently advised Mine Action Review that Kosovo would only start submitting Article 7 reports when it becomes a member of the UN.³⁶

PLANNING AND TASKING

The GICHD supported the development of Kosovo's new Mine Action Strategy for 2019–24, bringing together a wide range of national and international stakeholders in a strategy stakeholder workshop in Pristina in October 2018. The strategy, formally approved in January 2019 and launched by the Ministry of Kosovo Security Services on 4 April 2019, has three goals:

- Mine/ERW threats managed and reduced
- Communication and awareness raising
- Management of residual contamination.

The strategy declares that all known mined and CMR-contaminated areas will be addressed by the end of 2024, leaving only residual contamination to be managed accordingly. It contains annual projections for anti-personnel mine clearance, including:

- all high priority anti-personnel mine tasks (numbering 8 as at October 2018) will be cleared by the end of 2020
- all medium-priority anti-personnel mine tasks (25 as at October 2018) will be cleared by 2022; and
- all low-priority anti-personnel mine tasks (15 as at October 2018) will be completed by 2024.³⁷

Planned completion of clearance of the high priority tasks by the end of 2020 may be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁸

The strategy states it is based on a number of assumptions, including that the necessary funding will be secured and that no new mined or CMR-contaminated areas are identified. It notes, however, that “so far each year 3–4 different affected areas have been reported” and that should this trend continue, capacity and progress will need to be reassessed with regards to the 2024 deadline.³⁹

As per the strategy, KMAC will develop annual operational work plans to implement the strategy's goals.⁴⁰ KMAC will also request an external mid-term review of the strategy in 2022 to evaluate progress and make any adaptations according to contextual changes if required.⁴¹

In 2019, KMAC confirmed that it had developed annual operational work plans to target anti-personnel mined areas, according to impact-based criteria, including risk reduction, development priorities, and poverty reduction, along with the findings of a nationwide baseline socio-economic impact assessment carried out in 2018 by KMAC, with the support of The HALO Trust.⁴² The mine action strategy for 2019–24 is also in alignment with the objectives of Kosovo's National Development Strategy 2016–2021.⁴³

In 2019, The HALO Trust developed a new prioritisation system that takes into account the “community profile” for a task. This system draws on several factors, such as socio-economic status, planned land use, government development plans, and demographics. All information is collected from government and public data as well as from extensive community survey.⁴⁴

In 2020, KMAC planned that clearance would start on nine mined areas.⁴⁵

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

National mine action standards for land release are in place in Kosovo, which according to KMAC are in accord with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).⁴⁶

A 2014 evaluation of Kosovo's mine action programme, conducted on behalf of the International Trust Fund (ITF) Enhancing Human Security, concluded that an increase in capacity and improvements to land release methodology and equipment deployed would be necessary if Kosovo were to complete clearance operations by 2024. Since the 2014 evaluation, a number of significant improvements have been introduced to the mine action programme, including the introduction of HSTAMID detectors by The HALO Trust, which have advanced operational productivity.⁴⁷

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2019, Kosovo's national mine action programme's capacity consisted of two international operators, The HALO Trust and NPA, and national operator, the KSF. However, NPA did not conduct survey or clearance of anti-personnel mined area in 2019, solely focusing on CMR.⁴⁸ The demining season is from the end of March to the end of November, due to weather conditions.⁴⁹

HALO Trust's operational personnel are cross-trained for mine clearance and battle area clearance (BAC) and can move readily between activities. On average, in 2019, The HALO Trust deployed 48 deminers to mine clearance tasks – a slight increase on the previous year.⁵⁰

KSF operated two manual clearance teams in 2019, totalling 20 deminers, and expected capacity to remain the same in 2020.⁵¹ KFOR supports the KSF and Kosovo Police with EOD response tasks and organising mine and ERW demolitions in Mitrovica and the north of Kosovo.⁵²

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

A total of almost 0.32km² of mined area was released in 2019: 0.27km² through clearance and 0.05km² cancelled through non-technical survey.⁵³

SURVEY IN 2019

A total of more than 0.05km² was cancelled through non-technical survey in 2019 (see Table 1). Whereas KMAC did not report any mined area as having been reduced through technical survey in 2019,⁵⁴ HALO Trust reported reducing 92,761m² through technical survey during the year.⁵⁵

This is an increase in non-technical survey, compared to 2018, when no mined area was cancelled, but is a decrease on the 114,000m² reduced through technical survey in 2018.⁵⁷

While KMAC did not report any anti-personnel mined area as having been reduced through technical survey in 2019, HALO Trust reported reducing 92,761m², across the districts of Ferizaj, Gjakova, Mitrovice, and Prizren. HALO Trust applies reduction to tasks once clearance has been completed.⁵⁸

Table 1: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2019⁵⁶

Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
HALO Trust	25,049
KSF	26,500
Total	51,549

CLEARANCE IN 2019

In 2019, a total of almost 0.27km² of anti-personnel mined area was cleared, with 21 anti-personnel mines, 1 anti-vehicle mine, and 5 items of UXO found and destroyed (see Table 2).⁵⁹ This was a slight increase in the area cleared compared to 2018, when just over 0.22km² of anti-personnel mined area was cleared, with 46 anti-personnel mines found and destroyed.⁶⁰

Table 2: Mine clearance in 2019⁶¹

Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
HALO Trust	221,246	17	1	0
KSF	47,390	4	0	5
Totals	268,636	21	1	5

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

A further 20 anti-personnel mines were destroyed by the KSF in EOD response tasks in 2019.⁶² As Kosovo has strict national procedures for the management of explosives, the KSF, with support from KFOR in northern Kosovo, carries out the destruction of mines, CMR, and other ERW found by The HALO Trust and NPA.⁶³

Compared to the previous year, in 2019, The HALO Trust saw an increase of mine clearance productivity by some 13% based on its own data, as a result of increasing team numbers and introducing a greater number of HSTAMIDS detectors.⁶⁴

During operations in 2019, three mined areas were cleared in which no anti-personnel mines were found: Deve (4,247m²), Rrasa e Zogut (3,227m²), and Shkoza (4,400m²).⁶⁵ Evidence of mines, particularly PMR2-A, was present at some tasks,⁶⁶ but

it still highlights the need for robust evidence-based survey prior to any clearance.

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Kosovo cannot formally adhere to the APMBC and therefore does not have a specific clearance deadline under Article 5. Nonetheless, it has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines as soon as possible.

As stated in Kosovo's Mine Action Strategy 2019–24, which sets completion of mine and cluster munition clearance by the end of 2024, completion will only be achievable if sustained funding is secured.⁶⁷ Specific concerns are elaborated in the strategy about the need to upgrade old equipment, including vehicles to proceed without unnecessary stand-downs or costly repairs.⁶⁸

As at April 2020, KMAC reported that it still expects to clear all known mined areas by the end of 2024.⁶⁹ The HALO Trust reported that it requires increased capacity to complete mine clearance by the end of 2024, as the funding commitment as at May 2020 was not sufficient. HALO also highlighted the need for a review of the current data on mined areas, including an evaluation of survey polygons, and application of efficient land release methodologies, in order to ensure coordinated and cost-effective targeting of clearance.⁷⁰

Assuming the target is met, completion of mine clearance in 2024 would be 25 years after the end of the conflict between the FRY forces and NATO and more than 20 years after the UN claimed that clearance was largely complete.

Table 3: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2019	0.27
2018	0.22
2017	0.23
2016	0.15
2015	0.22
Total	1.09

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

According to Kosovo's Mine Action Strategy 2019–24, a separate national strategy on the management of residual contamination will be developed by KMAC by 2023, in collaboration with other national actors. This will clarify roles and responsibilities in order to manage what is expected to be a long-term residual contamination problem.⁷¹

- 1 See UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), "UNMIK OKPCC EOD Management Section Annual Report 2005", Pristina, 18 January 2006, p. 2; and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *Explosive Remnants of War, Cluster Bombs and Landmines in Kosovo*, Rev'd Edn, Geneva, June 2001, pp. 6 and 15, at: bit.ly/331PWfQ.
- 2 Email from Ahmet Sallova, Head of Mine Action Centre, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 3 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 4 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 July 2020.
- 5 HALO Trust, "Action on cluster munitions in Kosovo", Side event, First Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) Review Conference, Dubrovnik, 10 September 2015.
- 6 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 7 Email from Olivia Meader, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 8 ICRC, *Explosive Remnants of War, Cluster Bombs and Landmines in Kosovo*, June 2001, p. 15.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 "UNMIK Mine Action Programme Annual Report – 2001", Mine Action Coordination Cell, Pristina, undated but 2002, p. 1.
- 11 HALO Trust, "Failing the Kosovars: The Hidden Impact and Threat from ERW", Report, 15 December 2006, p. 1.
- 12 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 1 August 2012.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 June and 3 July 2017; and Ministry of Defence, "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 3.
- 15 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 16 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, pp. 5–6.
- 17 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020; and Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 18 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 19 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 20 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 14.
- 21 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 25 April 2019.
- 22 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 30 April 2019.
- 23 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 8.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 26 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, pp. 8–9.
- 27 Ibid., p. 8.
- 28 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 29 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 1 May 2019 and 22 May 2020.
- 30 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 31 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 1 May 2019; and "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 8.
- 32 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 33 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 30 April 2019.
- 34 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 1 May 2019; and Terje Eldøen, NPA, 25 April 2019.
- 35 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 13.
- 36 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 37 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 12.
- 38 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 July 2020.
- 39 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, pp. 9–10.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid., p. 16.
- 42 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 30 April 2019; and Tom Welling, HALO Trust, 7 May 2018.
- 43 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 1.
- 44 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 45 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 1 May 2019; and Terje Eldøen, NPA, 25 April 2019.
- 48 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 12 May 2020.
- 49 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 3.
- 50 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 51 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 52 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 4; and interview with Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, Pristina, 5 April 2019.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 56 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020; and Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020. However, while KMAC reported that HALO cancelled 25,049m² in 2019, HALO itself did not report cancelling any mined area during the year.
- 57 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 11 July 2019 and Mike Newton, HALO Trust, 28 July 2019.
- 58 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 59 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May and 23 June 2020; and Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April and 16 July 2020.
- 60 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 11 July 2019.
- 61 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May and 23 June 2020; and Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April and 16 July 2020. However, there was a discrepancy between clearance data reported by KMAC for HALO Trust and that reported by HALO Trust itself. KMAC reported that HALO cleared a total of 420,875m², with the destruction of a total of 59 anti-personnel mines and 1 anti-vehicle mine.
- 62 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 63 Interview with Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, Pristina, 5 April 2019.
- 64 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 65 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 66 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 67 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 6.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 April 2020.
- 70 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO Trust, 22 May 2020.
- 71 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 15.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Nagorno-Karabakh should make a commitment to respect the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and set a deadline for the clearance of all anti-personnel mines.
- Despite not being a State Party to the APMBC, Nagorno-Karabakh has obligations under international human rights law to clear anti-personnel mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- The Nagorno-Karabakh authorities should commit to never use anti-personnel mines and provide resources for mine survey and clearance.
- Nagorno-Karabakh should expedite creation of a mine action authority to centralise and strengthen information management and enhance coordination between all stakeholders.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The estimate of anti-personnel mine contamination more than doubled to 7.75km² in 2019 (see Table 1) as a result of a nationwide survey started by HALO Trust and expected to continue until 2022. It found 125 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), up from 70 a year earlier, covering 4.72km² compared with 3.78km² at the end of 2018. It also identified 108 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) affecting 3.03km², mostly in the north-eastern Martakert area bordering Azerbaijan.¹

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end 2019)

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
Askeran	8	321,286	1	28,309	349,595
Hadrut	15	1,614,398	0	0	1,614,398
Lachin	19	560,044	0	0	560,044
Martakert	77	1,902,840	107	3,003,233	4,906,073
Martuni	2	154,715	0	0	154,715
Shahumyan	4	167,900	0	0	167,900
Totals	125	4,721,183	108	3,031,542	7,752,725

All regions of Nagorno-Karabakh have been affected by mines and unexploded submunitions as a result of the 1988–94 conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and subsequent fighting. Mines were laid by both the Azeri and pro-Karabakh forces during the war, with a relatively high proportion of anti-vehicle mines being used in some regions.² The mines were of Soviet design and manufacture, and due to the nature of the conflict certain areas were mined several times.³ Nagorno-Karabakh's armed forces said they laid additional anti-personnel mines along the Armenian-Azerbaijani line of contact in 2013, east and north of disputed territory.⁴

Of 183 CHAs and SHAs newly identified in 2019, 182 covering a total of 4,633,027m² were within the Traditional Oblast while the remaining one, covering 14,318m² was outside. The significant discoveries around Martakert underscored the many years that had elapsed since previous surveys, which were mostly conducted in the early 2000s with some additional survey in 2010–11 and 2014, and increased knowledge of contamination accumulated by local communities.⁵

Nagorno-Karabakh has a relatively small amount of anti-vehicle mine contamination but much more extensive cluster munition contamination (see Table 2), which covers approximately 10 times as much area as anti-personnel mines as well as explosive remnants of war (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munitions 2020*).

Table 2: Explosive contamination by type (at end 2019)⁶

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHA	Area (m ²)
Anti-personnel mines	125	4,721,183	108	3,031,542
Anti-vehicle mines	20	1,171,238	8	73,319
Cluster munitions	213	70,481,083	0	0
Totals	358	76,373,504	116	3,104,861

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Nagorno-Karabakh does not have a mine action centre or authority. The HALO Trust established the Nagorno-Karabakh Mine Action Centre (NKMACH) in 2000, which it hoped would consolidate all mine action-related information and respond to requests from the government ministries, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and local communities. The project did not, however, attract local support and has been moribund for several years.⁷

Proposals for establishing a national centre were supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in meetings with The HALO Trust at the end of 2019 and discussions were set to resume in 2020. HALO reported constructive talks on the issue with the State Emergency Services and the Ministry of Agriculture.⁸

A mine action coordination committee is responsible for liaising between the local authorities and The HALO Trust. Regular coordination committee meetings were held between the local authorities, The HALO Trust, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) until 2018 when the head of the committee was moved to a new post. The position remains vacant, with HALO Trust continuing to lobby for a suitable candidate to fill the role.⁹

The Nagorno-Karabakh authorities do not provide The HALO Trust with any funding to clear mined areas.¹⁰

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

HALO's Nagorno-Karabakh programme follows the organisation's gender and diversity policies, providing equal access to employment for women and engaging them in management and operational roles.¹¹ Its most senior national staff member is female and women were employed in both survey and clearance. In 2019, female staff were included in non-technical survey teams for the first time. From 2020, all HALO survey teams include at least one woman. Women made up around 13% of HALO's staff in 2019, about the same as in the previous year, and expected to hire more women, subject to the availability of funding.¹²

All groups affected by anti-personnel mines, including women and children, are said to be consulted during survey and community liaison activities. Relevant mine action data is disaggregated by sex and age.¹³ But gender is said to be not taken into account in the prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance activities.¹⁴

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Nagorno-Karabakh does not have a mine action information management system; The HALO Trust operates its own database.¹⁵

No central mechanism exists for systematic sharing of data on mine clearance, underscoring the value of a mine action authority. The emergency services share information on explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) call-outs and advance notice of demolitions.¹⁶ The Nagorno-Karabakh Army Liaison Officer shares information with The HALO Trust on items found, incidents, CHAs, and clearance on a regular basis. HALO is not authorised to share this data with others.¹⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

There is no national mine action strategy currently in place in Nagorno-Karabakh.¹⁸

HALO Trust's work plan has focused on completing existing tasks, giving priority to areas where confirmed accidents indicate the greatest humanitarian threat and where cleared areas are most likely to be put to use. HALO Trust started a nationwide survey in 2019, focusing on Malakert as Nagorno-Karabakh's most heavily mine-contaminated region. When new information of contamination is received, such as a mine find or incident, HALO tasks a non-technical survey team to respond within 48 hours. Otherwise, the survey was due to continue in 2020 on a region-by-region basis.¹⁹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Nagorno-Karabakh has no local mine action standards. The Nagorno-Karabakh police were planning to lobby the government to develop standards while The HALO Trust planned to support calls for national standards as part of discussions on creating a mine action authority.²⁰

In the meantime, The HALO Trust follows its internal standing operating procedures. These were extensively re-written in 2019 to support introduction of more efficient clearance techniques, including the use of Minehound ground-penetrating-radar detectors.²¹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The HALO Trust has been the main organisation conducting land release in Nagorno-Karabakh since it started working there in 2000. The Nagorno-Karabakh Emergency Service, formerly known as the Rescue Service, conducts EOD spot tasks and has reportedly conducted some clearance. One Nagorno-Karabakh army unit conducts limited demining.²²

Clearance is conducted mostly in the summer months between May and October. In 2019, HALO Trust operated with a total staff that peaked at 242 at the end of September before winding down in line with normal practice to 159 at the end of the year. At the end of 2019, HALO had 12 manual clearance teams with a total of 79 deminers together with four four-person non-technical survey teams and two mechanical teams with a total of eight personnel. Uncertainty over the level of continued United States (US) funding raised the possibility that HALO Trust would reduce staff further in 2020 rather than build up capacity over the summer.²³

After trialling Minehound GPR detectors and developing SOPs for them in 2019, The HALO Trust planned to deploy the detectors with demining teams in 2020.²⁴ By May 2020, HALO Trust had received three of the detectors and had one in service. It planned to deploy the other two by mid-June after training which requires dry ground and was delayed by persistent rain. Initial results showed the detector had increased clearance rates by around 10%, a figure expected to rise with experience.²⁵

The HALO Trust introduced a mobile data platform, the Fulcrum App, to boost the effectiveness and efficiency of non-technical survey. It allows survey teams to track and map historical evidence related to mine contamination and will enhance survey of the remaining mine contamination in Nagorno-Karabakh. HALO Trust also introduced use of Differential GPS providing greater accuracy to survey data.²⁶

DEMINER SAFETY

HALO Trust did not experience any demining casualties in 2019.

In November 2019, Nagorno-Karabakh police concluded their investigation into a March 2018 anti-vehicle mine blast which killed three members of a HALO Trust technical survey team and injured two others.²⁷ The HALO Trust and an external investigator had already conducted investigations that were concluded by June 2018. None of the investigations was able to determine with certainty the cause of the accident, which may have been a deep-buried mine. The other possibilities were that the area was missed during clearance due to the complexities of working around a previous accident site, or that the mine was not detected due to inadequate application of clearance techniques.²⁸

The investigation, which was the most detailed in HALO Trust's history, led to 28 recommendations, mostly focused on management systems. Manual prodding, halted after the accident, remains suspended.²⁹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

The HALO Trust released a total of 195,997m² in 2019, all of it through clearance, almost a quarter less than in 2018.

SURVEY IN 2019

No mined area was cancelled through non-technical survey or reduced through technical survey in 2019.

As part of its re-survey of Nagorno-Karabakh, HALO Trust teams surveyed 38 out of 362 villages in 2019. It expects to complete survey of the Traditional Oblast by early 2022 and finish the rest of the territory the following year.³⁰

CLEARANCE IN 2019

HALO Trust cleared 195,997m² in 2019 (see Table 3), down from the 253,804m² it cleared during the previous year, but, in the process, it destroyed more anti-personnel mines than it did in 2018.³¹

Table 3: Mine clearance in 2019

Province/Region/District	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Askeran	5,936	2	0
Hadrut	153,360	84	1
Lachin	18,221	5	0
Martakert	15,476	23	0
Martuni	3,004	0	2
Totals	195,997	114	3

HALO survey teams are responsible for conducting EOD spot tasks and seven of nineteen tasks conducted in 2019 involved destruction of mines of which one was an anti-personnel mine and the remainder anti-vehicle mines.³²

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- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | Email from Rob Syfret, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. | 16 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 13 May 2020. |
| 2 | United States Agency for International Development (USAID), "De-mining Needs Assessment in Nagorno-Karabakh", September 2013, p. 2. | 17 | Email from Asqanaz Hambardzumyan, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019. |
| 3 | HALO Trust, "Our role in Nagorno-Karabakh: History", accessed 20 July 2019 at: bit.ly/2Zyu1KZ . | 18 | Ibid. |
| 4 | L. Musayelian, "Karabakh Enhances Defense Capabilities", <i>Asbarez</i> , Stepanakert, 26 July 2013, at: bit.ly/3imvugM . | 19 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. |
| 5 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 13 May 2020. | 20 | Email from Asqanaz Hambardzumyan, HALO Trust, 26 April 2019. |
| 6 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. | 21 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. |
| 7 | Emails from Andrew Moore, HALO Trust, 28 June 2013; and Asqanaz Hambardzumyan, Field Officer, HALO Trust, 26 April 2019. | 22 | Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020; and Amasia Zargarian, HALO Trust, 4 May 2018. |
| 8 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 13 May 2020. | 23 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. |
| 9 | Emails from Andrew Moore, HALO Trust, 26 May 2016; and Asqanaz Hambardzumyan, HALO Trust, 26 April 2019. | 24 | Ibid. |
| 10 | Email from Asqanaz Hambardzumyan, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019. | 25 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 13 May 2020. |
| 11 | Ibid. | 26 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. |
| 12 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. | 27 | Emails from Asqanaz Hambardzumyan, HALO Trust, 10 and 26 April and 1 June 2019. |
| 13 | Email from Asqanaz Hambardzumyan, HALO Trust, 10 April 2019. | 28 | Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May, 13 May, and 30 July 2020. |
| 14 | Ibid. | 29 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. |
| 15 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. | 30 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 13 May 2020. |
| | | 31 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 7 May 2020. |
| | | 32 | Email from Rob Syfret, HALO Trust, 13 May 2020. |

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) should reaffirm its written commitment to respect and implement the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), including clearance of all anti-personnel mines east of the Berm, consonant with its human rights obligations.
- A resource mobilisation plan should be developed with the aim of attracting international donor support.
- Greater support should be provided to the Saharawi Mine Action Coordination Office (SMACO) to enable it to continue to coordinate mine action in Western Sahara, east of the Berm and ensure that capacity development efforts are not lost.
- Mine action in Western Sahara must not become forgotten or overlooked by the international mine action community. Support must still be given to address remaining mine, cluster munition, and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination.
- SMACO should revise its strategy to include a more realistic date for completion of clearance of anti-personnel mines with annual survey and clearance targets, and a detailed budget.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The exact extent of mine contamination across Western Sahara is not known, although the areas along the Berm¹ are thought to contain some of the densest mine contamination in the world.² The contamination is a result of fighting in previous decades between the Royal Moroccan Army (RMA) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front) forces.

According to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the primary mine threat in Western Sahara east of the Berm, excluding both the Berm itself, restricted areas, and the buffer strip, is from anti-vehicle mines rather than anti-personnel mines; cluster munition remnants (CMR) are also a major hazard.³ As at end 2019, no areas suspected or confirmed to contain solely anti-personnel mines remained to the east of the Berm. The majority of mine contamination identified during ongoing and historical clearance efforts was from anti-vehicle mines though with some areas previously thought to contain only anti-vehicle mines found to also contain anti-personnel mines following non-technical survey conducted in the Agwanit Area of Responsibility.⁴

At the end of 2019, land in Western Sahara to the east of the Berm contained a total of 51 areas confirmed and suspected to contain mixed anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mine contamination covering a total of 275km² (see Table 1).⁵ From 2018, this is an increase of 58.74km² in total mined area and an increase of 25 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). According to UNMAS, this is due to previously unrecorded anti-vehicle mine contamination being found through survey and added to the database.⁵

Table 1: Mined area east of the Berm (at end 2019)⁷

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (km ²)	SHAs	Area (km ²)	Total CHAs and SHAs	Total area (km ²)
AP mines	0	0	0	0	0	0
AV mines	27	61.90	0	0	27	61.90
AP/AV mines	5	87.11	19	126.00	24	213.11
Totals	32	149.01	19	126.00	51	275.01

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle CHA = Confirmed hazardous area SHA = Suspected hazardous area

Both the north and south of Western Sahara are known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, with 24 areas confirmed or suspected areas with a total size of 213km² remaining to be addressed at the end of 2019, as set out in Table 2.⁸ This is a small decrease in total area from the end of the previous year when there was 216.25km² contaminated with anti-personnel mines.⁹ According to UNMAS, this decrease is due to re-survey of contaminated areas.¹⁰

Table 2: Mined area containing anti-personnel mines by province east of the Berm (at end 2019)¹¹

Province	CHAs	Area (km ²)	SHAs	Area (km ²)	Total CHAs and SHAs	Total area (km ²)
North Region	1	0.11	16	16.04	17	16.15
South Region	4	87	3	109.96	7	196.96
Totals	5	87.11	19	126.00	24	213.11

In September 2018, UNMAS reported that following non-technical survey efforts, east of the Berm, 10 of the then 27 mined areas remained, covering an estimated total of almost 120km². These areas are located within the 5km-wide buffer strip and are inaccessible for clearance.¹² Clearance of the buffer strip of mines and ERW is not foreseen in UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) Military Agreements No. 2 (with Frente POLISARIO) and No. 3 (with RAM), which, according to the UN, considerably limits the ability of MINURSO military observers to patrol and verify developments.¹³ No survey or clearance of the buffer strip was conducted during 2019.¹⁴

The RMA controls territory to the west of the Berm where it has been conducting large-scale demining. According to UNMAS, the RMA cooperates with the MINURSO mine action component and submits regular monthly reports of its activities in the Territory, west of the Berm, helping to build a clearer understanding of the mine and ERW threat across Western Sahara.¹⁵

CLUSTER MUNITION REMNANTS AND OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR

Western Sahara also has a significant problem from CMR and other ERW (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2020* report on Western Sahara for further information).¹⁶

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

UNMAS Western Sahara, formerly the MINURSO Mine Action Coordination Centre (MACC), facilitates MINURSO monitoring of the ceasefire and ensures the safe passage of UN personnel. On 30 October 2019, MINURSO's mandate was extended for an additional 12 months until 30 October 2020 under Security Council Resolution 2494 (2019). UNMAS Western Sahara serves as the UN focal point for mine action activities within the MINURSO area of operations. Its contracted teams work in areas east of the Berm only. The RMA conducts its own demining in areas west of the Berm. In 2013–14, the Polisario Front, with UN support, established the SMACO, which is responsible for coordinating mine action activities in Western Sahara east of the Berm, excluding the buffer strip.¹⁷

In 2019, UNMAS Western Sahara had a grant of \$53,937 to cover capacity building and some operating expenses for SMACO. UNMAS also supported SMACO to develop its own internal strategy for 2019–23, which includes a communications and resource mobilisation strategy.¹⁸

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

UNMAS has reported that gender policies are implemented in accordance with UNMAS, the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and MINURSO guidelines, as well as with direction from the Polisario.¹⁹ UNMAS also reported that gender has been mainstreamed into Western Sahara's national mine action work plans and the SMACO 2019–23 mine action strategy.²⁰ During survey, efforts are made to consider the needs of men, women, girls, and boys to ensure more effective and efficient operations, despite challenges presented by conducting survey activities targeting Bedouin populations.²¹

UNMAS reported there is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in survey and clearance teams in Western Sahara, east of the Berm, including for managerial level/supervisory positions. In 2019, 9% of operational roles in SafeLane Global were held by women and at a managerial level this was 7%. In SMACO, there is one woman at managerial level out of five positions.²²

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

According to UNMAS, the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database for Western Sahara, east of the Berm, improved as a result of an ongoing data audit initiated at the end of 2015.²³ The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has also provided ongoing support to correct database errors, and an upgrade to the latest database software version, IMSMA Core, was scheduled to take place in August 2019.²⁴ However, as at June 2020, the updating of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for information management and the gradual shift to IMSMA Core had been suspended because of COVID-19 lockdown.²⁵

PLANNING AND TASKING

In 2019, SMACO developed its strategy for mine action in Western Sahara, east of the Berm, covering 2019–23 in line with the newly published global UN Mine Action Strategy 2019–2023. In order to achieve a Western Sahara that is free of the impact of mines and ERW, SMACO has established the following timed objectives:

- to implement efficient and effective communication with national and international organisations by 2019.
- to establish an effective mechanism for data collection of accidents and victims which will be shared with partners according to the SMACO Data Protection Policy by 2019.
- to establish sustainable and constant funding of SMACO by 2020.
- to ensure availability of human resources to comprehensively manage mine action by 2020.
- to fully implement a professional management structure within SMACO by 2021.
- to create a discussion platform (think tank) for a national victim rights protection policy by 2022.
- to establish a national employment policy for mine action activities by 2023.²⁶

As at June 2020, it is not known if Western Sahara, east of the Berm, achieved its objectives for 2019. UNMAS reported there was no mine action work plan for 2019 or 2020 and that UNMAS Western Sahara mine action activities continue to be in support of MINURSO's mandate.²⁷

UNMAS and SMACO identify priorities for clearance of both minefields and cluster munition strikes to the east of the Berm in conjunction with MINURSO. Priorities are identified based on humanitarian needs for the safety and freedom of movement of local populations, while UNMAS Western Sahara facilitates the ceasefire and ensuring the safe passage of UN personnel.²⁸

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Local mine action standards were developed and finalised in 2016 by UNMAS, together with SMACO, and in coordination with mine action partners. A first annual review of the standards was completed in November 2018 with a review board consisting of representatives from UNMAS, SMACO, and all implementing partners. No significant changes were made, and UNMAS reported in June 2019 that translation of the standards into Arabic had been completed and shared with SMACO.²⁹

An external quality management system was in place from 2018 and implemented by UNMAS and SMACO to the east of the Berm.³⁰

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Table 3: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dog teams	Mechanical assets*	Comments
SLG (for UNMAS Western Sahara)	2	20	0	0	Multi-tasking teams
SLG (for UNMAS Western Sahara)	1	3	0	0	Survey and Route Verification Team
Totals	3	23	0	0	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

SafeLane Global (formerly Dynasafe MineTech Limited, DML) was the implementing operator for UNMAS Western Sahara, conducting survey and clearance in 2019. There was a decrease in overall operational capacity from 2018 as Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) had made the "difficult decision" to close down its programme, effective on 1 January 2019, after releasing the last known contaminated areas in Bir Lehlou province in August 2018.³¹

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

In 2019, a total of 0.20km² of mined area was cleared by SafeLane Global for UNMAS Western Sahara in the north and south regions. Of this 0.14km² was mixed mine contamination with four anti-personnel mines and 42 anti-vehicle mines found and destroyed, and 0.06km² was solely contaminated with anti-vehicle mines, see Table 4.³² This is a massive decrease from 2018 when a total of nearly 3.71km² of mixed mined area was released: more than 2.38km² through clearance and 1.32km² through survey.³³

Table 4: Mine clearance in 2019³⁴

Region	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
North	SLG (for UNMAS Western Sahara)	143,421	4	42	476
South	SLG (for UNMAS Western Sahara)	58,895	0	8	0
Totals		202,316	4	50	476

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle UXO = Unexploded ordnance

Western Sahara is not a State Party to the APMBC. In June 2014, however, the SADR submitted a voluntary APMBC Article 7 transparency report to the UN "as a sign of the support of the Sahrawi State for the goals of the Treaty".³⁵

In SMACO's new mine action strategy 2019–23, the vision is for Western Sahara to be free of the impact of mines and ERW.³⁶ UNMAS Western Sahara needs to maintain its level of funding of \$3.265 million per year and to secure an additional \$2 million per year to clear all known mine and ERW contamination in the territory of Western Sahara, east of the Berm, and outside the buffer strip, restricted areas, and the Berm itself by 2023.³⁷

This is almost two years earlier than UNMAS' previous estimate, which had sought to release all high and medium hazardous areas in Western Sahara east of the Berm by 2025.³⁸ Temperatures of up to 60 degrees Celsius, strong winds, sandstorms, and heavy rain during the wet season can cause mine action activities to be suspended delaying progress.³⁹

In 2019, with the loss of NPA as a key mine action implementer, along with the cessation of both German and Norwegian funding for mine clearance activities, the future of Western Sahara's mine action programme remained uncertain. Additional resources and capacity, along with support to SMACO, needed to be secured urgently. There was a massive decrease in clearance output from 2018 to 2019 in Western Sahara and UNMAS reported that as at June 2020, operations had been partially suspended due to the outbreak of COVID-19, putting the already unrealistic 2023 completion date even further out of reach.⁴⁰

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- 1 A 2,700km-long defensive wall, the Berm was built during the conflict, dividing control of the territory between Morocco on the west and the Polisario Front on the east. The Berm is 12 times the length of the Berlin Wall and second in length only to the Great Wall of China.
- 2 See UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Western Sahara", updated May 2015, at: bit.ly/2MEmsjN; and Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), "Making life safer for the people of Western Sahara", London, August 2011.
- 3 Email from Graeme Abernethy, UNMAS, 1 March 2018.
- 4 Emails from Robert Thompson, Chief of Operations, UNMAS, 31 July 2019; Graeme Abernethy, UNMAS, 1 March 2018; Virginie Auger, UNMAS, 29 March 2017; and Edwin Faigmane, Programme Officer, UNMAS, 18 June 2020.
- 5 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June 2020.
- 6 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 28 July 2020.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 31 July 2019.
- 10 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 29 July 2020.
- 11 Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 31 July 2019.
- 12 Email from Graeme Abernethy, UNMAS, 14 September 2018. The buffer strip is an area 5km wide east of the Berm. MINURSO, "Ceasefire Monitoring Overview", undated but accessed 1 June 2016, at: bit.ly/2Yxg1nv.
- 13 "Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara", UN doc. S/2017/307, 10 April 2017, p. 8; and email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 6 August 2020.
- 14 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June 2020.
- 15 Emails from Graeme Abernethy, UNMAS, 14 September 2018; and Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June 2020; and UNMAS, "2017 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects: MINURSO".
- 16 Questionnaire response by Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 22 May 2017; and email, 17 May 2016.
- 17 Response to questionnaire by Sarah Holland, UNMAS, 24 February 2014, and email, 25 February 2014; and email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 6 August 2020.
- 18 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June and 6 August 2020.
- 19 Emails from Graeme Abernethy, UNMAS, 1 March and 5 May 2018.
- 20 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June 2020.
- 21 Emails from El Hadji Mamadou Kebe, NPA, 4 May 2019 and 14 March 2018.
- 22 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June 2020.
- 23 Emails from Graeme Abernethy, UNMAS, 1 March and 5 May 2018.
- 24 Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 31 May 2019.
- 25 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June 2020.
- 26 SMACO "Strategic Plan 2019-2023", at: bit.ly/38jaGm2; and email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 31 July 2019.
- 27 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June 2020.
- 28 Emails from Graeme Abernethy, UNMAS, 1 March and 5 May 2018; and Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 6 August 2020.
- 29 Emails from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 29 April 2019; and Dandan Xu, UNMAS, 28 June 2019.
- 30 Emails from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 29 April 2019; and Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 28 July 2020.
- 31 Email from El Hadji Mamadou Kebe, NPA, 4 May 2019.
- 32 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 29 July 2020.
- 33 Email from Robert Thompson, UNMAS, 31 July 2019.
- 34 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 29 July 2020.
- 35 "SADR initiative welcomed by Maputo Conference on Mine Ban", Sahara Press Service, 2 July 2014, at: bit.ly/2GE1JqW.
- 36 SMACO "Strategic Plan 2019-2023", at: bit.ly/38jaGm2.
- 37 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 6 August 2020.
- 38 Emails from Virginie Auger, UNMAS, 10 May and 29 March 2017; and Sarah Holland, UNMAS, 21 April and 18 May 2016.
- 39 UNMAS, "About UNMAS in Western Sahara", updated January 2017, at: bit.ly/2MEmsjN.
- 40 Email from Edwin Faigmane, UNMAS, 18 June 2020.

ANNEX

The background of the page is composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various shades of orange and red. These shapes create a dynamic, layered effect, with some appearing as broad diagonal bands and others as more complex, angular forms. The overall aesthetic is modern and graphic.

ANNEX 1: ARTICLE 5 OF THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION

ARTICLE 5: DESTRUCTION OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES IN MINED AREAS

1. Each State Party undertakes to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control, as soon as possible but not later than ten years after the entry into force of this Convention for that State Party.
2. Each State Party shall make every effort to identify all areas under its jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be emplaced and shall ensure as soon as possible that all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control are perimeter-marked, monitored and protected by fencing or other means, to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians, until all anti-personnel mines contained therein have been destroyed. The marking shall at least be to the standards set out in the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, as amended on 3 May 1996, annexed to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.
3. If a State Party believes that it will be unable to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines referred to in paragraph 1 within that time period, it may submit a request to a Meeting of the States Parties or a Review Conference for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of such anti-personnel mines, for a period of up to ten years.
4. Each request shall contain:
 - a) The duration of the proposed extension;
 - b) A detailed explanation of the reasons for the proposed extension, including:
 - (i) The preparation and status of work conducted under national demining programmes;
 - (ii) The financial and technical means available to the State Party for the destruction of all the anti-personnel mines; and
 - (iii) Circumstances which impede the ability of the State Party to destroy all the anti-personnel mines in mined areas;
 - c) The humanitarian, social, economic, and environmental implications of the extension; and
 - d) Any other information relevant to the request for the proposed extension.
5. The Meeting of the States Parties or the Review Conference shall, taking into consideration the factors contained in paragraph 4, assess the request and decide by a majority of votes of States Parties present and voting whether to grant the request for an extension period.
6. Such an extension may be renewed upon the submission of a new request in accordance with paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of this Article. In requesting a further extension period a State Party shall submit relevant additional information on what has been undertaken in the previous extension period pursuant to this Article.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

The background of the page is composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various shades of orange and red. These shapes create a dynamic, layered effect, with some appearing as broad diagonal bands and others as more complex, angular forms. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIM	Abandoned Improvised Mines (Afghanistan)	LIS	Landmine Impact Survey
AP	Anti-personnel	MAG	Mines Advisory Group
APMBC	1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention	MDD	Mine detection dog
AV	Anti-vehicle	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
AXO	Abandoned explosive ordnance	MRE	Mine risk education
BAC	Battle area clearance	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina	NGO	Non-governmental organisation
CCM	2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions	NMAS	National Mines Action Standards
CHA	Confirmed hazardous area	NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
CMR	Cluster munition remnants	NSAG	Non-state armed group
DCA	DanChurch Aid	OAP	Oslo Action Plan
DDG	Danish Demining Group	OAS	Organization of American States
EO	Explosive ordnance	OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
EOD	Explosive ordnance disposal	PPE	Personal protective equipment
EORE	Explosive ordnance risk education	QA	Quality assurance
ERW	Explosive remnants of war	QC	Quality control
EU	European Union	QM	Quality management
FSD	Swiss Foundation for Mine Action	SHA	Suspected hazardous area
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining	SOP	Standing (or standard) operating procedure
GIS	Geographic information system	TWG	Technical working group
HI	Humanity and Inclusion	UN	United Nations
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
IED	Improvised explosive device	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards	UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action	UXO	Unexploded ordnance
IP	Implementing partner	VA	Victim assistance
ITF	International Trust Fund (ITF) Enhancing Human Security	VTF	Voluntary Trust Fund (United Nations)

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