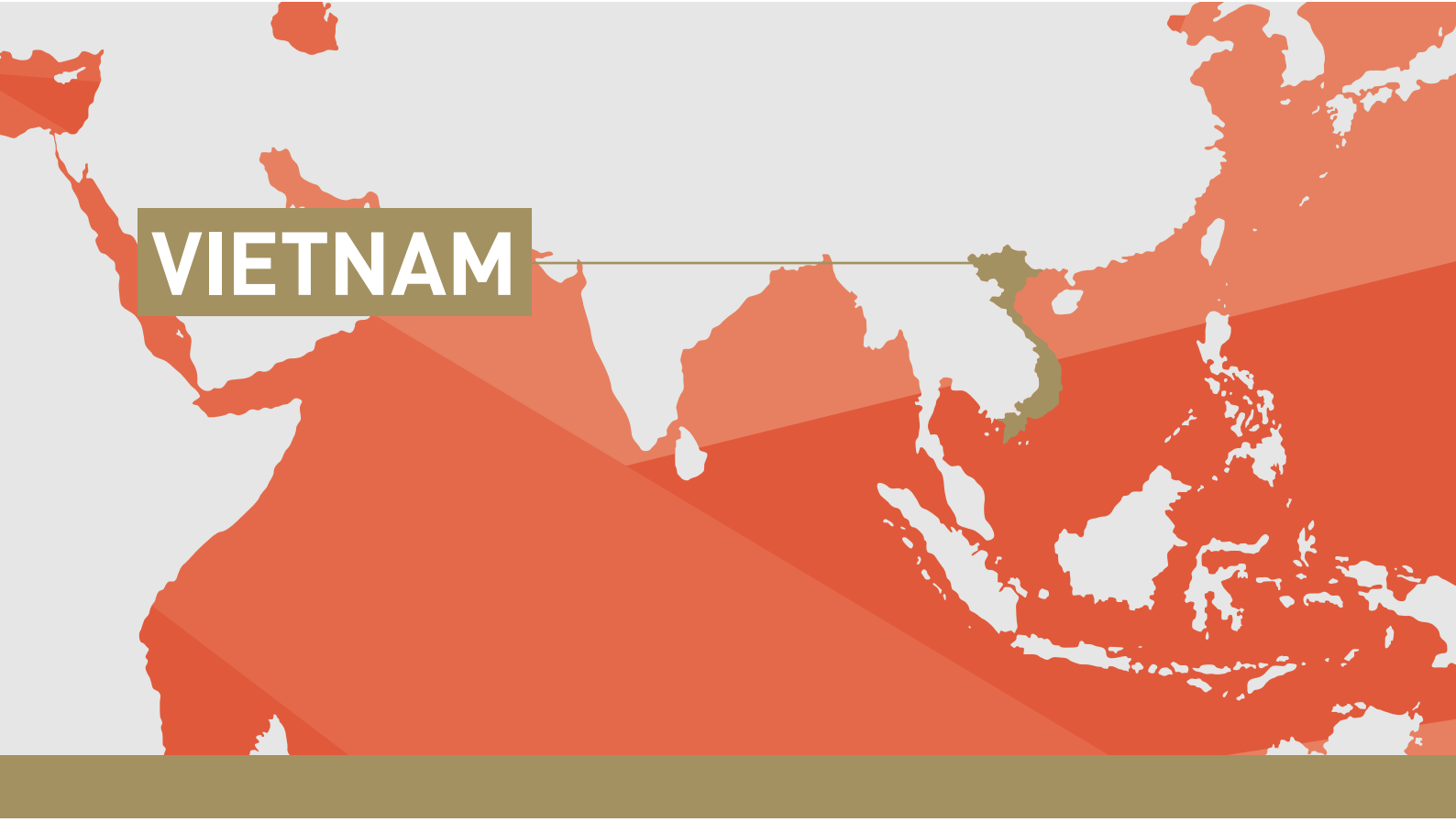

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

	2015
Problem understood	5
Target date for completion of cluster munition clearance	4
Targeted clearance	5
Efficient clearance	5
National funding of programme	7
Timely clearance	5
Land-release system in place	6
National mine action standards	5
Reporting on progress	3
Improving performance	6
PERFORMANCE SCORE: AVERAGE	**5.1**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Vietnam should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.
- Vietnam should prepare a strategic plan giving priority to clearance of cluster munition remnants (CMR) and widening application of the CMR survey methodology applied in Quang Tri province.
- Vietnam should accelerate development of a national database and make data available to operators on a timely basis.
- Vietnam should publish comprehensive annual reports on the results of survey and clearance by all operators, national and international.

CONTAMINATION

Vietnam is massively contaminated by CMR, but no credible estimate exists of the extent (to the nearest hundred square kilometre). The United States (US) dropped 413,130 tons of submunitions over Vietnam between 1965 and 1973, striking 55 provinces and cities, including Haiphong, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Hue, and Vinh. Vietnam's Military Engineering Command has recorded finding 15 types of US-made submunitions.[1] Most submunition types used by the US were air-dropped, but artillery-delivered submunitions were also used in central Quang Binh and provinces to the south of it.[2]

The Military Engineering Command says it has encountered substantial amounts of cluster munitions abandoned by the US military, notably at or around old US air bases, including eight underground bunkers found in 2009, one of them reportedly covering an area of 4,000m^2 and containing some 25 tons of munitions.[3]

MAG demolition of explosive remnants of war © Sean Sutton/MAG

NPA Cluster Munitions Remnants Survey, Quang Tri Province, Vietnam. © Ngo Xuan Hien / NPA

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Vietnam's mine action programme has shifted from military management to civilian oversight but operations continue to depend largely on the armed forces. A Prime Minister's Decision in 2006 assigned the Ministry of National Defence to oversee mine action at the national level with clearance undertaken by the Army Engineering Corps of the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN).[4] BOMICEN, part of the Ministry of National Defence, has acted as a central coordinating body for clearance and survey by national operators.[5]

In 2013, Vietnam announced a Prime Minister's decision to establish a national mine action centre (VNMAC) to strengthen the direction of mine action and provide a focal point for mine action operations.[6] However, although VNMAC reports to the Prime Minister's office, the decision assigned responsibility for managing and coordinating the national mine action programme to the Ministry of Defence. VNMAC was given responsibility to propose policy, draw up plans, serve as the focal point for international cooperation, lead fundraising, and "preside over" mine action information management. It is also responsible for organising and implementing quality assurance.[7] The government appointed VNMAC's director and two deputy directors in 2014 and the centre became officially operational in February 2015.[8]

International operators conclude agreements to work in Vietnam with the People's Aid Coordinating Committee but negotiate their programme of operations separately with the authorities of each province.

Quang Tri province, which includes the former demilitarised zone that separated North and South Vietnam and is one of the most heavily contaminated regions, approved the creation of a Legacy of War Coordination Centre (LWCC) in February 2015. The LWCC, established by the province's Department of Foreign Affairs with funding and technical support provided by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), is responsible for drawing up an annual workplan, coordinating operations of NPA and Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and operates a database integrating mine action data of all operators, including the results of NPA's and MAG's integrated survey and clearance operations.[9]

1 "Vietnam mine/ERW (including cluster munitions) contamination, impacts and clearance requirements", Presentation by Sr. Col. Phan Duc Tuan, People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), in Geneva, 30 June 2011.

2 Handicap International, *Fatal Footprint, the Global Human Impact of Cluster Munitions*, Brussels, November 2006, p. 15.

3 Interview with Sr. Col. Phan Duc Tuan, PAVN, in Geneva, 30 June 2011.

4 Prime Minister's Decision No. 96/2006/QD-TTg, 4 May 2006.

5 Email from Col. Nguyen Trong Dac, Ministry of National Defense, 6 August 2006.

6 Interview with Maj. Gen. Pham Quang Xuan, Director, VNMAC, in Geneva, 31 March 2014.

7 Prime Minister's Decision 319/QD-TTg, 4 March 2014.

8 Information provided by Do Van Nhan, Deputy Director General, VNMAC, received by email from Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VAF), 19 June 2015.

9 Legacy of War Coordination Centre website, at: http://lwcc-dbu-quangtri.vn/en-us/INTRODUCTION/Project-Establishment; email from Le Nah Thu, Project Officer, MAG, 9 May 2016.

Strategic Planning

VNMAC said it had drafted an action plan for 2016–20, which was awaiting approval by the prime minister, but provided no further details.[10]

VNMAC priorities for 2016 included issuing a decree on mine action monitoring, elaborating quality management standards, building VNMAC's headquarters in Hanoi, constructing a national database, and conducting technical survey and clearance of approximately 300km^2.[11]

VNMAC reported that mine action in 2015 received a $4 million grant from Japan for clearance in Ha Tinh province and the US pledged $10.2 million for survey and clearance of Quang Tri.[12]

Operators

Most clearance in Vietnam is conducted by the Army Engineering Corps, whose officials have previously operated some 250 mine and battle area clearance teams, including those of around 50 military companies.[13] Four international humanitarian operators active in Vietnam in 2015 included Danish Demining Group (DDG), MAG, NPA, and PeaceTrees Vietnam.

LAND RELEASE

No results were available for operations by VNMAC and the Army Engineering Corps which account for most clearance, preventing any assessment of Vietnam's overall progress in dealing with cluster munitions contamination.

Survey and clearance by international operators accelerated in 2015, mainly as a result of a project for integrated survey and clearance carried out by NPA and MAG, respectively, in Quang Tri province using US funding.

Survey in 2015

In 2015, NPA survey in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue provinces confirmed almost 11.4km^2 of CMR contamination across 234 areas (see Table 1).

MAG and NPA for many years worked independently in different districts of Quang Tri. After a pilot project in 2014, Quang Tri provincial authorities approved a project under which NPA concentrated on conducting its cluster munition remnants survey (CMRS) while MAG cleared the confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) generated by NPA's survey. The project aims to complete clearance of all the province's main contaminated areas by 2020. Both operators expanded capacity supported by multi-year funding from the US. NPA, partnering Project Renew, had a total operations staff of 152 which included 21 CMRS teams, five explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams and one ten-strong team of "BAC searchers" NPA also conducted community-based NTS in Quang Tri using the evidence points collected as a starting point for CMRS.[14]

MAG also operated in the neighbouring province of Quang Binh conducting non-technical and technical survey as well as clearance, working from evidence points established during spot EOD tasks. It cancelled four suspected hazardous areas covering a total of 85,000m^2 and confirmed 176 areas covering 1.88km^2.[16]

MAG clearance operations, Vietnam © Sean Sutton/MAG

Table 1: **Cluster Munitions Remnants Survey in 2015**[15]

Operator	Province	Areas confirmed	Area confirmed (m^2)
NPA	Quang Tri	212	11,115,000
	Thua Thien Hue	22	278,750
Totals		**234**	**11,393,750**

10 Information provided by Dang Van Dong, VNMAC, received by email from the International Centre, VVAF, Hanoi, 23 June 2016.

11 Information provided by Dang Van Dong, Deputy Director, VNMAC, received by email from the International Centre, VVAF, Hanoi, 23 June 2016.

12 Information provided by Dang Van Dong, VNMAC, received by email from the International Centre, VVAF, 23 June 2016.

13 Interview with Sr. Col. Nguyen Thanh Ban, Engineering Command, Hanoi, 18 June 2013; email from Executive Office of the National Steering Committee, 6 August 2012.

14 Emails from Le Anh Thu, Project Officer, MAG, 9 May 2016; and Resad Junuzagic, Country Director, NPA, 26 May and 15 June 2016.

15 Email from Resad Junuzagic, NPA, 26 May 2016.

16 Email from Le Anh Thu, MAG, 9 May 2016.

Clearance in 2015

Vietnam's Army Engineering Corps and military-affiliated commercial companies have previously reported clearance of several hundred square kilometres a year but no information was received for operations in 2015. International operators reported clearance of 9.8km^2 for the year (see Table 2).

Land released through clearance by international operators rose sharply in 2015 as a result of a nearly fivefold increase in clearance by MAG compared with the previous year. MAG added 14 mine action teams and seven brush-cutting teams in 2015 bringing the total number of staff to 377. The expansion was made possible by substantial additional funding from the US and Japan, giving MAG a budget of $6.8 million for the year.[17]

PeaceTrees Vietnam, operating in Quang Tri province, said it employed 29 technicians who cleared 101,868m^2 and destroyed a total of 3,031 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) but did not specify clearance of CMR or provide any other details.[18]

MAG's increased focus on clearance in Quang Tri also led to a downturn in spot EOD tasks in 2015. DDG, which established a presence in Vietnam in 2013 initially conducting risk education in Quang Nam province, started deploying EOD teams on spot tasks in June 2015, and in December started battle area clearance (BAC) focused on CMR. By the end of March 2016 it had completed 105 BAC tasks releasing 43,414m^2.[19]

Table 2: **Clearance of CMR-contaminated areas in 2015**

Operator	Province	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m²)	Submunitions destroyed	APM destroyed	AVM destroyed	UXO destroyed
MAG	Quang Binh	62	2,958,784	2,591	0	0	1,443
	Quang Tri	85	6,239,399	3,764	1	0	2,948
NPA	Quang Tri	3	143,250	234	17	1	60
	Thua Thien Hue	0	491,267	44	1	0	451
Totals		**150**	**9,832,700**	**6,633**	**19**	**1**	**4,902**

APM = Anti-personnel mines AVM = Anti-vehicle mines

Table 3: **Spot/roving clearance and EOD in 2015**

Operator	Province	Roving tasks	Submunitions destroyed	UXO destroyed
DDG	Quang Nam	265	51	729
	Quang Tri	179	20	314
MAG	Quang Tri	3,490	105	3,519
	Quang Binh	2,992	764	3,060
NPA	Quang Tri	1,781	168	3,612
	Thua Thien Hue	172	205	935
Totals		**8,879**	**1,313**	**12,169**

APM = Anti-personnel mines AVM = Anti-vehicle mines

ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

Vietnam is not a state party or signatory to the CCM. Nonetheless, Vietnam has international human rights law obligations to protect life, which requires that CMR be cleared as soon as possible.[20]

17 Ibid.

18 Email from Rebecca Giovannozzi, Program Coordinator, PeaceTrees Vietnam, 7 June 2016.

19 Email from Clinton Smith, Country Director, DDG, 6 April 2016.

20 Vietnam is a state party to the 1996 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 6(1) of which stipulates that: "Every human being has the inherent right to life."