

# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

**ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2019**  
 (NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE)

<b>PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE</b>	For 2015	For 2014
Problem understood	6	6
Target date for completion of mine clearance	5	5
Targeted clearance	7	7
Efficient clearance	6	6
National funding of programme	7	7
Timely clearance	3	3
Land release system in place	7	6
National mine action standards	7	7
Reporting on progress	5	7
Improving performance	6	5
<b>PERFORMANCE SCORE: AVERAGE</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>5.9</b>

## PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

The performance of the mine action programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) was mixed in 2015. Continuation of the European Union (EU) pilot project on land release, and development of national standards on land release, technical survey, and non-technical survey (NTS) are steps towards more efficient land release. If systematically applied, these techniques would allow the location and extent of contamination to be more accurately identified, and to avoid unnecessary full clearance of areas that are not contaminated. In addition, however, estimates of confirmed hazardous area (CHA) and suspected hazardous area (SHA) were inconsistent between different reporting forums, without sufficient justification or adequate explanation, as was BiH's reported land release data.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- BiH should implement the recommendations of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment.<sup>1</sup> In particular, BiH should continue reforming the governance and management of the mine action programme, empowering the Demining Commission to provide political leadership, root out corruption, and begin consultations with a wide range of local and international stakeholders on a new mine action law.
- BiH should review, adopt, and operationalise new evidence-based methods of land release, to more accurately delineate areas of confirmed contamination, and cancel or reduce areas where evidence of mines is lacking.
- BiH should conduct a high-level effort to seek new local, national, and international sources of funding.
- BiH should update its completion plan for mine survey and clearance, based on the findings of the 2015 revision of the mine action strategy and latest available information.
- The BiH Mine Action Centre (BHMACE) should ensure it reports more accurately and consistently on land release data (disaggregated by method of release), as well as on mined areas, including using the terms CHA and SHA in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

## CONTAMINATION

BiH is heavily contaminated with mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), primarily as a result of the 1992–95 conflict related to the break-up of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.<sup>2</sup> Most minefields are in the zone of separation, 1,100km long and up to 4km wide, between BiH's two political entities – the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS). Twenty years after the end of the conflicts, BiH is still the most heavily mined country in Europe and one of the top ten in terms of extent of contamination in the world.

BHMACE has reported different figures for its estimate of mine contamination as at the end of 2015.<sup>3</sup> In both its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 7 transparency report and Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Article 10 Report, BiH refers to 1,149km<sup>2</sup> of SHA (approximately 2.3% of its territory).<sup>4</sup> In its APMBC Article 7 report, though, BiH refers to an estimated 300km<sup>2</sup> of CHA,<sup>5</sup> though it is unclear what this refers to, or how it relates to the 23km<sup>2</sup> reported in Table 1. According to BiH, an estimated 82,000 mines and items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) remain to be cleared.<sup>6</sup>

1 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015.  
 2 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2015), Form A.  
 3 Email from Tarik Serak, Head, Department for Mine Action Management, BHMACE, 26 May 2016; and APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form C. BiH's CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2015), Form A, reports 1,149.9km<sup>2</sup> of SHA but no CHA.  
 4 APMBC Article 7 (for 2015), Form C; and CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2015), Form A.  
 5 Ibid.  
 6 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form C.

**Table 1: Anti-personnel mine contamination by canton as at end 2015<sup>7</sup>**

Canton	SHAs	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	CHAs	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
Unsko-Sanki	669	112.06	134	2.80
Posavski	184	20.37	13	0.60
Tuzlanski	761	86.82	70	1.97
Zanicko-Dobojski	725	127.23	50	1.55
Bosansko-Podrinjski	239	50.92	22	0.95
Srednje-Bosanski	876	146.08	109	3.39
Hercegovacko-Neret	1,298	164.06	70	2.73
Zapadno-Hercegovacki	6	0.31	3	0.23
Sarajevo	285	77.37	42	1.13
Canton 10	552	91.96	35	1.0
<b>Sub-total BiH Federation</b>	<b>5,595</b>	<b>877.18</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>16.35</b>
Republika Srpska	3,249	254.21	323	6.52
Brčko district	164	18.51	4	0.17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9,008</b>	<b>1,149.90</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>23.04</b>

A 2015 UNDP evaluation reported that BHMAC is aware that not all of the SHA is actually mined, but “without more efficient non-technical survey and technical survey procedures the exact extent of the problem cannot be quantified.”<sup>8</sup>

BHMAC reported that a general assessment of mines across the country identified 1,369 affected communities, threatening the safety of 517,238 inhabitants, some 15% of the total population of BiH.<sup>9</sup> Of the total SHA, 62% is forested, 26% agricultural land, and 12% infrastructure.<sup>10</sup> Mine contamination is said also to obstruct the return of refugees and the displaced; impede rehabilitation and development of utility infrastructure; and prevent free movement between communities, especially on the administrative line between the entities.<sup>11</sup>

The fertile agricultural belt in the Posavina region, along with the Dobojski region, has the most heavily contaminated areas.<sup>12</sup> However, according to BHMAC, most mine incidents now occur in forested areas.<sup>13</sup> In 2015, only one mine-related accident was recorded, resulting in a fatality.<sup>14</sup> This suggests that the humanitarian impact of mines is actually quite limited.

BHMAC confirmed that while border crossings in BiH are safe from the threat of mines, there may be a threat in the vicinity of some of the crossings, but these areas are fully marked with warning signs.<sup>15</sup> BHMAC cited the potential movement of refugees in the vicinity of non-legal border lines, as a challenge in 2015, due to the proximity of SHAs.<sup>16</sup>

BiH was severely affected by the Balkan flood disaster in May 2014, which reminded the international and local community of the task of mine clearance that still remains in BiH, and emphasised the need to push for a non-stagnated mine action sector.<sup>17</sup> The EU’s 2014 Flood Recovery Needs Assessment for BiH found that while minimal mine mitigation was needed compared to that expected, mines and UXO remain a risk in human, economic and social terms and should be addressed as a priority.<sup>18</sup> The EU needs assessment recommended that BHMAC consider the possibility that landslides may have buried landmines deeper than the 10cm to 20cm currently investigated in clearance efforts.<sup>19</sup> The assessment identified key priorities and tasks for mine action to aid the recovery.<sup>20</sup>

7 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAC, 26 May 2016.

8 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13 May 2015, p. 17; and email from Darvin Lisica, Regional Programme Manager, Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA), 5 May 2016.

9 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAC, 26 May 2016.

10 Ibid.

11 Email from Darvin Lisica, NPA, 5 May 2016.

12 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 27 June 2008, p. 4; BHMAC, “Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Annual Report 2014”, May 2015, p. 5; and email from Tarik Serak, BHMAC, 27 May 2015.

13 Interview with Tarik Serak, BHMAC, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015.

14 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2015), Form C.

15 BHMAC, “Mine Action Report for BiH for 2015 approved by the BH Ministry Council”, Sarajevo, 16 May 2016.

16 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAC, 26 May 2016.

17 Email from Lilliam Palmbach, UNDP, 29 May 2015.

18 EU, “Bosnia and Herzegovina Floods 2014: Recovery Needs Assessment”, undated, pp. 6, 117, at: <http://europa.ba/Download.aspx?id=1521>.

19 Ibid., p. 118.

20 Ibid., pp. 241–43.

## PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Demining Commission, under the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs, supervises the state-wide BHMAL and represents BiH in its relations with the international community on mine-related issues.<sup>21</sup> The Demining Commission is composed of representatives from three ministries (civil affairs, security, and foreign trade and economic affairs) elected from the three constituent peoples of BiH and representing BiH's three majority ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs).<sup>22</sup> Three new Demining Commission members were appointed on 23 July 2015.<sup>23</sup> Whereas the Minister for Civil Affairs remains ultimately responsible for mine action, the Demining Commission represents the strategic body responsible for setting mine action policy, and it proposes the appointment of BHMAL senior staff, for approval by the Council of Ministers.<sup>24</sup> One problem posed by the structure of the Demining Commission is that each of the three represented ministries has separate portfolios in their respective ministries; and their work on the Demining Commission is only part-time in addition to their other responsibilities.<sup>25</sup>

BHMAL, established by a 2002 Decree of the Council of Ministers, is responsible for regulating mine action and implementing BiH's demining plan, including accreditation of all mine action organisations.<sup>26</sup> BHMAL operates from its headquarters in Sarajevo, and through two main offices in Sarajevo and Banja Luka and eight regional centres (Banja Luka, Bihać, Brčko, Mostar, Pale, Sarajevo, Travnik, and Tuzla).<sup>27</sup> A 2015 UNDP

evaluation concluded that BHMAL was doing a good job in operational management and in introducing new and more efficient procedures; and was carrying out its core activities effectively, despite not being fully funded.<sup>28</sup> It also noted that BHMAL was carrying out some strategic management and coordination functions, such as donor liaison, resource mobilisation, and strategic planning, which are primary functions of the Demining Commission.<sup>29</sup> An acting director of BHMAL was appointed on 22 September 2015 by the Council of Ministers of BiH, who will serve until the formal appointment of a new Director.<sup>30</sup>

Prior to 2015, BiH mine action governance had been receiving increasingly critical media attention for several years.<sup>31</sup> In 2012, eight local companies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) filed a criminal complaint with the State Prosecutor against the then BHMAL Director, Dušan Gavran, alleging irregularities in tendering demining contracts and sale of official vehicles. Reports about the investigation re-emerged in the BiH press in early 2014, and in April 2014 the Director was arrested as part of a police investigation into activities related to demining and over suspicions he abused his official position and made illegal profits.<sup>32</sup> The Director of BHMAL was conditionally released from custody on 9 May 2014,<sup>33</sup> after which he went on sick leave and was subsequently suspended in September 2014.<sup>34</sup> In October 2014, BHMAL Assistant Director, Milan Rezo, was appointed Acting Director.<sup>35</sup>

21 BHMAL Organisational chart, at: <http://www.bhmal.org/en/stream.daenet?kat=84>, accessed 5 April 2016.

22 The principle of organising BiH state-level bodies along ethnic lines has come under increasing scrutiny following the 2009 judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the *Sejdić and Finci* case that the rights of two Bosnians of Roma and Jewish descent had been violated by being denied the opportunity to run for high-level elected office because they were not of the major ethnic groups. European Court of Human Rights, *Sejdić and Finci v. Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Judgment, 22 December 2009; see also "The Sejdić-Finci question", *The Economist*, 9 October 2013, at: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2013/10/bosnia>; and UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 22.

23 BHMAL, "The appointment of new members of Demining Commission in Bosnia and Herzegovina", News item, 24 July 2015.

24 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 22.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

26 *Bosnia and Herzegovina Official Gazette*, Sarajevo, 17 March 2002.

27 BHMAL, BHMAL Organisational chart, at: <http://www.bhmal.org/en/stream.daenet?kat=84>, accessed 5 April 2016.

28 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 26, 32.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

30 BiH Council of Ministers, "The conclusions of the 24th session of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina", 22 September 2015, at: [http://vijeceministara.gov.ba/saopstenja/sjednice/zakljucni\\_sa\\_sjednica/default.aspx?id=20404&langTag=en-US](http://vijeceministara.gov.ba/saopstenja/sjednice/zakljucni_sa_sjednica/default.aspx?id=20404&langTag=en-US).

31 C. Hewell, "How the Bosnian Government Is Failing the Country on Landmine Removal", *Balkanist*, 26 July 2014, at: <http://balkanist.net/how-the-bosnian-government-is-failing-the-country-on-landmines/>.

32 English translation in: E. Jukic, "Bosnia De-Mining Boss Grilled Over Corruption Claims", *Balkan Insight*, 25 April 2014, at: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnia-mining-director-questioned-over-corruption>; and Original document: State Prosecutor of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Upućen Prijedlog za Određivanje Mjere Pritvora za Osumnjičenog Dušana Gavrana (1958)", 25 April 2014, at: <http://www.tuzilastvobih.gov.ba/?id=2415&jezik=b>.

33 FENA, "Dušan Gavran pušten iz pritvora", *Nezavisne Novine*, 12 May 2014, at: <http://www.nezavisne.com/novosti/hronika/Dusan-Gavran-pusten-iz-pritvora-244304.html>.

34 Interview with Tarik Serak, BHMAL, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015; "Istraga o Kriminalu u BH MAC-u: Dušan Gavran i dalje direktor", ["Investigation on Crime in BHMAL: Dusan Gavran Remains Director"], *Slobodna Bosna*, 11 August 2014, at: [http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/15731/istraga\\_o\\_kriminalu\\_u\\_bh\\_mac\\_u\\_dusan\\_gavran\\_i\\_dalje\\_direktor.html](http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/15731/istraga_o_kriminalu_u_bh_mac_u_dusan_gavran_i_dalje_direktor.html); "Deminerska Mafija: Uskoro optužnica protiv Dušana Gavrana?" ["Demining Mafia: Indictment Soon against Dušan Gavran?"], *Slobodna Bosna*, 20 October 2014, at: [http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/16952/deminerska\\_mafija\\_uskoro\\_optuznica\\_protiv\\_dusana\\_gavrana.html](http://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/16952/deminerska_mafija_uskoro_optuznica_protiv_dusana_gavrana.html); SRNA, "Suspendovan direktor BHMAL-a Dušan Gavran", ["BHMAL Director Dušan Gavran Suspended"], *Nezavisne Novine*, 1 October 2014, at: <http://www.nezavisne.com/novosti/bih/Suspendovan-direktor-BHMAL-a-Dusan-Gavran-265779.html>.

35 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAL, 23 April 2015.

The Demining Commission adopted new regulations on internal reporting of corruption and protection of whistle-blowers in August 2014.<sup>36</sup> New policies limit the reallocation of funds internally and provide additional controls on tendering. A UNDP evaluation lauded these new policies and recommended that BiH establish a more effective and transparent tendering mechanism for mine action activities.<sup>37</sup> It stated that the weakness of the governance and strategic management of mine action in BiH could be said to be the direct cause of national funding shortfalls and the lack of commitment towards fulfilling treaty obligations and achieving strategic clearance goals.<sup>38</sup>

Several stakeholders have highlighted the lack of meaningful supervision of BHMIC, and hope that the new Demining Commission will take a more prominent role and assume greater responsibility.<sup>39</sup> The UNDP evaluation in May 2015 found that the Commission had been weak and needed to take a more proactive role to ensure that mine action is firmly on the BiH government agenda. It called on the Council of Ministers to “provide improved governance, strategic management and funding for mine action”, particularly by strengthening and supporting the Minister of Civil Affairs and Demining Commission.<sup>40</sup>

Donor coordination in BiH was found to be lacking, and the 2015 UNDP evaluation recommended that donors take steps to improve coordination. Several donor meetings have since been held to discuss how donors to mine action should coordinate their activities.<sup>41</sup>

UNDP supports and advises BiH Mine Action Management (the Minister of Civil Affairs, the Demining Commission, and BHMIC) on mine action issues, including facilitating ongoing liaison with the Commission, BHMIC, and donors, in its capacity as co-chair of the Board of Donors. UNDP also supports monitoring of implementation of the mine action strategy, including revisions, action plans, and evaluations of the strategy revision. UNDP also supports implementation of some of the operational objectives of the revised strategy, such as supporting management of land release, and building the capacity of BHMIC to apply good governance principles in its management of mine action.<sup>42</sup>

## Strategic Planning

The BiH Mine Action Strategy for 2009–19, adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2008,<sup>43</sup> sets the target of becoming free of mines by 2019. BHMIC conducted the first of three planned revisions of the strategy in 2012 and 2013 (the other two were due in 2015 and then in 2017, respectively).<sup>44</sup> The 2012 revision asserted lack of funding as one of the major reasons for BiH’s slow progress to completion of its clearance goals.<sup>45</sup> The 2012 revision was sent to the Demining Commission in March 2013, but was never formally adopted by the Council of Ministers,<sup>46</sup> indicating the lack of political attention to mine action in BiH.

In April 2015, while revision of the second strategy was ongoing, BHMIC stated that it could provisionally report that, after six years, only half of the strategy’s scope had been implemented, primarily due to lack of funding for humanitarian demining.<sup>47</sup> Local NGO representatives expressed concern in March 2015 that civil society involvement in the strategy revision had, so far, been limited.<sup>48</sup> A representative of the EU said they were sceptical that the 2015 revision would be meaningful, but noted pressure from the international community to improve on previous strategic planning processes.<sup>49</sup>

The second revision of the BiH Mine Action Strategy 2009–19 was completed in 2015, in consultation with the Demining Commission and UNDP, and was adopted by the Demining Commission in BiH.<sup>50</sup> According to BHMIC, its new operational plan in the 2015 revision, envisaged that over the next two or three years all organisations would transition to conform to the new land release methodology.<sup>51</sup> As at May 2016, the Demining Commission was due to report to the Council of Ministers regarding information from the analysis of the strategy.<sup>52</sup> The third revision of strategy is due to take place in 2017.

Mine action prioritisation and planning in BiH is based on socio-economic impact. However, a UNDP evaluation recommended that the system be reviewed to reflect changing circumstances as well to take account of the specific impact of particularly dangerous mines such as the PROM-1.<sup>53</sup>

36 Ibid; BiH Demining Commission, “Pravilnik o internom prijavljivanju korupcije i zaštite lica koja prijave korupciju u BHMIC-u” (“Regulations on internal reporting of corruption and the protection of persons reporting corruption in BHMIC”), adopted on 24 August 2014.

37 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 5, 26–27.

38 Ibid., p. 21.

39 Interviews with Lt.-Col. Rupert Steeger, Defence Attaché, Germany Embassy, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015; Amir Mujanovic, Executive Director, Landmine Survivors Initiative, Sarajevo, 19 March 2015; and Dominika Skubida, EU, Sarajevo, 19 March 2015.

40 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 4, 22–25.

41 Ibid., pp. 4, 16.

42 UNDP, “UNDP Mine Action Programming: Bosnia and Herzegovina”, February 2016.

43 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2015), Form B.

44 Statement of BiH, APMBC Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 5 December 2013, p. 2.

45 Ibid., pp. 2–3.

46 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 17.

47 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMIC, 23 April 2015.

48 Interviews with Amir Mujanovic, Landmine Survivors Initiative, Sarajevo, 19 March 2015, and Radosav Zivkovic, STOP Mines, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015.

49 Interview with Dominika Skubida, EU, Sarajevo, 19 March 2015.

50 Statement of BiH, APMBC Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015; and email from Tarik Serak, BHMIC, 26 May 2016.

51 Statement of BiH, APMBC Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015.

52 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMIC, 26 May 2016.

53 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 25.

BHMAC's next general assessment was planned for 2015, in collaboration with the State Agency for Statistics. As at May 2016, however, BHMAC was waiting for the release of official census data to update the assessment.<sup>54</sup> BHMAC expects the assessment, which will determine high-, medium-, and low-impact SHAs, to be mainly statistical, though some data will be gathered from local communities, coordinated by the eight BHMAC regional offices.<sup>55</sup>

## Legislation and Standards

Since 2008, efforts have been made to adopt new mine action legislation in BiH with a view to creating a stable platform for mine action funding by the government and local authorities. However, a draft law prepared by the Ministry of Civil Affairs with support from BHMAC and UNDP, first submitted to parliament in February 2010, failed to gain parliamentary approval in 2012. The new law had still to be approved by the Council of Ministers, after which it must be sent for parliamentary approval.<sup>56</sup> As at May 2016, the Ministry of Civil Affairs was reportedly working on amendments and annexes in the demining legislation.<sup>57</sup> UNDP has highlighted the need for the existing draft to be amended to ensure a strategic management body exists for mine action; that BiH national standards on land release are referenced; and that no technical issues impede land release. UNDP has also asserted that any new law should have a public consultation stage before being adopted.<sup>58</sup>

A BHMAC official acknowledged that the lack of a new legal framework has contributed to BiH's repeated failure to meet its funding targets under its own mine action strategy.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, the UNDP 2015 evaluation stated that though a more robust legal framework for mine action in BiH would be welcome, the current demining law is adequate to enable mine action activities to be implemented effectively.<sup>60</sup>

In December 2012, having recognised the need for more efficient land release in BiH, the EU, with pre-accession funding, started a pilot "Land Release" project with BHMAC.<sup>61</sup> As part of this project, and by order of the Demining Commission, BHMAC developed three new chapters of its mine action standards in 2014 and 2015 — on land release, NTS, and technical survey — in

accordance with IMAS.<sup>62</sup> The new national standard chapters were drafted in cooperation with UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).<sup>63</sup> After public debate and feedback from demining organisations and other mine action stakeholders, the three new chapters were adopted by the Demining Commission on 27 January 2016.<sup>64</sup>

BHMAC envisaged that the Land Release project would treat 140km<sup>2</sup> of area suspected to be contaminated with mines and ERW,<sup>65</sup> and estimated that the 10 pilot projects developed so far would release 53km<sup>2</sup> in 2016.<sup>66</sup> In March 2016, UNDP reported that the results of the pilot project to date show that continued application of this land release approach will greatly accelerate reduction and cancellation of SHA in BiH, and reduce costs.<sup>67</sup>

## Operators

As at the end of 2015, 26 organisations were accredited for mine action in BiH, comprising five government organisations, nine commercial companies (seven local and two international), and twelve NGOs (ten national and two international).<sup>68</sup> However, only 17 of the 26 conducted demining operations in 2015. BHMAC did not anticipate any change in clearance capacity in 2016.<sup>69</sup>

The governmental operators – Civil Protection teams and the BiH Armed Forces' Demining Battalion – constitute about 60% of the real available operational capacity in BiH, though their total output in terms of land released by clearance and technical survey is proportionately much less.<sup>70</sup> The general view is that the BiH Armed Forces and Civil Protection are both good partners and have effective demining capacities, but have suffered from a lack of real investment, and are slower than other operators due to logistical reasons and equipment deficits.<sup>71</sup> The 2015 UN assessment recommended that BHMAC involve the BiH Armed Forces and Civil Protection teams more in conducting NTS, technical survey, and clearance tasks, as part of the land release process.<sup>72</sup>

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) is, according to the 2015 UNDP evaluation, well respected and credible in BiH and is treated almost like a national asset, even though it is international and independently funded through committed donor support.<sup>73</sup> Since 2010, NPA

54 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAC, 26 May 2016.

55 Interview with Tarik Serak, BHMAC, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015; BHMAC, "Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Annual Report 2014", May 2015, p. 4.

56 UNDP, "Mine Action Board of Donors Meeting", Press release, 31 March 2016, available at: [http://www.ba.undp.org/content/bosnia\\_and\\_herzegovina/en/home/presscenter/articles/2016/03/31/sastanak-odbora-donatora-za-protuminske-akcije.html](http://www.ba.undp.org/content/bosnia_and_herzegovina/en/home/presscenter/articles/2016/03/31/sastanak-odbora-donatora-za-protuminske-akcije.html).

57 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAC, 26 May 2016.

58 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 23 and 24.

59 Interview with Tarik Serak, BHMAC, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015.

60 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 23.

61 Ibid., pp. 19 & 20.

62 BHMAC, "Adoption of three new chapters of Mine Action Standard for land release, the new approach for solving the mine problem", 28 January 2016; and email from Tarik Serak, BHMAC, 26 May 2016.

63 BHMAC, "Adoption of three new chapters of Mine Action Standard for land release, the new approach for solving the mine problem", 28 January 2016.

64 Ibid.

65 Statement of BiH, APMBC Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015.

66 BHMAC, "Adoption of three new chapters of Mine Action Standard for land release, the new approach for solving the mine problem", 28 January 2016.

67 UNDP, "Mine Action Board of Donors Meeting", Press release, 31 March 2016.

68 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAC, 26 May 2016.

69 Ibid.

70 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 29.

71 Ibid.

72 UN, Mine Action Recovery Needs Assessment, 2015, p. 30.

73 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 30–31.

has increasingly focused on building the capacity of the Demining Battalion.<sup>74</sup> This involves transfer of knowledge through operational planning of clearance and technical survey operations; direct operational support; and provision of mine detection dogs (MDDs) and equipment, among other things.<sup>75</sup> According to the original project plan, NPA's funding from the Netherlands and Norway for mine action in the Srebrenica region was expected to come to an end in 2016, with the exception of Dutch funding for mine clearance in support of the activities of the International Commission for Missing Persons.<sup>76</sup>

NPA's remaining funding from Norway and Germany was expected to remain constant in 2016, and NPA also received additional funding from the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs for December 2015 to December 2017.<sup>77</sup>

NPA's own strategic plan foresaw withdrawal from BiH mine action in March 2015. However, given the slow progress of clearance in BiH and the impact of the floods, NPA maintained a similar level of capacity in 2015 as in 2014.<sup>78</sup> Besides its ongoing support to the Demining Battalion, in 2015 NPA planned to conduct release (through NTS, technical survey, and clearance) of mined areas in the regions of Bosanska Posavina, Dobo, and Srebrenica, and of areas contaminated with cluster munition remnants (CMR) across all of BiH. Additionally, NPA is supporting BHMIC with NTS and development of a process and standing operating procedures (SOPs) for targeted technical survey as the "missing chain" in BiH's land release process. As part of this process, NPA organised workshops regarding the development of the SOP, in which representatives from BHMIC and other national demining organisations participated.<sup>79</sup> A pilot project on targeted technical survey using specially trained dogs will be conducted in central Bosnia.<sup>80</sup>

Handicap International (HI) had ended its mine action activities in BiH at the end of 2012 and had closed down its office by March 2013. HI withdrew from BiH as part of an effort to focus on countries with lower human

development indices. In 2014, however, following the floods, HI partnered with local organisations in Bratunac, Dobo, Kalesija, Maglai, Olovo, Zavidovici, Zepce, and Zvornik to conduct risk education and aid the process of "mapping contamination and marking or re-marking dangerous areas".<sup>81</sup>

Clearance operators in BiH are not independently funded; instead they compete for international tenders. The UNDP evaluation suggested that this left much capacity underused and recommended alternative contracting models more appropriate for land release (either by having longer term contracts or being contracted for the clearance of larger areas), which could be more attractive to the demining organisations in terms of security and could also make best use of capacity in the long run.<sup>82</sup>

According to the 2015 UNDP evaluation, operators regret the absence of technical working group fora chaired by the BHMIC to discuss technical issues and would like to see those fora revived.<sup>83</sup>

## Quality Management

BHMIC'S two main offices in Banja Luka and Sarajevo coordinate the activities of regional offices in planning, survey, and quality control (QC)/quality assurance (QA). QA inspectors are based in the regional offices.<sup>84</sup>

The 2015 UNDP evaluation found that BHMIC's QA of demining activities functions well, but warned that as new methods of land release are implemented, QA teams would need to adapt to ensure the quality of the new procedures. The UNDP evaluation also recommended that BHMIC develop effective quality management mechanisms for the whole organisation to make processes more efficient and transparent.<sup>85</sup>

74 Email from Amela Balic, NPA Bosnia, 15 April 2015.

75 Email from Darvin Lisica, NPA, 5 May 2016.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid.

78 Interview with Amela Balic, NPA Bosnia, in Vogosca, 17 April 2014, and emails of 15 and 18 April 2015.

79 Email from Amela Balic, NPA, 20 October 2016.

80 Ibid.; and email from Darvin Lisica, NPA, 1 November 2015.

81 HI, "Bosnia landmine danger: Handicap International launches emergency risk awareness programme", 6 June 2014, at: [http://reliefweb.int/report/bosnia-and-herzegovina/bosnia-landmine-](http://reliefweb.int/report/bosnia-and-herzegovina/bosnia-landmine-danger-handicap-international-launches-emergency-risk)

[danger-handicap-international-launches-emergency-risk](http://reliefweb.int/report/bosnia-and-herzegovina/bosnia-landmine-danger-handicap-international-launches-emergency-risk); HI US, "Bosnia and Herzegovina", 2015, at: [http://www.handicap-international.us/bosnia\\_herzegovina](http://www.handicap-international.us/bosnia_herzegovina); and emails from Tom Shelton, Communications Officer, HI UK, 15 May 2014; and Emmanuel Sauvage, former Programme Coordinator, HI, 20 May 2014.

82 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, p. 35.

83 Ibid.

84 BHMIC, "Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Annual Report 2011", adopted by the Demining Commission, May 2012, p. 22; and email from Tarik Serak, BHMIC, 6 May 2014.

85 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 6, 27.

## LAND RELEASE

In 2015, BiH released 1.64km<sup>2</sup> by clearance and 8.39km<sup>2</sup> by technical survey. A further 16.57km<sup>2</sup> was cancelled. This is significantly less than in 2014, when 1.9km<sup>2</sup> was cleared, 10km<sup>2</sup> reduced by technical survey, and 30km<sup>2</sup> cancelled by NTS.

### Survey in 2015

In 2015, 18.39km<sup>2</sup> was reduced by technical survey, 16.17km<sup>2</sup> was cancelled by NTS, and 1.21km<sup>2</sup> was confirmed as mined (see Table 2).<sup>86</sup> Only BHMAL, with the assistance of an NPA NTS team seconded to it, cancelled SHAs and confirmed areas as mined in 2015.

**Table 2: Survey of mined area in 2015<sup>87</sup>**

Operator	SHAs cancelled	Area cancelled (km <sup>2</sup> )	Areas confirmed	Confirmed area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Areas reduced by TS	Area reduced by TS (km <sup>2</sup> )
BHMAL	167	16.17	79	1.21	0	0
BiH Armed Forces	0	0	0	0	43	2.10
Civil Protection FBiH	0	0	0	0	24	1.12
Civil Protection RS	0	0	0	0	10	0.27
NPA	0	0	0	0	18	1.15
Stop Mines	0	0	0	0	18	0.72
Pro Vita	0	0	0	0	13	0.53
UEM	0	0	0	0	9	0.40
Doking Nho	0	0	0	0	4	0.37
Pazi Mine	0	0	0	0	4	0.24
Eko Dem	0	0	0	0	2	0.10
MDDC	0	0	0	0	2	0.10
Demira	0	0	0	0	2	0.08
N&N Ivsa	0	0	0	0	9	0.45
Point	0	0	0	0	9	0.33
Detektor	0	0	0	0	5	0.30
UEM D.O.O.	0	0	0	0	4	0.07
<b>Totals</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>16.17</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>1.21</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>8.33</b>

\* The 1.21km<sup>2</sup> confirmed as mined corresponds to the surveyed area defined as requiring clearance. This excludes surveyed areas defined as requiring technical survey or permanent marking.

<sup>86</sup> Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAL, 26 May 2016.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.; APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form C; ; and CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2015), Form A. There was a small discrepancy between the 16.57km<sup>2</sup> cancelled in 2015, as reported in BiH's Article 7 report, the 17.04km<sup>2</sup> as reported in its CCW Protocol V report, and the 16.17km<sup>2</sup> reported to Mine Action Review. Furthermore, there appears to be a discrepancy between the 40km<sup>2</sup> of land BiH reported to have released between December 2014 and December 2015, at the 14MSP in December 2015.

## Clearance in 2015

In 2015, mine clearance operations in BiH were conducted by the Armed Forces, the Civil Protection of FBIH, and the Civil Protection of RS, and fifteen other clearance organisations (see Table 3).<sup>88</sup> More than half of the organisations engaged in small tasks, clearing a total of less than 100,000m<sup>2</sup> each during the year.

Overall, a total of 1.64km<sup>2</sup> was cleared in 2015,<sup>89</sup> less than the 1.85km<sup>2</sup> cleared in 2014,<sup>90</sup> and well below the 2009–19 mine action strategy target of 9.27km<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 3: Mine clearance in 2015<sup>91</sup>**

Operator	Areas released	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Armed Forces of BiH	8	184,800	643	64	86
Civil Protection of FBIH	6	62,794	49	4	16
Civil Protection of RS	6	77,104	137	0	78
UEM	9	207,649	97	0	57
Pro Vita	11	198,513	179	2	37
NPA	5	152,922	137	47	136
Doking Nho	12	147,927	78	1	31
Stop Mines	4	96,013	62	2	15
Pazi Mine	6	81,807	94	1	63
Demira	2	47,517	9	1	4
Eko Dem	1	1,000	14	0	4
MDDC	1	414	3	0	24
N&N Ivsa	13	229,843	40	3	38
Detektor	2	72,379	26	0	23
Point	4	57,497	82	3	53
Amphibia	1	13,396	3	0	2
UEM d.o.o.	2	7,326	1	1	0
Doking	1	1,585	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1,640,486</b>	<b>1,654</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>667</b>

AP = Anti-personnel

AV = Anti-vehicle

Clearance operations in BiH include mechanical preparation of land, and the use of MDDs and manual clearance depending on the geographical conditions.<sup>92</sup> NPA is deploying MDDs in up to 70% of processed areas that have undergone clearance and traditional technical survey operations with previous mechanical ground preparation. Manual methods are only used on areas where the application of other methods is not possible due to the nature of the terrain or vegetation.<sup>93</sup>

One of the key developments that NPA reported in its clearance operations in 2015 was the implementation of a pilot project of targeted technical survey over suspected mined areas, in coordination with BHMAL. The project, which was conducted in the municipality of Travnik, in the Middle Bosnia Canton, included development of SOPs, and application and testing of new techniques, processes, and procedures for targeted technical survey.<sup>94</sup> It is hoped that this

88 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMAL, 26 May 2016.

89 Ibid.

90 Ibid., 23 April 2015.

91 Ibid., 26 May 2016; APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form C; CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2015), Form A; and CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (for 2015), Form B.

92 Emails from Tarik Serak, BHMAL, 23 April 2015; and Darvin Lisica, NPA, 5 May 2016.

93 Email from Darvin Lisica, NPA, 5 May 2016.

94 Ibid.

will increase efficiency of land release, and ensure improved assessment of mined areas, with limited need for full clearance. For SHAs with incorrect minefield records, traditional systematic technical survey typically required 20%–30% of the resources needed for full clearance, whereas targeted technical survey only required 1%–3%.<sup>95</sup>

In addition, in 2015, NPA also deployed new techniques in BiH, including the use of special detection dogs and observation and recording of the dogs using drones.<sup>96</sup>

## ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the ten-year extension request granted by states parties in 2008), BiH is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2019. There is broad agreement in the BiH mine action community that BiH will not meet this deadline.<sup>97</sup>

In December 2015, BHMBC reported that releasing the remaining mined area by 2019 would largely depend on allocated funding, both local and international.<sup>98</sup> The Bosnian Minister of Civil Affairs warned in March 2016 that based on the current pace of demining, it would not be possible to implement the objectives set in the demining strategy by the deadline.<sup>99</sup>

Operationalisation of BiH's newly revised 2009–19 strategy aims to ensure that all mine clearance operators adjust and conform to new land release methodology,<sup>100</sup> which is hoped will significantly increase land release output. In December 2015, BHMBC asserted that in the course of the next three years, around one-third of the remaining mine problem should be resolved.<sup>101</sup>

**Table 4: Mine clearance in 2011–15**<sup>102</sup>

Year	Area cleared (km <sup>2</sup> )
2015	1.64
2014	1.85
2013	1.89
2012	1.30
2011	3.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.81</b>

In 2015, as in all the years since it was granted the ten-year extension to its initial Article 5 deadline, BiH fell far short of its land release targets, and at current rates of output, it may take several decades to clear BiH of mines.<sup>103</sup>

BHMBC reported that it would be able to provide a “more concrete” estimate of BiH's ability to meet its Article 5 deadline after the 2015 Strategy revision was completed.<sup>104</sup> However, in 2016, BHMBC reported that more detailed information about completion of clearance would be available at the end of 2017, after it had conducted the third revision of the mine action strategy.<sup>105</sup>

It is hoped that application of more efficient NTS and technical survey, as trialled in the EU Land Release pilot project, will help to determine more accurately the location and extent of actual contamination, and to release areas not contaminated. This methodology is the most time-efficient and cost-effective way to release mined areas.<sup>106</sup> Results of the pilot project so far show that: “By taking a large SHA (between 1 and 10km<sup>2</sup>) and applying rigorous and continual non-technical survey and technical survey, less than 1% of SHA had to be subjected to technical methods, resulting in huge savings in both time and cost on technical parts, which are always the most expensive activities”.<sup>107</sup>

In 2015, a BHMBC representative suggested that if the new methods of land release were adopted and BiH were given an additional five-year extension – to 2024 – then completion would be very realistic, contingent on sufficient funding.<sup>108</sup> Donor representatives, however, expressed scepticism about whether completion by 2024 was possible.<sup>109</sup> In May 2016, BHMBC claimed that analysis of the Mine Action Strategy 2009–19, shows that BiH is currently 3.5 years behind in fulfilling its Article 5 obligations, due to lack of funding.<sup>110</sup>

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid.

97 Interviews with Amir Mujanovic, Landmine Survivors Initiative, and with Dominika Skubida, EU, Sarajevo, 19 March 2015; with Tarik Serak, BHMBC, and Radosav Zivkovic, STOP Mines, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015; and emails from Amela Balic, NPA Bosnia, 15 April 2015 and Lillian Palmbach, UNDP, 29 May 2015.

98 Statement of BiH, APMBC Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015.

99 UNDP, “Mine Action Board of Donors Meeting”, Press release, 31 March 2016.

100 Statement of BiH, APMBC Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015.

101 Ibid.

102 See Mine Action Review and Landmine Monitor reports on clearance in BiH covering 2011–14.

103 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 14.

104 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMBC, 23 April 2015.

105 Ibid, 26 May 2016.

106 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 20.

107 Ibid.

108 Interview with Tarik Serak, BHMBC, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015.

109 Lt.-Col. Rupert Steeger, Germany Embassy, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015.

110 Email from Tarik Serak, BHMBC, 26 May 2016.

BHMAC expected national and international mine action funding to BiH to remain the same in 2016 as the previous year.<sup>111</sup> BHMAC itself is funded by the common institutions of BiH and other institutions at state level.<sup>112</sup> In addition, domestic institutions and organisations and the private sector also fund mine action operations.<sup>113</sup> According to BHMAC, the ratio of donor funding to national sources is 55% to 45%.<sup>114</sup>

Analysis shows that BiH has committed a larger proportion of its national budget to mine action than many other mine-affected countries.<sup>115</sup> Nevertheless, analysis by both NPA and UNDP shows that in the first five years of the 2009–19 strategy, while international donors maintained their planned funding commitments, BiH government funding declined considerably and consequently, by 2013, progress was way off target.<sup>116</sup> UNDP's 2015 assessment showed that low funding levels have a cascading effect in the mine action sector, and that requests for updated, fit-for-purpose equipment, are often turned down and financial constraints often limit BHMAC staff's time in the field, which in turn impacts performance.<sup>117</sup>

There is a growing expectation from international donors that BiH should contribute more funding to mine action.<sup>118</sup> BHMAC had hoped further funds would be made available by municipalities, though this has not materialised in sufficient quantities to make a significant difference in overall clearance rates.<sup>119</sup> BHMAC did, however, call attention to other ways in which municipalities supported mine action, such as through providing information on SHAs and in the planning of demining.<sup>120</sup>

A representative of the US Department of State said that donor fatigue appears to be a large factor in BiH's slow mine action progress, and argued that BiH requires financial resources from a larger pool of donors in order to achieve the targets outlined in its strategy.<sup>121</sup> The 2015 UNDP evaluation found that donors wanted to see more progress, were looking for an end date for assistance, and wanted more domestic responsibility. The slow pace of clearance has resulted in lack of confidence in the mine action programme from donors but also from people living in mine-affected communities, who felt disillusioned that the mines have not been cleared.<sup>122</sup>

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111 Ibid.

112 Ibid.

113 Ibid.

114 Statement of BiH, APMBC Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015.

115 NPA, "Humanitarian Disarmament Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina", PowerPoint Presentation, 17 April 2014; and UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 21.

116 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, pp. 17 and 21; and NPA, "Humanitarian Disarmament Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina", PowerPoint presentation, 17 April 2014.

117 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 22.

118 Interview with Tarik Serak, BHMAC, Sarajevo, 20 March 2015.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.

121 Email from Kaitlyn Coffey, Assistant Program Manager, PM/WRA, US Department of State, 13 April 2015.

122 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 14.