AFGHANISTAN

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2024

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2025
FIVE-YEAR EXTENSION SOUGHT BY AFGHANISTAN

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: MASSIVE

NATIONAL ESTIMATE AT END OF 2023

176KM²

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2023

14.47KM²

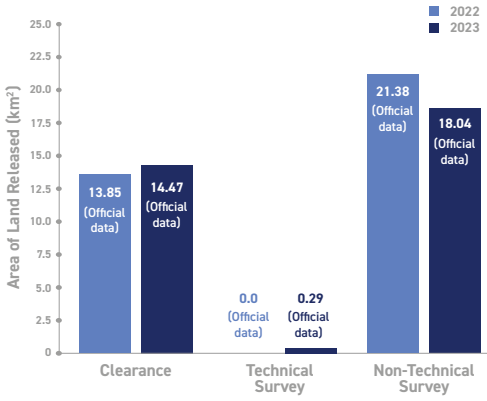
(OFFICIAL DATA)

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2023

5,971

(INCLUDING 2,242 DESTROYED IN SPOT TASKS)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET *(as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment)*: **NONE**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reached agreement in October 2023 on a framework for technical support through a Mine Action Technical Cell (MATC). This ended a disruptive, nearly two-year hiatus in institutional arrangements for management and coordination of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA). In March 2024, DMAC submitted an Article 5 deadline extension request. However, the final draft of Afghanistan's extension request was only made available on the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) website in November 2024, after a long delay by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the APMBC Implementation Support Unit (ISU) in the processing of the request, due to the IEA's lack of diplomatic recognition internationally. As a matter of international law, Afghanistan is represented by the Taliban government following its takeover in August 2021. The issue of recognition of the Taliban Government by the UN and individual States Parties is a separate matter from treaty application and implementation, just as it is under international humanitarian law. The Taliban regime is bound directly by all provisions of the APMBC, and it is therefore correct that Afghanistan's extension request, submitted by DMAC and MAPA, is considered and granted by States Parties at the Fifth Review Conference in November 2024.

FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW

The takeover of Afghanistan and the subsequent sanctions imposed on Afghanistan have had a significant negative impact on Afghanistan's clearance of anti-personnel (AP) mines. Clearance over the last five years totals almost 100km² but annual rates—at least according to official figures—have halved since 2021. At these lower rates, fulfilling Article 5 clearance obligations will likely require another 15 years. Mine action has managed to escape some of the most draconian Taliban policies on the employment of women.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **The authorities of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) should increase national funding to the mine action sector.**
- **The IEA and DMAC should enhance the engagement of women and minorities in mine action.**
- **International donors should put funding for the MATC on a stable, long-term basis.**

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	7	Afghanistan has a good, but still incomplete, knowledge of pre-2001 or "legacy" AP mine contamination increasingly located in remote and mountainous areas. But helped by access to areas previously cut off by conflict, it continues to locate significant amounts of previously unrecorded mined area, particularly areas affected by improvised mines.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	4	The MAPA is nationally managed but heavily dependent on international funding, which previously covered most DMAC salaries. Diplomatic isolation and international sanctions targeting the Taliban government cut off donor funding for DMAC leaving only a skeleton management team in place with minimal capacity to discharge its oversight and coordination functions. After a series of interim arrangements, DMAC and the UN agreed on the creation of a Mine Action Technical Cell in October 2023, providing a platform for more effective coordination of the MAPA despite the negative impact of extremely short-term donor funding to support it.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	4	Mine action has escaped the full force of draconian Taliban restrictions on women. Before August 2021, mainstreaming gender was one of four main goals in the 2016–20 strategic plan although progress implementing it was slow. Since August 2021, implementing partners, with DMAC's support, have been able to continue to employ women in office and field (risk education and community liaison) roles. The Article 5 deadline extension request submitted by the government says gender mainstreaming "is subject to review and further development" and that its strategic plan for 2021–26 sets goals for "inclusion and empowerment of women and other marginalised groups in mine action."
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION* (10% of overall score)	6	Not Scored	Afghanistan has a national standard on environmental management in mine action and DMAC says operational planning takes account of a range of environmental factors. Implementing partners have standing operating procedures on managing environmental impact that align with local conditions and international operators also work through their organisations' global policies on environmental management.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	4	Information management suffered major disruption after the change of government when DMAC lost international donor funding and its data management staff. Implementing partners continued to report operating results to DMAC but the lack of agreement between DMAC and the UN on technical support stalled operation of the national mine action database, creating a large backlog of operating results. DMAC took back control of data processing in February 2023 but still lacked capacity to upload survey and clearance reports. UN technical support for data processing after the creation of the MATC in October 2023 saw rapid progress in clearing the backlog but significant discrepancies between DMAC and implementing partner data underscored continuing data management challenges. As at end-September 2024, Afghanistan had not submitted an Article 7 report since 2021.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	5	4	For most of 2023, DMAC planning and tasking of the MAPA continued on a project-by-project basis largely determined by availability of donor funding but coordinated by DMAC's Planning Officer and the MATC after it came into operation in October 2023. DMAC set out a five-year strategy in its 2024 Article 5 deadline extension request, including clearance milestones released in March 2024, but its ambitious targets looked largely aspirational in the absence of donor funding to implement them.

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM** (10% of overall score)	6	6	The MAPA has national mine action standards (AMAS) 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. International experts believe the AMAS need comprehensive updating. Upheavals in DMAC after August 2021 disrupted quality management, which continued only sporadically until October 2023 when DMAC and UNAMA agreed on setting up the MATC.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	6	Data inconsistencies obscure the precise extent of land released. Implementing partners recorded clearance of more than 30km^2 in 2023 (more than double the official data), assisted by improved security and better provincial access. The IEA, meanwhile, affirmed its commitment to fulfilling Afghanistan's APMBC obligations. In March 2024, the IEA submitted a request for a five-year extension to Afghanistan's Article 5 deadline. However, the final request, submitted by DMAC and MAPA, was only made available on the APMBC website in November 2024, after a long delay by the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the APMBC ISU in the processing of the request.
Average Score	**5.8**	**5.4**	**Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE**

* New criterion introduced in 2024 to assess performance.
** The weighting of this criterion was previously 20% of overall performance score, but is now given a 10% weighting.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)
- 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)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- Fondation Suisse de Déminage (FSD)
- The HALO Trust (HALO)

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)/Mine Action Technical Cell (MATC)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Afghanistan estimated total AP mined area at the end of 2023 amounted to 176km^2 (see Table 1), 2% less than the total a year earlier. The area affected by conventional AP mines dropped 11% by the end of the year but increased opportunities for survey since the 2021 change of government and cessation of hostilities yielded a 19% rise in the recorded level of improvised AP mined area.[1] Area contaminated with anti-vehicle (AV) mines almost matches that of AP mined area.

Table 1: Mined area by contamination type (at end 2023)[2]

Contamination type	CHAs	Area (m^2)	SHAs	Area (m^2)	Total area (m^2)
AP mines	1,286	97,673,538	49	15,122,223	112,795,761
Improvised mines	1,817	61,962,810	17	1,572,445	63,535,255
AP mined area totals	**3,103**	**159,636,348**	**66**	**16,694,668**	**176,331,016**

1 Email from Aimal Safi, Senior Technical Advisor, DMAC, 8 May 2024.

2 Ibid.

Table 1 Continued

Contamination type	CHAs	Area (m^2)	SHAs	Area (m^2)	Total area (m^2)
AV mines	921	153,117,394	94	19,300,239	172,417,633
Mined area totals	**4,024**	**312,753,742**	**160**	**35,994,907**	**348,748,649**

CHA = Confirmed hazardous area SHA = Suspected hazardous area

Improved security since the end of active conflict in 2021 has facilitated survey of areas that were previously inaccessible and DMAC said operators identified 49km^2 of previously unrecorded mined area in 2023. This included 625 areas with improvised AP mines in 22 provinces covering 17.76km^2 and 134 conventional AP mined area in 18 provinces totalling 8.4km^2. The biggest areas of newly identified contamination consisted of AV mines (22km^2) and unexploded ordnance (UXO) (53km^2).[3]

Most of Afghanistan's conventional AP mined area results 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. Big concentrations of "legacy" mines in the north-east, centre, and west account for close to three-quarters of the total contamination (see Table 2). Afghanistan estimated the area affected by these so-called "legacy" mines dating from before 2001 amounted to 112km^2 at the end of 2023, down from 147km^2 a year earlier.

Table 2: AP mined area (excluding improvised mines) by region (at end 2023)[4]

Region	CHAs	Area (m^2)	SHAs	Area (m^2)	Total area (m^2)
North-east	500	32,913,946	12	8,682,246	41,596,192
Central	356	25,406,436	3	587,544	25,993,980
South	58	5,570,595	24	4,241,432	9,812,027
West	103	15,536,393	0	0	15,536,393
South-east	90	7,373,039	10	1,611,001	8,984,040
North	92	3,761,645	0	0	3,761,645
East	87	7,111,484	0	0	7,111,484
Totals	**1,286**	**97,673,538**	**49**	**15,122,223**	**112,795,761**

Improvised mines have been identified in 26 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.[5] The extent of contamination is much smaller than the area affected by conventional AP mines but often has a higher priority because of its closer location to inhabited areas. Contamination is concentrated in the southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar (see Table 3), although survey had identified more than 4.5km^2 in the central region, including Kabul, by the end of 2023. This is more than four times the level identified a year earlier and consists entirely of confirmed hazardous areas.

Table 3: Improvised AP mined area by region (at end 2023)[6]

Region	CHAs	Area (m^2)	SHAs	Area (m^2)	Total area (m^2)
North-east	61	477,817	6	86,199	564,016
Central	176	4,581,191	0	0	4,581,191
South	930	38,869,310	6	1,434,656	40,303,966
West	201	5,079,195	0	0	5,079,195
South-east	186	4,111,695	0	0	4,111,695
North	55	1,984,521	5	51,590	2,036,111
East	208	6,859,081	0	0	6,859,081
Totals	**1,817**	**61,962,810**	**17**	**1,572,445**	**63,535,255**

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request (submitted but not accepted at the time of writing), p. 45.

6 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 8 May 2024.

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Afghanistan contends with a significant threat from AV mines and UXO, which together cause the large majority of incidents involving explosive ordnance.[7] Afghanistan's 2024 Article 5 deadline extension request identifies 1,015 areas affected by AV mines and covering over 172km^2. The end of active conflict after the change of government opened areas previously shut off by insecurity such as Ghazni, Wardak, and Zabul, which had AV mined areas inside villages and that are a high priority for clearance.[8]

DMAC reports a further 15 areas covering 9km^2 affected by cluster munition remnants (CMR) (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2024* report) and another 467 areas contaminated by other explosive remnants of war (ERW) affecting almost 166km^2. These areas do not include 38 former NATO firing ranges which for the moment are said to have a total size of 631km^2, although DMAC believes they need resurvey and is confident this would significantly reduce the size of contamination.[9]

Table 4: Other explosive ordnance contamination[10]

Contamination	CHAs	Area (km^2)	SHAs	Area (km^2)	Total area (km^2)
AV mines	921	153.1	94	19.3	172.4
CMR	15	9.2	0	0	9.2
ERW	465	165.7	2	0.02	165.7
Totals	**1,401**	**328.0**	**96**	**19.32**	**347.32**

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The MAPA's management structure has remained unchanged since the Taliban takeover of government in August 2021. The mine action sector still falls under the authority of a High Commission for Disaster Management led by a first deputy prime minister and supported by an interministerial board.[11] The IEA retained Afghanistan's National Disaster Management Authority in the role of a national mine action authority, setting overall policy, while DMAC continues to be responsible for strategic planning, managing and coordinating survey and clearance, risk education, and victim assistance, and overseeing information management and quality management (QM). The IEA-appointed director of DMAC has commented that the only change resulting from the change of government was in the personnel running it.[12]

DMAC's ability to function has been severely constrained by international sanctions imposed on the IEA and a sharp downturn in the donor funding on which mine action was largely dependent. DMAC had completed the transition from being a project of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to national management in June 2018. By 2021, the Government of Afghanistan paid salaries of only 15 of DMAC's 155 staff, the rest being paid by UNMAS and the United States (US) Department of State's Bureau of Political and Military Affairs through ITF Enhancing Human Security.[13] After August 2021, international sanctions imposed on the IEA ended the cooperation agreement between UNMAS and DMAC, and its technical staff on internationally funded salaries mostly transferred to UNMAS. DMAC's active staff as at May 2024 consisted of the director and 14 other staff, including the heads of planning and operations and an information management officer.[14]

After the change of government, DMAC and UNMAS negotiated a series of agreements creating mechanisms for cooperation to maintain coordination and technical support for the MAPA but they proved short term due to disagreements and financial shortfalls.[15] A UN Security Council resolution in March 2022, renewed in 2024, mandated UNAMA to "advise and coordinate explosive ordnance threat mitigation measures in support of humanitarian and development initiatives, support the coordination of the humanitarian mine action sector."[16]

A Liaison Office set up in June 2022 ceased operating in November 2022 due to lack of funds but resumed operation in January 2023 until DMAC suspended it in April of the same year. In October 2023, DMAC and UNAMA agreed on the creation of a Mine Action Technical Cell. In 2024, the

7 Email from Mohammad Wakil Jamshidi, Deputy Programme Manager and Chief of Operations, UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS), 12 July 2023.

8 Interview with Farid Homayoun, Country Director, HALO, Kabul, 4 June 2022; and email, 22 June 2023.

9 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 46-47.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid., p. 1.

12 Interview with Qari Nooruddin Rustamkhail, Director, DMAC, in Kabul, 4 June 2022.

13 Email from Mohammad Akbar Oriakhil, DMAC, 17 March 2021.

14 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 12 May 2024.

15 For more details on mine action coordination and the role of the UN after August 2021 see *Clearing the Mines 2023*, pp. 31–34.

16 UN Security Council Resolution 2626, 17 March 2022, operative para. 5(j). Operative para. 3 of Council Resolution 2727 of 17 March 2024 extended UNAMA's mandate until 17 March 2025 "as defined in" Resolution 2626.

MATC had a total staff of 51 providing technical support to DMAC in planning and prioritisation (one staff), operations coordination (six staff), data entry (five staff), QM (fourteen staff), and one staff member each working on risk education, gender, diversity and inclusion, and victim assistance. DMAC had seven regional offices before the change of government but since then has lacked funding and staff to maintain them. The MATC instead has operated four regional offices in Herat, Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Kunduz.[17] Donor funding for the MATC has remained precarious and short-term, on occasion necessitating the issuance of staff termination notices that were later withdrawn on receipt of new funding. MATC funding was due to expire at the end of June but it received funding from the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) in the United States (US) Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs for July and August, and on 23 August 2024, the German Federal Foreign Office agreed to provide funding until the end of the year. By then, MATC hoped to reach agreement with PM/WRA for funding to support operations into 2025.[18]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The Taliban's crackdown on women's employment and education left severely limited space for women's continuing engagement in key humanitarian services such as health and this has included mine action. DMAC stated in 2022 that it remained possible for women to work in the MAPA[19] and in 2023 some implementing partners (IPs) reported employing more women than before the change of government, including in field operations as well as in office roles. A major obstacle to national IPs employing women has been a sharp downturn in donor funding forcing lay-offs of many deminers.

Before the Taliban takeover of August 2021, DMAC's 2016–20 strategic plan included gender mainstreaming as one of four main goals. It stated that "achievable targets, reflecting prevailing circumstances and conditions, will be adopted to support and encourage progress wherever possible."[20] Afghanistan's Article 5 deadline extension request says DMAC, in consultation with IPs, has developed a gender and diversity mainstreaming policy for the MAPA "and it is subject to review and further development."[21] It states additionally that a National Mine Action Strategic Plan for 2021–2026 (yet to be released at the time of writing) sets out a vision and objectives that are "G & D sensitive" and that "a standalone goal has also been set on inclusion and empowerment of women and other marginalized groups in mine action."[22]

The extension request acknowledges the very low level of employment of women and people with disabilities in mine action—put at 4% and 1%, respectively—but identifies a number of actions it says are being taken to strengthen gender and diversity in mine action. These include monthly meetings of a technical working group led by DMAC and involving UNMAS and IPs, and training to improve the capacity of female staff. Mine action data continue to be disaggregated by gender and age.[23]

In practice, scope for deploying female staff varies according to the disposition of provincial and district authorities but IPs are employing mixed gender ("mahram") teams, particularly for risk education and community liaison.[24] Among national operators, Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC) reported hiring five female staff in 2023 for positions ranging from a risk education instructor to office clerks and cleaners;[25] the Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA) deployed 12 women in mixed gender/mahram teams in 2023 and three in 2024;[26] and the Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation (OMAR) has a female gender focal point (who works from home because of restrictions) as well as a mixed-gender risk education team.[27] The Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA) deployed a mahram team in Kunduz, Nangahar, and Maydan Wardak provinces and also hired two other female staff – one as a data processor at its Kabul headquarters and a second working in Kandahar province.[28]

All of Danish Refugee Council (DRC)'s 21 risk education teams are mixed-gender/mahram teams and women are also employed in non-technical survey (NTS) teams and office roles. It employed a total of 30 women in its staff of 245, all but one of them in operational positions.[29] The HALO Trust reported employing 40 women out of a total staff of 2,024 people in 2023, including 36 out of the 1,876 employed in field operations.[30] In May 2023 HALO was able to deploy 15 mixed-gender teams in Ghor, Kabul, Kunduz, and Nangarhar provinces. It received permission to deploy two more teams in Takhar province in June 2023 and expected to deploy all mixed-gender risk education teams from July 2023. HALO also said it employs members of all ethnic groups and its database tracks the organisation's ethnic diversity.[31]

17 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 5 June 2024.

18 Interview with Nick Pond, Chief of Mine Action Section, UNAMA, 28 April 2024; and emails, 26 May and 3 September 2024.

19 Interviews with Qari Nooruddin Rustamkhail, Director, DMAC, 4 June 2022; Soeren Adser Soerensen, DRC, 6 June 2022; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 4 June 2022; and with Awal Khan, QA Manager, OMAR, and Zarina Omar, EORE Manager & Gender Focal Point, OMAR, 8 June 2022.

20 DMAC, "National Mine Action Strategic Plan 1395–1399 (2016–2020)", State Ministry for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, undated but 2016, p. 17.

21 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 41.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Mahram teams combine a female staff member and male relative.

25 Email from Farid Elmi, Operations Manager, ATC, 3 April 2024.

26 Email from Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 13 May 2024.

27 Email from Abid K. Fazel, Deputy Director, Programmes, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

28 Email from Mir Mohammad, Executive Operations Manager, MCPA, 4 August 2024.

29 Email from Hannah Rose Holloway, Head of Humanitarian Disarmament and Peacebuilding, DRC, 23 April 2024.

30 Emails from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024; and Kim Feldewerth, HALO, 3 October 2024.

31 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 22 June 2023.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Afghanistan has a national standard on environmental management in mine action, "AMAS 07.06 Environmental Management", along with a national policy on environmental protection that was approved by DMAC in 2015. DMAC factors a range of environmental issues into operational planning. These range from seasonal issues such as snow cover affecting deployment in mountainous to dealing with flood risks and ensuring deployment of machinery compatible with local conditions.[32] Additionally, most IPs have their own standard operating procedures (SOPs) aligned with the local context. ATC reports it applies an environmental management system in compliance with ISO 14001:2015, which is designed to prevent pollution, reduce waste, and protect natural habitats.[33] MCPA has an SOP on environmental protection and trains staff in implementing it as well as avoiding use of mechanical assets that are harmful to the environment.[34]

The MAPA's international operators—DRC, the Fondation Suisse de Déminage (FSD), and The HALO Trust—each have global policies on managing operations to limit environmental impacts. DRC's Health, Safety and Environmental Management SOP considers issues such as air, water, and soil pollution; reduction in the volume of waste and safe disposal; reducing energy consumption and CO_2 emissions; and promoting appropriate land use and management of long-term environmental risks. It states, "necessary measures should be implemented without damaging property, or infrastructure, in a manner that minimizes the environmental impact and is safe for local communities' men, women and children and for demining staff."[35] HALO's global SOP is aligned with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and in 2023 it trialled an environmental assessment tool using a questionnaire to establish an area's environmental characteristics. It also hired an environmental specialist to assess the impact of operations and advise on measures to mitigate harm.[36]

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The MAPA is supported by an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation database and prior to the change of government in August 2021 had planned to upgrade to IMSMA Core. Information management experienced severe disruption following the change of government in August 2021 and ensuing disagreements over the role of the UN. IPs continued to report to DMAC but shortages of staff resulted in extended interruptions when IP operation reports were not uploaded, delaying the database upgrade.[37] UNMAS, with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), had proposed to migrate data from IMSMA NG to Core in 2022 but at that time DMAC did not agree. The upgrade to Core and closure of IMSMA NG appeared first in a 10-point list of priorities presented to a MAPA stakeholder meeting in January 2024.[38] The MATC reported in May 2024 that it was in discussion with DMAC on plans and a timeline for completing the upgrade.[39]

DMAC reaffirmed its full control of information management in February 2023 but still required additional capacity to support the database. The October 2023 agreement between DMAC and UNAMA on a framework for technical support through the MATC paved the way for stabilising data processing which is undertaken by six staff working under dedicated contracts. By late April 2024, the database had a backlog of 10,400 pending reports to upload, of which 400 were survey and clearance reports and the remaining 10,000 related to victim assistance.[40] By the middle of 2024, the backlog reportedly included some 400 hazard reports and 340 completion reports.[41] DMAC cited problems with the number and late submission of reports it received from IPs who, it said, sometimes submitted hundreds of reports at the same time.[42] Other stakeholders reported, however, a lack of quality management of data uploaded to the database and significant discrepancies between official and IP data, underscoring persistent challenges to the MAPA's information management. The HALO Trust believes a lack of capacity within the team is a key contributing factor to the backlog.[43]

DMAC last submitted an APMBC Article 7 report in May 2021, covering calendar year 2020.

32 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 5 June 2024.

33 Email from Farid Elmi, ATC, 3 April 2024.

34 Email from Mir Mohammad, MCPA, 22 April 2024.

35 Email from Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, 23 April 2024.

36 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 21 June 2023.

37 See *Clearing the Mines 2023*, pp. 27–30.

38 PowerPoint presentation, MAPA Stakeholders' Meeting, Kabul, 29 January 2024.

39 Emails from Nick Pond, UNAMA, 25 August 2023 and 26 May 2024.

40 Interview with Nick Pond, UNAMA, and Mohammed Wakhil, Deputy Programme Manager, MATC, in Geneva, 28 April 2024.

41 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024.

42 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 8 August 2024.

43 Email from Kim Feldewerth, HALO, 3 October 2024.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Afghanistan's change of government in August 2021 and cuts in international funding before and afterwards disrupted management of the mine action sector and stalled implementation of the five-year plan prepared for Afghan years 1400–1404 (April 2021 to March 2026). UN attempts to provide coordination and technical support through a Liaison Office in 2021–23 proved unsuccessful (see the *Clearing the Mines 2023* report on Afghanistan for details) but DMAC and UNAMA agreed in October 2023 on the operation of the MATC, which included planning, prioritisation, information management, QM, and tasking support to DMAC.[44] DMAC has not set out an annual work plan for the MAPA since 2021 when the sector faced sharply reduced international donor support.

DMAC sent an Article 5 deadline extension request in March 2024 asking for an additional five years until 31 March 2030 and including a multi-year work plan for achieving completion projected to cost a total of $256 million.[45] The request states that "it would be very challenging or impossible" to consider Afghanistan's AP mine contamination in isolation from other explosive ordnance. In addition to tackling AP mined areas totalling over 100km^2,[46] it plans to clear other explosive ordnance now estimated to affect 347km^2 (see Table 4). However, operating targets set out in the request are based on deploying a number of teams far in excess of what is available on current levels of donor support.[47]

The request provides for a three-year village-by-village re-survey of Afghanistan's 23 provinces to be conducted by 54 quick response teams (QRT) at a projected cost of $10.5 million, starting in April 2025. The operation would also include re-survey of 38 remaining former NATO firing ranges. Drawing on the experience of the previous re-survey of three firing ranges, DMAC projected this would result in cancellation of large areas and substantially shrink the area needing clearance.[48] DMAC's plan also foresees clearance of all improvised mine contamination estimated to cover 63.5km^2 in the first three years of the extension period and sets annual targets for clearance of AP mines and other ordnance.[49]

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The MAPA has comprehensive national mine action standards that are compliant with IMAS. Before the change of government in August 2021 and the disruption to MAPA management, DMAC had reviewed them annually and amended them in consultation with IPs.

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 was reviewed in a series of technical working group meetings and a revised version issued in 2020. It stipulates clearance should take place only in a rural or semi-rural setting. All action to neutralise abandoned improvised mines (AIMs) should be conducted remotely or semi-remotely, and, where possible, devices should be destroyed in situ.[50] The standard was amended in early 2023 to include mechanical clearance of improvised mines.[51]

A GICHD capacity assessment in 2019 noted that DMAC had been "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 said some chapters needed to be reviewed and updated to promote greater efficiency.[52] The assessment drew attention to the persistently high percentage of land released through full clearance—averaging 78% between 2018 and 2020—and called into question the efficiency of the MAPA's survey and land release practices but the balance appears to have shifted. In 2021, the percentage of full clearance fell to below half (48%) but primarily as a result of HALO's cancellation of land affected by improvised mines. In 2023, official data showed full clearance accounted for a little over half the total area released.[53]

44 Interview with Nick Pond, UNAMA, 28 April 2024, and email, 26 May 2024.

45 2024 Article 5 deadline extension request, p. 71.

46 The extension request, drawing on older data, puts AP mine contamination at 176km^2.

47 2024 Article 5 deadline extension request, p. 65. The request calls for operations by a total of 472 teams in Afghan year 1404 (April 2025–March 2026); 432 teams in 1405 and 408 teams in 1406; dropping to 262 and 261 teams in the last two years of the plan period.

48 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. iii and 58-60.

49 Ibid., p. 58.

50 AMAS 06.10, March 2019, p. 5; Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form F, p. 15.

51 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024.

52 GICHD, Integrated Capacity Assessment Report, 5 July 2019 (draft), p. 7.

53 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 8 May 2024.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The active capacity of Afghanistan's mine action sector has fallen sharply as a result of reduced international donor support. DMAC reported that six national and three international operators conducted clearance in 2023, the same as the previous year but working with far fewer teams. The total number of personnel dropped from round 5,900 in the last quarter of 2020 to around 3,000 at the start of 2023. Throughout the year, the MAPA deployed approximately 360 teams active across the spectrum of mine action. By July 2024, the number of active teams had fallen to 287.[54]

ATC completed the 15-month first phase of a demining project in Maydan Wardak in October2023 which had employed 274 staff, including nine demining teams with a total of 180 personnel. For the second phase, also due to last 15 months (until January 2025), ATC reported funding was reduced and the project employed six 10-man demining teams, another team for dealing with improvised mines and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), and a risk education team. ATC hoped to start a 12-month project funded by the UN's Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) by the end of July 2024 which would employ two manual demining teams, one EOD team, one QRT, and a mechanical unit.[55]

DAFA, which had some 400 staff operational in 2022, reported it had 175 staff working at the end of 2023, including 114 in operations. In 2022, it fielded 8 teams and 136 deminers; in 2023, it had one team working on clearance of improvised mines, 11 survey/EOD teams with a total of 77 personnel, and a mechanical team. DAFA also had 10 quick response teams (QRTs) funded by the UN's AHF working in 24 provinces and 10 QRT teams deployed to Zero Point refugee camp and transit centres conducting a range of services, including NTS, spot EOD, clearance of small hazardous areas, and risk education.[56]

DRC employed a total of 252 people at the end of 2023, including 215 in operations, compared with a total staff of 459 (342 in operations) the previous year. In addition to the QRTs and teams working on improvised mines, DRC had four battle area clearance (BAC) teams with 43 searchers who were also available for manual mine clearance. Its operations teams conducted clearance in five provinces in 2023 (Helmand, Kabul, Kunar, Nangarhar, and Parwan) but mainly clearing UXO.[57]

FSD ended 2023 with 100 staff, including 80 deminers in 5 teams, significantly more than the 32 deminers employed a year earlier. But funding shortfalls meant its teams started working in June and July 2023 and the decision of PATRIP Foundation to stop funding mine action in Afghanistan meant FSD would lose three demining teams as well as two risk education teams and a livelihood survey team. In 2023, teams worked in northern Badakshan tackling mainly Soviet-era butterfly mines and in Kunduz province on other mine types, focusing on Kunduz during the winter and spring months when adverse weather hampers access to Badakshan.[58]

HALO, much the biggest operator in Afghanistan reported deploying an average of 167 teams per month and 2,024 staff active in 2023, down from a little over 3,000 staff it employed two years earlier. The 2023 operation included 25 manual demining teams working on legacy mines which worked in Badakshan, Ghazni and Takhar but in 2023 and 2024 it has given priority to survey and clearance of improvised mines, which involved 68 teams with 333 deminers working mainly in Ghazni, Helmand, Kandahar and Maydan Wardak.[59]

Table 5: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2023[60]

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers	Machines/ personnel
AREA	N/R	N/R	N/R
ATC*	9	180	1/17
DAFA	1	10	1/7
DRC	13	104	4/14
FSD	5	80	0/0
HALO	93	947	12/44
MCPA	17	155	17/106
MDC	8	160	0
OMAR	15	270	4/48
Totals	**161**	**1,906**	**39/236**

N/R = Not reported * Includes 3 teams/27 personnel working on improvised mines with mechanical units and 11 QRT teams with 77 staff conducting EOD spot tasks, NTS, risk education, and some manual clearance.

MCPA, the biggest national operator, appeared to have avoided major redundancies in 2023 when it reported a largely unchanged total staff of 734, nearly half of them in operations. These included four manual demining teams, nine teams working on improvised mines, and four QRTs; and 13 survey teams with 52 staff and 17 mechanical teams employing 102 people. MCPA picked up an AHF-funded clearance project in November 2023 but with the completion of two other projects in 2024 it expected it would have to lay off 174 staff in the course of the year.[61]

54 Interview with Nick Pond, UNAMA, 28 April 2024; and emails, 26 May and 15 July 2024.

55 Emails from Farid Elmi, ATC, 3 April and 17 July 2024.

56 Email from Bismillah Haqmal, Operations and Planning Manager, DAFA, 13 May 2024.

57 Emails from Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, 23 April and 21 July 2024.

58 Email from Din Mohammad Nickwah, FSD, 17 July 2024.

59 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024.

60 Emails from Farid Elmi, ATC, 3 April 2024; Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 13 May 2024; Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, 23 April and 21 July 2024; Din Mohammad Nickwah, FSD, 17 July 2024; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024; Mir Mohammad, MCPA, 22 April 2024; and Abid K. Fazel, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

61 Email from Mir Mohammad, MCPA, 22 April 2024.

MDC employed 160 deminers in 2023 and worked mainly on clearance in the western provinces of Baghlan and Herat, but with the completion of that project it expected it would have to reduce its operations staff.[62] In 2021, OMAR employed a total of around 1,000 staff in its mine action programme but by the end of 2023 it reported the number had fallen to 287, including 15 demining teams with 270 deminers supported by a mechanical unit and one risk education team. OMAR said it laid off 185 deminers and support staff on completion of projects in Kunar and Paktya, and without the arrival of new funding it faced further redundancies with the scheduled completion of its one active project in July 2024.[63]

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), with a team of 18 people (including an international country director, five international, and six national technical advisers), continued to provide third-party monitoring of all US PM/WRA grants to IPs in Afghanistan. It monitored 19 grants with a total value of $12.25 million in 2023 which covered demining operations by five operators (ATC, FSD, HALO, MCPA, and OMAR), weapons and ammunition disposal by one operator, and victim assistance by two organisations.[64]

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2023

Persistent discrepancies between official and operator data prevent a clear determination of the MAPA's operating results. DMAC had reported release of 27.68km^2 in 2022, but disruption to information management following Afghanistan's 2021 change of government left a backlog of thousands of operator reports waiting to be uploaded to the database and official data appeared to have significantly understated results. IPs reported release of 52.07km^2 through survey and clearance in 2022.

In 2023, DMAC has reported that IPs released a total of almost 32.8km^2 through survey and clearance, destroying 3,729 AP mines (of which 1,590 were improvised mines) in the course of clearance operations and another 2,242 in EOD spot tasks.[65] This represents a 37% drop from the total that operators reported in 2022. However, IPs said they released a total of 59.98km^2 through survey and clearance in 2023, an increase of almost 15% on their results in 2022. IPs reported destroying 8,924 AP mines, including those of an improvised nature, in 2023. Of these, 1,591 were destroyed in the course of spot task operations.[66]

SURVEY IN 2023

The extent of land released through survey is obscured by large discrepancies between DMAC and IP data. DMAC reported release of a total of 18.33km^2 through survey in 2023, most of it cancelled through NTS (see Table 6) and 16% higher than the 15.54km^2 it reported for the previous year.[67] IPs reported releasing a total of 39.2km^2 through survey in 2023 (see Table 7),[68] more than double the amount reported by DMAC and 40% more than the 21.64km^2 they reported the previous year.

Most of the discrepancy is accounted for by cancellation of nearly 15km^2 reported by DAFA in 2023 but which is absent from the official count. DMAC reported that quality of survey had fallen after 2021 when it no longer had resources to deploy QM teams in the field, and it tasked DAFA to reassess reported SHAs to confirm the presence or absence of explosive ordnance before entering them in the database. DAFA cancelled 14.93km^2, including 68 areas reportedly contaminated with improvised mines, but as they had not been registered in the database DMAC did not include them as cancelled SHAs.[69]

Table 6: Release of AP mined area through NTS in 2023 (m^2) (DMAC data)[70]

Operator	Legacy AP mines	Improvised AP mines	All mined area combined
ATC	1,870	0	1,870
DAFA	0	39,973	39,973
DRC	6,212,297	14,324	6,226,621
DMAC	756,096	12,014	768,110
HALO	206,519	5,002,151	5,208,670
MATC	0	42,235	42,235
MCPA	4,951,506	684,029	5,635,535
OMAR	115,208	0	115,208
Totals	**12,243,496**	**5,794,726**	**18,038,222**

62 Email from Mohammad Shoaib Hakimi, Director, MDC, 17 July 2024.

63 Email from Abid K. Fazel, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

64 Email from Mats Hektor, Senior Technical Advisor, NPA, 22 May 2024.

65 Emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 8 May and 8 August 2024.

66 Emails from Farid Elmi, ATC, 3 April 2024; Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 13 May 2024; Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, 23 April and 21 July 2024; Din Mohammad Nickwah, FSD, 17 July 2024; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024; Mir Mohammad, MCPA, 22 April 2024; and Abid K. Fazel, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

67 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 8 May 2024.

68 Emails from Farid Elmi, ATC, 3 April 2024; Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 13 May 2024; Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, 23 April and 21 July 2024; Din Mohammad Nickwah, FSD, 17 July 2024; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024; Mir Mohammad, MCPA, 22 April 2024; and Abid K. Fazel, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

69 Emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 8 August 2024; and Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 12 August 2024.

70 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 8 May 2024.

Table 7: Release of AP mined area through NTS in 2023 (m^2) (IP data)

Operator	Legacy AP mines	Improvised mines	All mined area combined
ATC	77,424	0	77,424
DAFA	14,933,980	0	14,933,980
DRC	8,864,150	0	8,864,150
HALO	5,505,319	7,706,186	13,211,505
MCPA	648,637	1,313,209	1,961,846
MDC	76,027	70,194	146,221
Totals	**30,105,537**	**9,089,589**	**39,195,126**

No mined area was reduced through technical survey (TS) in 2022 but DMAC reported that TS of conventional AP mined area by six IPs resulted in reduction of a total of 288,910m^2 in 2023.[71]

CLEARANCE IN 2023

DMAC reported clearance of a total of 14.47km^2 of mined area in 2023 destroying a total of 3,729 conventional and improvised devices (see Tables 8 and 9). This consisted of 8.79km^2 affected by conventional AP mines, representing a 12% drop on the level of clearance that DMAC reported in 2022, and 5.68km^2 contaminated by improvised mines, more than double the previous year's estimate.[72] In addition to the 3,729 AP devices destroyed during clearance of mined area, a further 2,242 were reportedly destroyed in spot tasks.

Table 8: AP mine clearance in 2023 (DMAC data)[73]

Operator	Province/district	Area cleared (m^2)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
AREA	Nuristan	1,256,616	58	0
ATC	Maydan Warak	698,091	5	1
DAFA	Baghlan, Paktika	61,188	14	0
DRC	Kabul, Nangarhar, Parwan	98,452	39	0
FSD	Badakshan	323,277	666	0
HALO	Badakhshan, Ghazni, Maydan Wardak, Takhar	283,135	52	0
MCPA	Paktya	100	2	0
MDC	Baghlan, Herat	3,283,877	676	0
OMAR	Paktya, Nangarhar, Kunar	2,782,426	627	1
Totals		**8,787,162**	**2,139**	**2**

Table 9: Clearance of improvised mines in 2023 (DMAC data)[74]

Operator	Province/district	Area cleared (m^2)	Improvised mines destroyed
DAFA	Kandahar, Hilmand, Nangarhar	53,024	22
DRC	Hilmand and Nangarhar	213,449	19
HALO	Balkh, Ghazni, Ghor, Hilmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Zabul	5,389,418	1,510
MCPA	Ghazni, Kandahar, Kunduz, Maydan Wardak, Paktya	26,082	39
Totals		**5,681,973**	**1,590**

71 Ibid. The six IPs were AREA, ATC, DRC, FSD, MCPA, and MDC.

72 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 8 May 2024.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

The nine IPs that reported mine clearance (see Tables 10 and 11) recorded clearing almost 14.91km^2 of legacy AP mined area, two-thirds more than DMAC reported, but a similar amount of land affected by improvised mines (5.88km^2).[75] Three national IPs accounted for more than 90% of the AP mined area cleared in 2023. HALO, much the biggest operator, said it pivoted to focus on improvised mines as a higher priority hazard. As in 2022, it accounted for more than 90% of the clearance of improvised mined areas.[76]

Table 10: AP mine clearance in 2023 (IP data)[77]

Operator	Area cleared (m^2)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
ATC	3,162,129	17	9	491
DRC	509,749	24	0	1,355
FSD	452,325	987	0	827
HALO	315,065	52	1	32
MCPA	100	2	0	0
MDC	3,432,687	750	2	39
OMAR	7,033,164	633	1	2,807
Totals	**14,905,219**	**2,465**	**13**	**5,551**

Table 11: Improvised AP mine clearance in 2023 (IP data)[78]

Operator	Area cleared (m^2)	AP mines destroyed
DAFA	45,421	168
DRC	233,657	21
HALO	5,463,328	1,545
MCPA	134,016	48
Totals	**5,876,422**	**1,782**

DEMINER SAFETY

Operators reported that three deminers suffered serious injuries in 2023. Two OMAR deminers sustained injuries during clearance operations in Jaji district of Paktya province in 2023 which resulted in amputations for both deminers.[79] A HALO deminer incurred life-changing injuries after initiating a grenade which he investigated with a tool not authorised for the procedure. HALO reported the incident revealed deficiencies with its battle area clearance (BAC) SOPs and training, which it addressed.[80]

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR AFGHANISTAN: 1 MARCH 2003

↓

ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2013

↓

FIRST EXTENSION REQUEST DEADLINE (10-YEARS): 1 MARCH 2023

↓

SECOND EXTENDED DEADLINE (2-YEAR INTERIM EXTENSION): 1 MARCH 2025

↓

THIRD EXTENDED DEADLINE SOUGHT (FIVE YEARS): 1 MARCH 2030

NOT ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE (EXTENSION REQUESTED)
LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): NONE

75 Emails from Farid Elmi, ATC, 3 April 2024; Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 13 May 2024; Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, 23 April and 21 July 2024; Din Mohammad Nickwah, FSD, 17 July 2024; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024; Mir Mohammad, MCPA, 22 April 2024; and Abid K. Fazel, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

76 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024.

77 Emails from Farid Elmi, ATC, 3 April 2024; Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, 23 April 2024; Din Mohammad Nickwah, FSD, 17 July 2024; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024; Mir Mohammad, MCPA, 22 April 2024; and Abid K. Fazel, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

78 Emails from Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 13 May 2024; Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, 23 April 2024; Din Mohammad Nickwah, FSD, 17 July 2024; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024; Mir Mohammad, MCPA, 22 April 2024; Mohammad Shohab Hakimi, MDC, 17 July and 4 August 2024; and Abid K. Fazel, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

79 Email from Abid K. Fazel, OMAR, 31 March 2024.

80 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 15 July 2024.

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Afghanistan is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2025. It will not meet this deadline.

Afghanistan submitted its second Article 5 extension request in 2022, months after the change of government, as an interim measure allowing time to develop a strategy adjusted to its new circumstances. Afghanistan received a two-year extension until 1 March 2025. UN Member States have not formally recognised the IEA and with DMAC's acquiescence the request was submitted through Afghanistan's permanent mission to the United Nations in Geneva which is still represented by the ambassador of the previous government.

In March 2024, DMAC submitted a new request seeking a five-year extension to 1 March 2030, underscoring Afghanistan's commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the APMBC as well as to other international conventions to which it is already a State Party.[81] The Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the ISU, reflecting the IEA's lack of diplomatic recognition, delayed action on processing receipt of the request received by DMAC in March 2024, and the final draft of the request was only made available on the APMBC website in November 2024. As a matter of international law, Afghanistan is represented by the Taliban government following its takeover in August 2021. The Taliban regime is bound directly by all provisions of the APMBC. The issue of recognition of the Taliban Government by the UN and individual States Parties is a separate matter from treaty application and implementation, just as it is under international humanitarian law. The issue of recognition should not prevent the government of Afghanistan from fulfilling its legal obligations under the Convention, including adherence to the Article 5 extension request process. It is therefore correct that Afghanistan's extension request, submitted by DMAC and MAPA, is considered and granted by States Parties at the Fifth Review Conference in November 2024.

Afghanistan's third request is largely aspirational. Taking advantage of improved security allowing access to all parts of the country, it set a target of completing clearance of not just AP mines but all of Afghanistan's explosive ordnance contamination within five years at a projected cost of $256 million. The MAPA has considerable experience and capacity as one of the oldest humanitarian demining programmes but targets do not realistically reflect Afghanistan's prevailing circumstances and MAPA capacity.

Afghanistan's estimated AP mine contamination (including improvised mines) of 176km^2 accounts for only one third of total explosive ordnance contamination (524km^2)[82] but survey in areas previously inaccessible due to conflict continues to find previously unrecorded contamination, obscuring the full extent of the challenge to be completed within five years. More importantly, the IEA's diplomatic isolation and its dependence on shrinking and increasingly short-term donor funding has already resulted in the lay-off of almost half the MAPA's personnel since 2021, stalling the progress of survey and clearance and creating uncertainty about the number of teams that will be active in the coming years.

Table 12: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance[83]

Year	Area cleared (km^2)
2023	14.47
2022	13.85
2021	17.71
2020	24.24
2019	28.01
Total	**98.28**

81 Statement of Afghanistan, Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meetings, 16 May 2022.

82 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. iii.

83 Clearance of AP and improvised mines reported by six implementing partners totalled 30.38km^2 in 2022 and 21.1km^2 in 2023, which would raise the five-year total to more than 121km^2.