

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 the countrywide re-survey of anti-personnel mine contamination.
- 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 2018, Azerbaijan reported 33 mined areas in regions under its control totalling 4.1km² (see Table 1). A more precise estimate of contamination will only be known after completion of a countrywide re-survey but as at April 2019, no such survey was planned. In 2018, however, an additional 98,887m² of mined area was added to the database.²

As at the end of 2018, Azerbaijan estimated that it had 14 anti-personnel mined areas covering a total of more than 1.6km² (see Table 2). Before this latest estimate, the previous assessment of anti-personnel mine contamination provided by ANAMA was 69.9km² in 2015.³

Table 1: Mined area by type (at end 2018)⁴

Contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs that may contain mines	Area (m ²)
Anti-personnel mines	6	1,142,486	7	503,000
Anti-vehicle mines	10	1,302,960	9	1,195,720
Totals	17	2,445,446	16	1,698,720

CHAs = Confirmed hazardous areas SHAs = Suspected hazardous areas

Table 2: Anti-personnel mined area by region (at end 2018)

Region	CHAs	Area(m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Jabrayil	1	98,887	2	250,000
Fizuli	3	815,462	2	85,000
Khojavend	1	226,500	0	50,000
Garadagh	1	1,637	1	48,000
Aghdam	0	0	1	70,000
Aghjabedi	0	0	1	0
Totals	6	1,142,486	7	503,000

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 report on Nagorno-Karabakh in this report 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).⁵

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 2019* report on Azerbaijan for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

ANAMA, the *de facto* national mine action authority and mine action centre, is tasked with planning, coordinating, managing, and monitoring 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.⁶

UNDP provides capacity development to ANAMA and will continue to do so until 2020. The five main project activities are: 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.⁷ According to ANAMA, as at end April 2019, project outputs included improvements to ANAMA's regional structure, enhanced international training services, better training equipment, and support for the training centre.⁸

As at April 2019, Azerbaijan was still in the process of adopting a national mine action law, with draft legislation under review by the Cabinet of Ministers.⁹ Once adopted, it will regulate mine action in Azerbaijan, governing issues such as licensing, accreditation, quality assurance (QA), and tender procedures.¹⁰

The Azerbaijani government funds 90% of ANAMA's operating costs and 90% of all survey and clearance activities in Azerbaijan.¹¹

GENDER

ANAMA does not have a gender policy. There are no women working in any operational roles in survey and clearance in Azerbaijan. However, women do participate in mine risk education sessions and are consulted during survey.¹²

One of the goals of the UNDP-ANAMA capacity strengthening project is to introduce a gender-sensitive approach to mine action to Azerbaijan.¹³ 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 is working with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to upgrade this to the latest IMSMA Core during 2019–20.¹⁴

PLANNING AND TASKING

The existing mine action strategy was for 2013–18.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ The strategy expired at the end of 2018 and has not yet been replaced.

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 2019–22.¹⁷

ANAMA had annual workplans for both 2018 and 2019. 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 multi year strategic plan, tasks are prioritised according to the state development plan and instructions from the government.¹⁸

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.¹⁹ No major modifications to the standards were made in 2018.²⁰

ANAMA also has standing operating procedures (SoPs) in place, which were reviewed in 2018.²¹

OPERATORS

In 2018, ANAMA employed 613 operational and administrative staff across six regional centres (including the Regional Mine Action Resource and Training Centre).²²

The Training, Survey and Quality Assurance Division continued its quality management (QM)-related activities during 2018. 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 NGOs.²³

OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Mine detection dogs (MDDs) and mechanical assets are used to support reduction through technical survey and manual clearance operations.²⁴ In 2018, Azerbaijan had 48 MDDs and 6 machines.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2018

No anti-personnel mined area was cancelled or reduced through survey in 2018.²⁵

In 2018, a total of 353,258m² of mined area was cleared, as set out in Table 3. In Aghdam and Aghjabedi only two anti-personnel mines were found in clearance of 1,500m² and 10,000m², respectively. In Jabrayil, no anti-personnel mines were found during clearance but only ten items of UXO. This is a marked decrease from clearance in 2017 when 7.69km² was cleared (or 4km² if you exclude cleared areas with no anti-personnel mine contamination). In addition, two anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed during EOD spot tasks.

Table 3: Mine clearance in 2018²⁶

Region	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Fizuli	ANAMA	3	238,396	25	1	2
Aghdam	RA	0	1,500	1	0	0
Aghjabedi	RA	0	10,000	1	0	0
Garadagh	ANAMA	1	4,475	2	0	150
Jabrayil	ANAMA	1	98,887	0	0	10
Totals		5	353,258	29	1	162

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

Azerbaijan submitted voluntary APMBC Article 7 transparency reports in 2008 and 2009 but has not submitted an Article 7 report in the last nine years. Over the last five years, 11.47km² of mined area has been cleared in Azerbaijan. Mine clearance output fell dramatically in 2018 after a large increase in 2017 (see Table 4). Accuracy of reporting of contamination, survey and clearance data continues to be an issue in Azerbaijan as does effectiveness and efficiency of land release methodology with many areas being cleared that prove to have little or no mine contamination. As at April 2019, no target date had been set for the completion of anti-personnel mine clearance in Azerbaijan.

Table 4: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance (2014–18)

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2018	0.35
2017	*4.00
2016	0.83
2015	1.49
2014	4.80
Total	11.47

* A further 3.7km² was cleared but was found not to contain mines.

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- 1 ANAMA "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2018", p. 5.
 - 2 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, Public Relations Officer, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
 - 3 Email from Tural Mammadov, Operations Officer, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.
 - 4 Ibid.
 - 5 ANAMA "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2018", p. 5.
 - 6 Email from Tural Mammadov, Operations Officer, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.
 - 7 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.
 - 8 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
 - 9 Ibid.
 - 10 Email from Parviz Gidayev, ANAMA, 20 May 2015; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2014".
 - 11 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
 - 12 Ibid.
 - 13 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.
 - 14 Email from Maria Gurova, Programme Officer, GICHD, 22 August 2019.
 - 15 Email from Parviz Gidayev, Planning & Development Manager, ANAMA, 20 May 2015; and ANAMA, "Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action 2017", p. 10.
 - 16 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA 2 May 2018.
 - 17 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
 - 18 Ibid.
 - 19 Email from Tural Mammadov, ANAMA, 19 October 2016.
 - 20 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
 - 21 Ibid.
 - 22 ANAMA, 2018 report, undated.
 - 23 Ibid.
 - 24 Email from Sabina Sarkarova, ANAMA, 2 April 2019.
 - 25 Ibid.
 - 26 Ibid.