

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Georgia should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

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 non-governmental organisation (NGO) demining operators.¹

CMR contamination in Georgia resulted from the conflict over South Ossetia in August 2008, in which both Georgian and Russian forces used cluster munitions. After the end of the conflict and through to December 2009, The HALO Trust cleared some 37km² of submunitions and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) in Georgian-controlled territory.² In May 2010, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) completed clearance of its tasked areas.³ In 2016, two submunitions were reported in the Shida Kartli region and then destroyed by the State Security Agency, as part of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) call-outs.⁴ In 2017, The HALO Trust conducted survey in the Shida Kartli region to investigate each of the call-outs.⁵ During survey, a three submunitions were found, which were identified as residual contamination and destroyed.⁶ One submunition was destroyed in 2019 (see Land Release Output section below).

OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND LANDMINES

Georgia remains contaminated by other unexploded ordnance (UXO), likely in South Ossetia and also within Georgia in former firing ranges, and by anti-vehicle and anti-personnel mines (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines 2020* report on Georgia for further information).

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. 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).⁸ The HALO Trust is funded by international donors.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

DELTA and The HALO Trust each have 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.⁹ HALO Trust's EOD teams in Abkhazia are mixed ethnic Georgian and ethnic Abkhaz and comprise both men and women.¹⁰

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.¹¹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The HDCD uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (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.¹² The data in the national information management system is accessible to the HALO Trust.¹³ HALO Trust uses its own IMSMA-compatible data collection forms that DELTA has approved while the HDCD quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) team also have its own forms.¹⁴

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 ERW.¹⁵ The annual work plans for 2019 centred on BAC within the Tbilisi Administered Territory (TAT) does not include the autonomous republics of Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, which are outside of Georgia's effective control.¹⁶

In 2019, due to access not being granted to the remaining minefields, The HALO Trust had suspended all operations in Tbilisi Administered Territory, apart from one two-month task clearing abandoned explosive ordnance 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 EOD call-outs.¹⁷

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 International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and International Ammunition Technical Guidelines are being translated into Georgian.¹⁸

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 2019.¹⁹

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.²⁰ In 2019, the HALO Trust deployed 33 personnel to conduct BAC at Primorsky.²¹ DELTA retains a small demining and EOD capacity in Tbilisi Administered Territory.

In Tbilisi Administered Territory, quality management (QM) is conducted by DELTA. In Abkhazia, The HALO Trust is responsible for its own QM.²²

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

No CMR survey or clearance took place in 2019. One submunition was destroyed during an EOD spot task but this was found to be residual contamination not evidence of a broader problem.²³

It is believed that, with the possible exception of South Ossetia, Georgia is now free from CMR. Georgia has reported that, in the areas cleared by The HALO Trust in Abkhazia which are currently outside its control, external QA/QC could not be completed. Georgia, therefore, cannot confirm whether this land is free of contamination.²⁴

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Georgia is said to have a residual risk capacity for CMR with plans in place for dealing with residual risk and liability.²⁵

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- 1 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, Head of Division, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
 - 2 Explosive Remnants of War Coordination Centre, "Explosive Remnants of War Coordination Centre (ERWCC) in Facts and Figures", November 2009, p. 17.
 - 3 Email from Jonathon "Gus" Guthrie, Programme Manager, NPA, 27 May 2010.
 - 4 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 20 June 2017.
 - 5 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 25 April 2018; and Irakli Chitanava, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 25 May 2018.
 - 6 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 25 April 2018; and Irakli Chitanava, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 25 May 2018.
 - 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, 12 May 2020.
 - 9 Email from Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
 - 10 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
 - 11 Ibid.
 - 12 Ibid.
 - 13 Email from Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019.
 - 14 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019; and Michael Montafi, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
 - 15 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019.
 - 16 Emails from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March and 10 June 2019; and Matthew Walker, HALO Trust, 8 April 2019. The Tbilisi Administered Territory (TAT) does not include the autonomous republics of Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, which are outside of Georgia's effective control.
 - 17 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
 - 18 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
 - 19 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO Trust, 8 May 2020.
 - 20 Email from Irakli Chitanava, HALO Trust, 2 May 2017.
 - 21 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO Trust, 20 July 2020.
 - 22 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019.
 - 23 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 12 May 2020.
 - 24 Ibid.
 - 25 Email from Oleg Gochashvili, DELTA, 28 March 2019.