



AZERBAIJAN

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

For 2015

For 2014

Problem understood	7	7
Target date for completion of mine clearance	5	5
Targeted clearance	6	6
Efficient clearance	5	5
National funding of programme	8	8
Timely clearance	6	6
Land release system in place	6	6
National mine action standards	5	5
Reporting on progress	7	7
Improving performance	5	6
PERFORMANCE SCORE: AVERAGE	6.0	6.1

PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

There was a significant decrease in land released from clearance and survey in 2015, compared to previous years. This was due to the fact that an increased proportion of clearance tasks in 2015 were of battle area of unexploded ordnance (UXO) contamination, rather than of mined area. This resulted from ANAMA being tasked to clear a former military testing range in Ganja city and Jeyranchel, the latter under the NATO Partnership for Peace project.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Azerbaijan should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Azerbaijan should report on its plans and timelines for clearance of all known or suspected mined areas under its effective control.

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. As at the end of 2015, the area suspected to contain anti-personnel mine contamination in Azerbaijan was almost 69.9km².¹ This is significantly less than the 120km² of mined area in areas under Azeri control previously recorded, which has been updated by the Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA), and which referred to all mined areas, including those containing only anti-vehicle mines.² The extent of contamination in areas occupied by Armenia is unknown, although ANAMA has suggested that contamination may cover between 350km² and 830km², and contain between 50,000 and 100,000 mines.³

Since 2001, survey and clearance have been reducing and better defining the extent of contamination within areas under the control of Azerbaijan. In 2003, the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) identified 970 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) covering 751km².⁴ In 2006, re-survey reduced the estimate of contamination to 306km².⁵ Further re-survey by ANAMA in 2008–09 combined with clearance operations reduced total SHA to 184km² across 280 areas, of which 89 were believed to contain mines and 191 only unexploded ordnance (UXO).⁶

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 separate report on Nagorno-Karabakh). 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 mines and UXO.⁷

In 2015, ANAMA recorded nine mine incidents that killed three and injured eleven.⁸

1 Email from Tural Mammadov, Operations Officer, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2016", p. 5; and Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Azerbaijan", March 2012, p. 13.

6 GICHD, "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Azerbaijan", March 2012, p. 13.

7 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2016", p. 5.

8 Ibid.; and "ANAMA Monthly Report for April 2016", ANAMA.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

A 1998 presidential decree established ANAMA, which reports to the Deputy Prime Minister as head of the State Commission for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation.⁹ In April 1999, ANAMA established the Azerbaijan Mine Action Programme, a joint project of the Government of Azerbaijan and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).¹⁰ A joint working group, established in December 1999 and consisting of representatives from various ministries, provides regular guidance to ANAMA.¹¹

ANAMA is tasked with planning, coordinating, managing, and monitoring mine action in the country. It also conducts demining along with two national operators it contracts: Dayag-Relief Azerbaijan (RA) and the International Eurasia Press Fund (IEPF).¹² No commercial company is active in mine action in Azerbaijan.

ANAMA manages the mine action programme via its headquarters based in Baku, the regional office in Fizuli, and regional training centre in Goygol, and three operational centres located in Agjabedi, Agstafa, and Terter.¹³

UNDP provides support to ANAMA, and will continue to do so for 2017–19, as part of a project to support the institutional capacity of ANAMA with regards to mine/UXO clearance, risk education, victim assistance, international networking, and support to other mine-affected countries.¹⁴

Strategic Planning

ANAMA is integrated into the State Social and Economic Development programme. The programme sets out clear priorities, determined by joint interministerial discussions on state priorities, and humanitarian and economic impact, including obstacles to accessing agricultural land.¹⁵ The current mine action strategy is for 2014–18.¹⁶ ANAMA's long-term strategy is to clear the occupied territories as and when they become released.¹⁷

Legislation and Standards

As at October 2016, Azerbaijan was still in the process of adopting a mine action law, with draft legislation under review by the Cabinet of Ministers.¹⁸ Once adopted, the law will regulate mine action in Azerbaijan, including licensing, accreditation, quality assessment (QA), and tender procedures.¹⁹

Azerbaijan also has its own National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), which were adopted in 2001 and subsequently revised in 2003, 2004, and 2010.²⁰

Operators

As at the end of 2015, ANAMA employed 463 operational and administrative staff and had 44 mine detection dogs (MDDs) and 6 demining machines.²¹ Included in this is capacity, are two national demining non-governmental organisations (NGOs), IEPF and RA, that are contracted for mine clearance, and which together employ 169 operational and administrative staff. ANAMA also has a MDD breeding and training centre, which was built in 2011.²²

Quality Management

ANAMA established a National Training Quality Assurance Team in 2004. In 2011, this transitioned into ANAMA's training, survey, and QA division (TSQAD), which is responsible for training and QA. TSQAD also conducts quality control (QC).²³

In 2015, 111 QA monitoring visits were undertaken.²⁴ In addition, external quality control inspections were conducted at 81 sites in 2015, with more than 2.56km² of land physically checked. Five battle areas (surface) required re-clearance, 57 explosive devices and related components having been missed by the original clearance.²⁵

Information Management

Azerbaijan uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.²⁶

9 GICHD, "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Azerbaijan", March 2012, Executive Summary; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2016", p. 12.

10 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2016", p. 12.

11 Ibid., p. 11.

12 Ibid., p. 12.

13 Ibid.

14 "UNDP Mine Action Programme: Azerbaijan", April 2016, UNDP.

15 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.

16 Email from Parviz Gidayev, ANAMA, 20 May 2015; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2016", p. 11.

17 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2014", p. 5; and GICHD, "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Azerbaijan", March 2012, Executive Summary.

18 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.

19 Response to Mine Action Monitor questionnaire by Parviz Gidayev, ANAMA, 20 May 2015; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2014".

20 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.

21 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2016", pp. 9 and 12.

22 Ibid., pp. 14 and 15.

23 Ibid., pp. 28 and 30.

24 Ibid., p. 27.

25 Ibid., p. 28.

26 Ibid., p. 35.

LAND RELEASE

The total mined area released by clearance and technical survey in 2015 was almost 5.36km²,²⁷ a significant reduction compared to the almost 10.4km² of clearance and technical survey in 2014.²⁸ In addition, almost 0.51km² was cancelled in 2015.²⁹

Survey in 2015

Almost 2.86km² was reduced by technical survey in 2015, and a further 1.01km² reduced using mechanical assets.³⁰ In addition, some 0.51km² was cancelled.³¹

Clearance in 2015

Azerbaijan cleared almost 1.5km² of mined area in 2015 (see Table 1), comprising 1.04km² of manual clearance and 0.45km² of mine clearance with the support of MDDs.³² This is a significant decrease compared to 2014, when ANAMA cleared almost 4.76km² of mined land: 2.8km² through manual clearance and 1.95km² with MDD support.³³ The decrease is explained by the fact that the 2014 data included significant mine clearance (1.7km²) as part of Phase I of the ANAMA-NATO Partnership for Peace project in the Jeyranchel area of Agstafa, in a former military testing range; whereas phase II of this project, in 2015, only included UXO clearance.³⁴

Table 1: Mine clearance in 2015

Operator	Mined areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed*	AV mines destroyed*	UXO destroyed*
ANAMA CT	4	211,144	0	4	14
ANAMA ERT	2	178,744	73	15	0
RA	7	561,815	1	1	22,451
IEPF	6	538,388	0	3	40
Totals	19	1,490,091	74	23	22,505

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle mine

* Table 1 includes the items destroyed only during mine clearance, and not technical survey. During technical survey an additional 1 AP mine, 71 AV mines, and 54 items of UXO were destroyed in 2015.

In addition, ANAMA tasks its emergency response team (ERT) or the national NGOs — depending on the location of the call-out — to respond to explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) requests from the local community, government bodies, and international humanitarian organisations.³⁵ During call-outs in 2015, an additional 7 anti-personnel mines and 110 items of UXO were destroyed in 13 provinces of Azerbaijan.³⁶

In order to ensure cost- and time-efficient use of assets, ANAMA implements results-based operational planning procedures referring to lessons learnt from previous mine clearance, and also benefitting from international practices and exchange of operational experience.³⁷

Azerbaijan submitted voluntary APMBC Article 7 transparency reports in 2008 and 2009 but has not submitted an Article 7 report in the last six years.

27 "ANAMA Monthly Report for August 2015" and "ANAMA Monthly Report for August 2016", ANAMA.

28 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 8 October 2015.

29 Ibid., 19 October 2016.

30 "ANAMA Monthly Report for August 2015" and "ANAMA Monthly Report for August 2016".

31 Ibid.

32 "ANAMA Monthly Report for August 2015" and "ANAMA Monthly Report for August 2016"; and email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.

33 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 8 October 2015.

34 Ibid., 19 October 2016.

35 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2016", pp. 9 and 16.

36 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.

37 Ibid.

ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Azerbaijan is not a state party or signatory to the APMBC, but nonetheless has obligations under international human rights law to protect life, which requires clearance of mines as soon as possible.³⁸

Over the last five years, nearly 18km² of mined area has been cleared in Azerbaijan, with annual clearance increasing slightly year on year until 2015 when a greater proportion of clearance capacity was tasked to battle area clearance rather than mine clearance (see Table 2).

Table 2: Mine clearance in 2011–15³⁹

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2015	1.49
2014	4.80
2013	4.63
2012	3.65
2011	3.30
Total	17.87

Currently, 90% of mine action in Azerbaijan is state funded.⁴⁰ ANAMA's long-term strategy is to be ready to start clearance of the occupied territories as and when this is possible.⁴¹

In September 2016, ANAMA and the British Embassy in Azerbaijan reportedly signed a memorandum of understanding to fund a demining project in the border region. The project was due to be implemented from late September 2016 to March 2017.⁴²

38 Azerbaijan is a state party to the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 6(1) of which stipulates that: "Every human being has the inherent right to life". It is also a state party to the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights, Article 2 of which protects the right to life.

39 See Landmine Monitor and Mine Action Review reports on clearance in Azerbaijan covering clearance in 2011–14.

40 G. Ahmadov, "Advocating Mine Action to Government of Azerbaijan", Geneva, 19 February 2016, at: <http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/documents/Gazanfar%20Ahmadov%20Azerbaijan.pdf>; and email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.

41 ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2014"; and GICHD, "Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership: Azerbaijan", March 2012, Executive Summary.

42 *Azernews*, "British government to finance demining operations in Azerbaijani border regions", 14 September 2016, at: <http://www.azernews.az/nation/102201.html>.