AFGHANISTAN

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2026

KEY DATA

APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2030

Not on track

AP MINE CONTAMINATION: 163KM^2

Massive
(National authority estimate)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (km^2)	Release in 2024 (km^2)
Clearance	5.29	10.44
Technical Survey	0	0.21
Non-Technical Survey	16.0	39.13

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	2,150 (incl. 1,275 in spot tasks)	5,376 (incl. 3,989 in spot tasks)

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2025:

- Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC)
- Agency for Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation in Afghanistan (AREA)
- Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA)
- The Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation (OMAR)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

All operators, particularly national implementing partners (IPs), experienced a major reduction in donor funding forcing severe cuts in capacity and resulting in a sharp drop in land release and the number of mines destroyed. Switzerland and South Korea provided funding to maintain the critical coordination and quality management support role performed by the United Nations (UN)-managed Mine Action Technical Cell (MATC). The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) signed an agreement with Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to proceed with plans to upgrade the national database.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) should increase and expedite delivery of national funding for the mine action sector, including by integrating mine action into projects undertaken by government ministries.**
- **The IEA and DMAC should enhance the meaningful participation of women in all areas of mine action.**
- **International donors should put funding for the critical support provided by the Mine Action Technical Cell on a stable, long-term basis and increase funding for mine action activities.**

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2025)	Score (2024)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	7	Afghanistan has a good, if incomplete, knowledge of pre-2001 or legacy AP mined area and improving knowledge of improvised mine contamination, but still locates significant amounts of previously unrecorded mined area.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	6	The mine action programme is nationally managed but largely reliant on international funding. Diplomatic isolation and reduced donor support since the 2021 Taliban takeover left DMAC with only a skeleton management team and has severely impacted UN coordination support.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	3	Implementing partners, with DMAC's support, have been able to keep some women in office and field roles (risk education and community liaison) but highly restrictive Taliban restrictions on women in public life undercut meaningful gender mainstreaming in the national programme, and conditions for deploying female staff vary regionally.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION (10% of overall score)	6	6	Afghanistan has a national mine action standard on environmental management and DMAC says operational planning considers environmental factors. Implementing partners have standard operating procedures on managing environmental impact that align with local conditions and international operators also follow their organisations' global policies.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	6	DMAC reached agreement with the GICHD to move ahead with plans upgrading the database from Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation to IMSMA Core, and held regular IM coordination meetings with IPs. The first stage of the upgrade will focus on risk education data migration.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	6	DMAC set out a five-year strategy in its 2024 Article 5 deadline extension request, including clearance milestones released in March, but its ambitious targets looked largely aspirational in the absence of donor funding to implement them.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (10% of overall score)	6	6	The national programme has mine action standards (AMAS) in Dari and English that are subject to regular review but which may need comprehensive updating. Reduced donor funding has severely impacted quality management capacity.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	6	Afghanistan underscored its compliance with the treaty by submitting an Article 5 extension request in 2024 but a sharp drop in funding slashed programme capacity resulting in a correspondingly sharp fall in land release.
Average Score	**5.9**	**5.9**	**Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE**

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE 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)
- Starlight Afghan Demining Services Company (SADC)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- Fondation suisse de déminage (FSD)
- The HALO Trust (HALO)

OTHER ACTORS

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

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Afghanistan had an estimated 163km² of AP mined area, including improvised mine contamination, at the end of 2025 (see Table 1), 10% less than the equivalent figure a year earlier.[1] This continued a progressive decline in the level of legacy mine contamination but also may point to a tipping point in improvised mine contamination, which fell for the first time in five years since the Taliban took power and active hostilities ended.

Table 1: Mine contamination by device type (at end 2025)[2]

Type of contamination	No. of CHAs	CHA area (m²)	No. of SHAs	SHA area (m²)	Total area (m²)
Anti-personnel mines	1,199	83,581,477	30	3,617,228	87,198,705
Improvised mines	2,085	67,532,367	13	8,707,332	76,239,699
AP mined area total[3]	**3,284**	**151,113,844**	**43**	**12,324,560**	**163,438,404**
Anti-vehicle mines	1,050	162,718,464	85	33,722,143	196,440,607
Totals	**4,334**	**313,832,308**	**128**	**46,046,703**	**359,879,011**

A continuing village-to-village survey identified 2.3km² of previously unrecorded legacy mined area in 2025 but the total area still fell 18% from the end of 2024. These conventional AP mines still affect 29 of Afghanistan's 32 provinces but what remains is concentrated in northern and central provinces, notably Baghlan, with close to a quarter of the total, Kabul, Maydan Wardak and Badakhshan (see Table 2).

Contamination 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. Much of what remains after two decades of clearance is located in remote and mountainous areas and as a result receives a lower clearance priority than other forms of explosive ordnance, which cause a higher number of casualties. In 2026 DMAC also investigated the presence of AP mines it said had been laid by Pakistan's army along the border in Nangahar, Khost, and Paktya provinces after border clashes in February 2026.[4] A DRC quick reaction team (QRT) confirmed a mine detonation near the Torkham border point in Nangahar province in August 2026 in which an Afghan man was injured.[5] DMAC also reported that Afghan police had collected Pakistani P2 Mk2 and P4 Mk1 anti-personnel mines that had been laid on mountain trails along the border in Kunar province.[6] For more information on use, please see the country profile on Afghanistan on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[7]

Table 2: AP mined area by region/province (at end 2025)[8]

Region	Province	CHAs	Area confirmed (m²)	SHAs	Area (m²)
Central	Kabul	86	6,346,827	0	0
	Kapisa	7	185,089	0	0
	Logar	29	2,768,817	0	0
	Maydan Wardak	94	8,039,537	3	587,544
	Panjshir	13	547,423	0	0
	Parwan	125	6,202,544	0	0
Subtotals		**354**	**24,090,237**	**3**	**587,544**
East	Kunar	18	1,441,617	0	0
	Laghman	1	53,424	0	0
	Nangarhar	30	2,416,094	0	0
	Nuristan	31	2,396,426	0	0
Subtotals		**80**	**6,307,561**	**0**	**0**

1 Email from Aimal Safi, Senior Technical Advisor, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

2 Ibid.

3 Afghanistan's Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form C, recorded AP mined area as totalling 162,533,433m² – CHAs covering 150,228,873m² and SHAs covering 12,304,560m².

4 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 10 September 2026.

5 Emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 1 and 6 September 2026; and from Nicholas Pond, Chief of Mine Action Section, UNAMA, 3 September 2026.

6 Emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 1, 6, and 10 September 2026.

7 https://the-monitor.org.

8 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

Table 2 continued

Region	Province	CHAs	Area confirmed (m²)	SHAs	Area (m²)
North	Balkh	19	950,713	0	0
	Faryab	5	536,867	0	0
	Samangan	39	1,011,237	0	0
	Sari Pul	10	329,266	0	0
Subtotals		**73**	**2,828,083**	**0**	**0**
North East	Badakhshan	77	4,840,617	0	0
	Baghlan	342	21,698,597	6	384,807
	Kunduz	5	141,137	0	0
	Takhar	24	1,079,951	0	0
Subtotals		**448**	**27,760,302**	**6**	**384,807**
South	Helmand	5	629,281	4	108,500
	Kandahar	25	2,731,468	12	2,005,579
	Zabul	21	1,644,375	0	0
Subtotals		**51**	**5,005,124**	**16**	**2,114,079**
South East	Ghazni	16	1,168,760	1	62,400
	Khost	23	1,101,165	0	0
	Paktika	17	1,239,743	3	397,385
	Paktya	54	3,364,391	1	71,013
Subtotals		**110**	**6,874,059**	**5**	**530,798**
West	Badghis	13	247,952	0	0
	Farah	32	7,386,159	0	0
	Ghor	16	1,571,491	0	0
	Hirat	22	1,510,509	0	0
Subtotals		**83**	**10,716,111**	**0**	**0**
Totals		**1,199**	**83,581,477**	**30**	**3,617,228**

Improvised mines extensively used in the years leading up to the Taliban's 2021 takeover have been identified in 26 provinces,[9] but are heavily concentrated in the southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar. Although survey identified 3.5km² of previously unrecorded improvised mine hazardous areas in 2025, the total recorded area marked a small (3%) drop from the end of 2024. Additionally, 86% of the contamination was recorded as CHAs, up from 11% a year earlier.[10]

Table 3: Improvised mine contamination by region (at end 2025)[11]

Province	CHAs	Area (m²)	SHAs	Area (m²)	Total area (m²)
Central	168	4,262,921	1	55,184	4,318,105
East	136	5,072,215	0	0	5,072,215
North	115	2,490,672	3	31,795	2,522,467
North East	26	265,531	2	52,268	317,799
South	1,096	40,075,993	7	8,568,085	48,644,078
South East	315	9,531,723	0	0	9,531,723
West	229	5,833,312	0	0	5,833,312
Totals	**2,085**	**67,532,367**	**13**	**8,707,332**	**76,239,699**

9 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 45.

10 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

11 Ibid.

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Afghanistan's many decades of conflict left extensive threats from a wide array of explosive remnants of war. These include cluster munitions affecting an estimated 8.7km^2 (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2026* report) and a significant threat from anti-vehicle mines. These affect a bigger area than AP mines covering more than 196km^2 and include hazardous areas whose proximity to population made them a high priority for clearance.[12]

However, around 88% of Afghanistan's explosive ordnance casualties in 2024–25 were caused by UXO[13] and extensive clearance capacity is still being deployed in 2026 to survey and clear 40 remaining firing ranges of the former International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) covering some 508km^2.[14] Forced return of close to three million Afghans from Pakistan and Iran in 2025 raised the priority for clearing some ranges.[15]

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

MAPA's management structure has remained unchanged since the Taliban takeover of government in 2021. The mine action sector falls under the authority of a High Commission for Disaster Management led by a first deputy prime minister and supported by an interministerial board.[16] Afghanistan's National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) remains 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, victim assistance, 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.[17]

DMAC's capacity remains severely constrained by international sanctions imposed on the IEA regime and a sharp downturn in the donor funding on which the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) has always been largely dependent. DMAC completed the transition from being a project of the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to national management in 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 US Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) through ITF Enhancing Human Security.[18]

After August 2021, international sanctions imposed on the IEA ended the cooperation agreement between UNMAS and DMAC, and DMAC technical staff on internationally funded salaries mostly transferred to UNMAS. In 2025, DMAC employed 14 civil servants, including its director. Other DMAC staff included a Senior Technical Adviser, an IMSMA programmer, an operations officer managing quick response teams, the QM Senior Manager, and managers of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), planning, mechanical demining, mine detection dogs (MDDs), risk education, information, and investigations.[19]

A UN Security Council resolution in March 2022, renewed in 2025, 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."[20] In March 2026, the Security Council renewed the mandate for three months to allow for discussion on the mandate pending a new vote in June 2026.[21] Resolution 2822 then extended the mandate through to 17 June 2027.[22]

After the change of government in 2021, DMAC and UNMAS cooperated through a series of interim arrangements designed to continue UN coordination and technical support for the MAPA, but they proved short term due to disagreements and financial shortfalls.[23] Negotiations culminated in an October 2023 agreement on the UN providing cooperation through a Mine Action Technical Cell (MATC). At the start of 2025, the MATC employed 51 people, including staff for planning and prioritisation, operations coordination (six staff), information management (five staff), and QM (fourteen staff).[24] However, its size and capacity have fluctuated due to continuing financial pressures.

DMAC coordinates closely with MAPA stakeholders through monthly meetings and bi-weekly meetings with UNAMA. It also reported convening eight different technical working groups covering planning and prioritisation, survey, quick response, improvised mines, information management, risk education (EORE), victim assistance and national mine action standards.[25] A number of IPs, however, reported restrictions from local authorities delaying access to tasks in what are considered sensitive areas, notably close to the border with Pakistan.

12 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, March 2024, p. 6.

13 Afghanistan, Reported Casualties from Explosive Ordnance, January 2024 to December 2025, UNMAS, January 2026.

14 Emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March and 16 July 2026; and Nicholas Pond, UNAMA, 23 February 2026.

15 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 26 March 2025.

16 Updated 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, pp. 9–10.

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

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

19 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 26 March 2025.

20 UN Security Council Resolution 2626, 17 March 2022, operative para. 5(j). Operative para. 3 of Council Resolution 2777 of 17 March 2025 extended UNAMA's mandate until 17 March 2026 "as defined in" Resolution 2626.

21 "UN Security Council extends UNAMA mandate for three months", UNAMA, 17 March 2026, https://bit.ly/3PpiQn5.

22 UN Security Council Resolution 2822, adopted on 15 June 2026, operative para. 1.

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

24 Emails from Mohammad Wakil Jamshidi, Senior Technical Adviser, Mine Action Section, UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), 12 March 2025; and Mohammad Akhbar Oriakhil, Mine Action Operations Officer, UNMAS Afghanistan, 11 June 2025.

25 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form J.

FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

Afghanistan estimated it needed US$52 million a year to implement the plans set out in its Article 5 extension request and US$256 million for the five-year extension period[26] but in 2025 it received less than half that amount. The government funded salaries and some operating expenses of DMAC in 2025 totalling around US$50,000. The government also agreed in principle to pay AFS70 million (approximately US$1 million) for mine action in 2026 but had not disbursed the funds as this report was being completed. DMAC planned to apply for a similar payment in 2027.[27]

DMAC reported that in 2025, the MAPA received a total of US$25.2 million from 16 donors: Denmark, the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Finland, the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), OCHA/Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, UNICEF, UNDP, UNOPS/UNMAS, UN Women, and private contributors.

The total included funding from UN agencies for clearance to support humanitarian projects. Japan provided US$159,000 for land release through the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan. Funding included US$451,450 for survey of all forms of explosive ordnance.[28] Three new donors included Luxembourg, which supported risk education. UNESCO provided funding for clearance of a mined area within the grounds of Kabul museum. The International Committee of the Red Cross also funded risk education through the Afghan Red Crescent Society.[29]

National IPs have been the hardest hit by the collapse of donor funding since 2021. By February 2026, four national IPs had no active projects.[30] But international operators also experienced severe impacts from greatly reduced and unpredictable donor funding. Danish Refugee Council (DRC) reported significant cuts in capacity as a result of the termination of US funding early in 2025.[31] HALO experienced relatively stable funding in 2022–24 but saw its funding drop from approximately US$23.9 million in 2024 to US$14 million in 2025 and to US$9 million in 2026.[32]

The MATC was due to receive PM/WRA funding for January through October 2025 but PM/WRA suspended funding for the MAPA in January 2025, resulting in MATC cutting its staff by 70% to 14, and UNMAS closing three of its four provincial offices (Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Kunduz) with the loss of regional staff.[33] Funding from the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan enabled the MATC to maintain a skeleton staff from February to the end of July 2025 but it had no QM personnel. The UK FCDO stepped in with funding from September 2025 to March 2026 for 23 staff, including eight QM officers, and recruitment of two additional staff in 2026 bought the total staff to twenty-five.[34] MATC received funding from Swiss Development Corporation and South Korea for a year until the end of March 2027 and SDC has offered to fund half MATC's requirements for an additional two years until the end of March 2029 but donors are needed to fund the other 50%.[35]

For more information on funding, please see the country profile on Afghanistan on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[36]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The MAPA has retained some space for women despite highly restrictive Taliban policies banning their participation in public life but women's employment is also severely limited by funding constraints. DMAC says it is trying to strengthen gender mainstreaming in mine action and has government permission for employment of women in the sector. It affirms that women can operate without facing any issues in all of the 32 provinces with the exception of Kandahar and Uruzgan.[37] Operators say restrictions also apply in Helmand province. However, regulations require women to work in separate offices from male staff and where possible remotely. The exception is two-person *maharam* teams in which women work alongside a male relative.

DMAC reported that the MAPA had an average of 51 *maharam* teams deployed in 2025 which were mainly active conducting risk education for millions of Afghans forced back from Pakistan and Iran but also supported survey teams collecting data on women and girls.[38] At the end of 2025, the MAPA employed 50 women, representing 4% of the total staff of 1,145.[39] In risk education activities and focus group discussions, HALO said its teams were able to conduct individual interviews with women to identify their needs and to integrate their findings in prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance.[40]

26 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 70.

27 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

28 The donors supporting survey were DANIDA, Finland, the GFFO, the FCDO, OCHA-Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, UNDP and the United States from previous year allocation.

29 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

30 UNMAS Monthly Update, MAPA Team Locations, January 2026.

31 Email from Stewart Little, Humanitarian Demining Programme Manager, DRC, 30 March 2026.

32 Email from Farid Homayoun, Country Director, HALO, 13 May 2026.

33 Email from Mohammad Wakil Jamshidi, Mine Action Section, UNAMA, 12 March 2025; and "Funding Cessations Impact on Mine Action Coordination", MATC PowerPoint Presentation, 7 April 2025.

34 Email from Nicholas Pond, Chief of Mine Action Section, UNAMA, 23 February 2026.

35 Email from Nicholas Pond, UNAMA, 12 July 2026.

36 https://the-monitor.org.

37 Emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 26 March 2025 and 21 March 2026.

38 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

39 UNMAS Monthly Update, MAPA Team Locations, January 2026.

40 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 13 May 2026.

In practice, most IPs had heavily cut staff due to lack of funding and by the end of 2025 employed only a handful of women. International operators supported by overseas donors employed most female staff: DRC had 23 women in its staff of 370, mostly working on EORE.[41] HALO Trust's total staff of 776 people included 24 women, of whom 21 worked in EORE operations.[42] Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA), the national operator with the biggest workforce (totalling 282), employed 23 women, but only two of them were employed in mine action work delivering EORE.[43] The other national operators employed one or two women.[44]

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Afghanistan has a national standard on environmental management in mine action, AMAS 07.06 Environmental Management, which makes environmental impact assessments mandatory in land release activities. This standard was under review and due to be updated in 2026.[45] Afghanistan said that the MAPA had also halted use of "machinery with environmental impacts" but did not specify the types of machinery covered by this restriction.[46]

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The MAPA is supported by an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation database overseen by DMAC with support in 2025 of four IM staff from MATC.[47] DMAC and the GICHD signed an agreement on upgrading the database to IMSMA Core and in 2025 convened a workshop to lay out the process and timeline for implementing the upgrade. Issues include the large volume of data, the number and complexity of different datasets, and the need for extensive data cleaning and validation in the process of migration to the new server. A GitHub repository was created to manage project documentation and task assignments. The first phase of the upgrade focused on risk education data. A new EORE reporting form was finalised by DMAC in consultation with GICHD and IPs and was due for field testing in 2026. This was due to be followed by a new hazard form. DMAC and partners aimed to complete the upgrade in mid-2027 but recognised that achieving it would depend on the progress of the data clean-up.[48]

PLANNING AND TASKING

Afghanistan's 2024 Article 5 deadline extension request set out what is the reference five-year plan for the MAPA, asking for an additional five years until 1 March 2030 to complete clearance of AP mines and all other explosive ordnance at a projected total cost of $256 million.[49] The request provided 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. A multi-year work plan set annual targets for clearance of AP mines and other ordnance. It envisaged completing clearance of all improvised mine contamination in the first three years of the extension period.[50]

Table 4: Article 5 deadline extension request clearance targets (m²)[51]

	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
Improvised mines	8,617,978	19,741,276	15,175,976	0	0
AP mines	10,047,341	19,006,446	22,511,895	19,454,212	20,737,263
AP/AV mines	2,173,789	3,199,506	4,105,927	6,152,924	5,406,458

These targets were quickly overtaken by developments. Improvised mine contamination estimated at the time at 63.5km² had increased to 79km² by the end of 2024, although it has since fallen back to 76km². Total AP mined area had risen from 176km² in the request to 182km². The work plan called for deploying a total of 472 teams in 2025, including 269 teams to clear IM, 44 for AP mines, and 54 for survey/EOD.[52] In the event, the MAPA deployed a total of 171 teams in 2025, including teams for survey, clearance, EOD, quick response, risk education, and victim assistance.[53]

41 Email from Stewart Little, DRC, 30 March 2026.
42 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 13 May 2026.
43 Email from Bismillah Haqmal, Operations and Planning Manager, DAFA, 27 February 2026.
44 Emails from AREA, 10 March 2026; ATC, 31 March 2026; and MCPA 16 March 2026.
45 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.
46 Updated 2025 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, June 2025, p. 17.
47 Email from Nicholas Pond, UNAMA, 23 February 2026.
48 Emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026; and Nicholas Pond, UNAMA, 23 February 2026.
49 2024 Article 5 deadline extension request, p. 71.
50 Ibid., p. 58.
51 Ibid., p. 64.
52 Ibid., pp. 65–66.
53 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Afghanistan has comprehensive national mine action standards that are IMAS-compatible and before August 2021 were subject to regular review. Its 2025 Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) Article 4 deadline extension request issued in June 2025 stated that all standards were under review by a technical working group which included DMAC technical staff, MATC, and implementing partners.[54] DMAC said the funding shortages impacting MATC had slowed the review in 2025 but that it updated standards dealing with planning and prioritisation, training and qualification, land release, NTS, TS, marking, clearance requirements, battle area clearance (BAC), mechanical clearance, EOD, improvised mine clearance, quality management, accreditation, and monitoring. In 2026, DMAC planned updates for standards on medical support and investigation of demining incidents and to produce new standards for cluster munitions survey and clearance, firing range clearance and storage transportation and handling of explosives.[55]

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The MAPA started 2025 with 285 operational teams employing a total workforce of 2,450 people covering clearance, weapons and ammunition destruction, risk education, and victim assistance. This was one-third less than a year earlier. By the end of 2025, funding cuts had reduced the MAPA's workforce to 171 teams employing 1,503 personnel, of which 79 teams were engaged in land release, 40 were quick response teams (QRTs), and 49 EORE teams. The remaining three teams were for VA. National IPs provided 40 teams with 431 personnel, many working on reduced salaries. By February 2026, four national IPs, ATC, AREA, OMAR, and MDC did not have any active mine action projects.[56]

Among national IPs, DAFA had the most staff operating in 2025 with six manual teams working on conventional AP mines, one team on improvised mines and four QRTs (see Table 5). AREA and MCPA both operated 11 QRTs. AREA's teams worked in 16 provinces conducting survey or resurvey and clearance of AP mine, improvised mine, and battle area tasks as well as EOD.[57] MCPA, in addition to QRTs, had 106 personnel working in six BAC teams in Laghman province. In 2026, it hoped to start a small project in partnership with DRC pending obtaining donor support for other tasks.[58] OMAR worked with six QRTs in 2025 but received a four-month BAC contract for 2026 requiring 9 manual clearance teams.[59] ATC started 2025 with more than 250 staff but at the end of the year none was working. US suspension of funding in January 2025 resulted in the lay-off of 170 personnel. Completion of an OCHA-funded project in July 2025 led to the lay-off of another 64 staff.[60]

US funding cuts significantly affected international IPs. DRC lost two manual demining teams, four NTS teams and 16 EORE teams as a result. Its total staff of 370 at the end of 2025 included six clearance teams, each of which conducts both mine and battle area clearance.[61] HALO, which remained the biggest IP with a total staff of 866, deployed 12 improvised mine clearance teams with 84 personnel in 2025, down from 40 teams and 380 deminers the previous year but it also reduced capacity in all activities, including legacy mine clearance and survey. HALO had employed 2,129 staff in 2024 but on the basis of funding available, foresaw the possibility the number would fall to about 500 in 2026.[62]

Table 5: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2025[63]

Operator	AP clearance teams/staff	IM clearance teams/staff	QRTs/ staff	Machines/ personnel	Comments
AREA	0/0	0/0	11/77	0/0	1 EORE team/2 staff mixed gender
DAFA	6/102	1/7	4/24	2/9	Also 4 BAC teams/68 staff and 5 EORE teams with 13 staff
DRC	6/36	4/16	10/30	5/15	Also 32 EORE teams/64 staff
HALO	8/56	12/84	12/63	12/40	Also 16 NTS teams/33 staff. Total operational personnel including drivers and medics: 866
MCPA	0/0	0/0	11/77	0/0	Also 6 BAC teams/108 staff and 6 EORE teams/18 staff
OMAR	0/0	0/0	6/42	0/0	
Totals	**20/194**	**17/107**	**54/313**	**19/64**	

54 Updated 2025 CCM Article 4 deadline Extension Request, June 2025, p. 9.

55 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

56 UNMAS, MAPA Team Locations, January 2026.

57 Email from Nisar Ahmad Omerzai, Managing Director, AREA, 10 March and 7 August 2026.

58 Email from Mohammad Akram Amiri, deputy director, MCPA, 16 March 2026.

59 Email from Abid K. Fazel, Deputy Director, Programmes, OMAR, 15 April 2026.

60 Email from Farid Elmi, Project Manager, ATC, 31 March 2026.

61 Email from Stewart Little, DRC, 30 March 2026.

62 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 13 May 2026.

63 Emails from Nisar Ahmad Omerzai, AREA, 20 March 2026; Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 27 February 2026; Stewart Little, DRC, 30 March 2026; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 13 May 2026; and Abid K. Fazel, Deputy Director, Programmes, OMAR, 15 April 2026.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2025

Table 6: Mined area release in 2025[64]

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (km²)	Comments
Clearance	5.3	
Technical survey	0	
Non-technical survey	16.0	Cancelled area included 14.2km² of AP mined area and 1.8km² affected by improvised mines.
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	**2025**	
AP mines destroyed	2,150	Includes 592 conventional AP mines and 1,558 improvised mines. 1,275 were cleared in spot tasks.

Land release by the MAPA in 2025 fell by more than half (57%) from the previous year to 21.3km² as a result of the funding shortfall and consequent loss of working capacity. The number of AP mines (including improvised mines) destroyed in clearance and spot EOD tasks fell to 2,150,[65] a drop of 60% from the previous year and 72% fewer than the number destroyed in 2021, the year the Taliban took control.

SURVEY IN 2025

Afghanistan's Article 5 work plan provided for completing a village by-village survey of 183 districts in three years, starting in April 2025, so as to cover areas that were not accessible to surveyors due to the conflict before 2021 or areas that were re-contaminated after survey.[66] In line with that plan, DMAC reported that IPs resurveyed an area of 148km² in 2025 which included 3,441 villages, and have completed re-survey of 40 districts.[67]

DMAC reported that IPs cancelled 16km², of which 14.2km² was of legacy mined area and 1.8km² of areas contaminated by improvised mines.[68] IPs recorded a bigger area cancelled through NTS that totals 25.3km². This comprised 21.2km² of legacy mined area and 4.1km² of areas affected by improvised mines but appears to have included areas affected by explosive remnants of war (ERW).[69]

Table 7: AP mined areas cancelled through NTS in 2025 (DMAC data)[70]

Operator	Legacy AP mines (m²)	Improvised AP mines (m²)	Total area released (m²)
AREA	3,807,393	1,050,207	4,857,600
ATC	7,500	0	7,500
DAFA[71]	79,508	6,429	85,937
DRC	111,688	200,342	312,030
DMAC	61,625	0	61,625
HALO	159,698	28,505	188,203
MCPA	113,466	55,799	169,265
OMAR	9,863,161	459,509	10,322,670
Totals	**14,204,039**	**1,800,791**	**16,004,830**

CLEARANCE IN 2025

Clearance fell sharply in 2025, mainly as a result of the financial squeeze and loss of MAPA working capacity but also because casualty trends and threat assessments supported a higher priority going to BAC of ERW rather than mine clearance.

64 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form F; and emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March and 14 July 2026.

65 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form F.

66 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 47.

67 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form F, and email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

68 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form F.

69 Emails from Farid Elmi, ATC, 31 March 2026; Nisar Ahmad Omerzai, AREA, 10 and 14 March 2026; Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 27 February 2026; Stewart Little, DRC, 30 March 2026; Farid Homayoun, HALO, 13 May 2026; and Abid K. Fazel, Deputy Director, Programmes, OMAR, 15 April 2026.

70 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 16 July 2026; Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form F.

71 DAFA reported it cancelled a total of 233,671m² through NTS in 2025. Email from Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 8 August 2026.

Improvised mine clearance continued to receive more attention but reduced capacity meant operators cleared 4.1km² in 2025 (see Table 8), down more than one-third from 6.7km² cleared the previous year and the number of improvised mines destroyed in clearance dropped to 477 in 2025 from 1,087 in 2024. HALO alone accounted for almost three-quarters of the area and items cleared. The number of improvised mines destroyed in spot EOD tasks also fell sharply to 1,081 in 2025 compared with 3,603 in 2024.[72]

Table 8: Clearance of improvised mines in 2025 (DMAC data)[73]

Operator	Province/district	Area cleared (m²)	Improvised mines destroyed
AREA[74]	Logar, Maydan Wardak, Ghazni, Herat, Helmand, Paktika	21,607	29
ATC	Baghlan	35,515	14
DAFA	Kandahar, Uruzgan, Zabul	223,180	22
DRC	Helmand, Kandahar, Nangahar	791,656	38
HALO	Ghazni, Ghor, Herat, Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul	3,040,349	364
MCPA	Kandahar, Kunduz, Laghman	11,212	6
OMAR	Balkh, Sari Pul	728	4
SADC	Balkh	1,630	0
Totals		**4,125,877**	**477**

IPs cleared 1.2km² affected by conventional AP mines in 2025, down from 3.7km² in 2024, and involving mostly small tasks with few mines. IPs destroyed a total of 392 conventional mines through clearance in 2025, with one operator, DAFA accounting for 85% of the total. The 2025 result was better than the previous year when they cleared 301 mines.

Table 9: Conventional AP mine clearance in 2025 (DMAC data)[75]

Operator	Province/district	Area cleared (m²)	AP mines destroyed
AREA	Maydan Wardak, Paktika	9,342	0
ATC	Baghlan	269,217	9
DAFA[76]	Khost, Paktiya	449,491	335
DRC	Kabul, Nangahar, Parwan	386,598	34
FSD	Kunduz	9,350	2
HALO	Ghazni, Kandahar	33,344	8
MCPA	Baghlan	1,740	0
OMAR	Samangan, Takhar	600	4
Totals		**1,159,682**	**392**

Financial hard times have changed the MAPA's delivery of humanitarian mine action. Until 2021, the MAPA drew critical scrutiny over land release conducted almost entirely through full clearance. With the sharp downturn in donor funding since 2021 the balance has reversed and in the last two years the MAPA has released more than three times as much land through survey as through clearance. The proportion of mines destroyed through clearance has similarly changed. In 2020, the last full year of operations before the change of government, EOD operations accounted for 8% of AP mines destroyed. In 2025, a third of conventional AP mines and more than two thirds of improvised mines were destroyed in EOD spot tasks.[77]

To address the threat of all types of explosive ordnance in the face of funding cuts, IPs have shifted increasing capacity to QRTs conducting EOD mostly in response to call-outs. The MAPA operated with 54 QRTs at the end of 2025 and 37 teams working on area clearance of legacy AP and improvised mines. As a result, more mines are now destroyed in spot EOD tasks than in area clearance. HALO, the biggest operator, destroyed 8 conventional AP mines and 361 improvised mines in clearance operations and 81 AP mines and 448 improvised mines in spot EOD tasks, which also destroyed 13 AV mines, 67 unexploded submunitions, and 2,695 other UXO.[78]

72 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

73 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

74 AREA reported clearance of 22,648m², destroying 30 improvised mines, 1 conventional AP mine, 1 submunition, and 9 UXO items. Email from Nisar Ahmad Omerzai, AREA, 7 August 2026.

75 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March 2026.

76 DAFA reported clearing 428,863m² in Kabul, Khost, and Paktiya provinces and destroying 330 AP mines. Email from Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 8 August 2026.

77 Email from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 16 July 2026.

78 Email from Farid Homayoun, HALO, 13 May 2026.

DEMINER SAFETY

Three deminers sustained injuries during land release operations in 2025. A DAFA team leader was severely injured while supervising the demolition of an APM using an electric detonator. The device was not fully neutralised and detonated unexpectedly when the Team Leader approached the demolition site. The Team Leader suffered a permanent loss of eyesight. After investigation, DAFA adopted additional safety measures and conducted refresher training.[79] A DRC deminer sustained severe burns to one hand from a device armed with white phosphorous.[80]

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR AFGHANISTAN: 1 MARCH 2003

↓

ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2013

↓

FIRST EXTENDED DEADLINE (10 YEARS): 1 MARCH 2023

↓

SECOND EXTENDED DEADLINE (2 YEARS): 1 MARCH 2025

↓

THIRD EXTENDED DEADLINE (5 YEARS): 1 MARCH 2030

NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

Under the Article 5 deadline extension request granted at the Fifth Review Conference in November 2024, 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 2030.

Afghanistan's extension request aimed to complete clearance of all explosive ordnance by March 2030 at a total cost of $256 million but has almost immediately fallen behind the request's land release target because of weak and unpredictable donor support for a programme almost entirely dependent on international funding. The request was based on availability of 472 teams, including 366 teams for clearance and EOD. In 2024, 278 clearance and EOD teams were operating, already a deficit of 88 teams. By the start of 2026, the number of clearance and EOD teams had fallen to 116 and by the end of the first half of 2026 to 58.[81]

In addition, MAPA clearance operations were not limited to AP mines. The request stated that "it would be very challenging or impossible" to consider Afghanistan's AP mined area in isolation from other explosive ordnance, reflecting the higher threat posed by other ordnance types. Former ISAF firing ranges accounted for 108 civilian casualties in 2025, a year in which the MAPA resurveyed and cancelled five covering around 40km^2.[82] After decades of demining in Afghanistan, many conventional AP mined areas left from conflicts in the 1980s and 1990s are in remote or low priority locations. Other ERW responsible for most casualties and improvised mines heavily employed in the later years of conflict, have higher priority.

Afghanistan's 2024 extension request underscored its commitment to the APMBC and set out theoretical possibilities for a fully funded programme, but the MAPA's circumstances have continued to deteriorate. The 5.29km^2 of mined areas released by the MAPA in 2025 amounted to barely one-fifth of the area released in 2020, the last full year of operations before the change of government, and some national IPs are barely surviving. Under prevailing conditions, Afghanistan will need a further extension of its Article 5 deadline.

Table 10: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance[83]

Year	Area cleared (km^2)
2025	5.29
2024	10.44
2023	14.47
2022	13.85
2021	17.71
Total	**61.76**

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

The 2024 Article 5 deadline extension request identifies the development of sustainable national capacity as the MAPA's main objective,[84] but does not address plans for managing residual contamination.

79 Email from Bismillah Haqmal, DAFA, 27 February 2026.

80 Email from Stewart Little, DRC, 30 March 2026.

81 UNMAS, MAPA Team Locations, January 2026 and July 2026.

82 Emails from Aimal Safi, DMAC, 21 March and 16 July 2026.

83 Clearance of conventional and improvised AP mines reported by six implementing partners totalled 30.38km^2 in 2022 and 21.1km^2 in 2023.

84 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 74.