

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2022

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2027
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION: HEAVY

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

50 km²

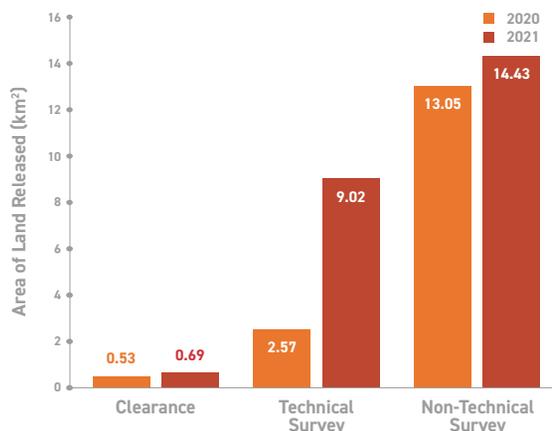
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2021

0.69 km²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2021

1,717

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) continued to make progress in Article 5 implementation in 2021, releasing more mined area through clearance, technical survey, and non-technical survey compared to the previous year. However, the total land release output of more than 18 km² achieved in 2021 (0.69 km² through clearance; 3.23 km² through reduction; and 14.43 km² through cancellation), is far below the annual land release 2021 target of 91.3 km² in BiH's 2020 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline extension request.

Regrettably, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMAC) failed to take full advantage of the Country Coalition established with Germany in 2020, and no meeting of the coalition took place in 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The amended demining law drafted in 2017, which had still to be adopted as of writing, should be revised further and re-submitted to Parliament for adoption. Liability policy and clearly defining "all reasonable effort" in the context of BiH should be discussed in parallel with the revision of the amended draft law.
- BiH should implement the recommendations of both the 2015 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment, and the 2016 performance audit report of the Audit Office of the Institutions of BiH,¹ both of which remain valid. In particular, BiH should continue strengthening the governance and management of the mine action programme.
- BHMAC should fully adopt international best practice in land release and ensure that all stakeholders, in all parts of BiH (including BHMAC's regional offices), consistently use evidence-based survey to confirm and delineate areas of actual contamination prior to clearance.

¹ UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015; and Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", No. 01-02-03-10-16-1-1101/16, 4 November 2016, p. 22.

- As part of efforts to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of land release operations, BHMAL should review and update in a collaborative manner relevant national mine action standards (NMAAS) to bring them in line with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). To facilitate this process, BHMAL should consider re-establishing technical working groups (TWGs).
- BHMAL should develop a detailed, costed, and multi-year Article 5 work plan with achievable and measurable milestones, and update its national mine action strategy for 2018–25 accordingly.
- BiH should fully embrace the “Country Coalition” approach, in partnership with Germany, which can provide a forum for regular dialogue among all mine action stakeholders to improve coordination and identify and overcome challenges.
- BHMAL should report more accurately and consistently on the extent of anti-personnel mine contamination, including using the classification of suspected hazardous area (SHA) and confirmed hazardous area (CHA) in a manner consistent with IMAS.
- BHMAL should detail the steps it plans to take to further mainstream gender and diversity within its mine action programme and improve gender balance in the sector, at the least by meeting the target of 40% female staff set by the 2003 Law on Gender Equality.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2021)	Score (2020)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	5	The European Union (EU)-funded “country assessment” project completed in May 2020 groups SHAs and CHAs together into logical units/polygons known as “Mine Suspected Areas” (MSAs), which are then each tasked for land release. While the results of the country assessment facilitate planning and tasking, the understanding and accuracy of BiH’s baseline of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination did not markedly improve, with less than 10% of mined area cancelled during implementation of the project. Many of the SHAs within these MSAs are believed to be still significantly inflated and clearance of confirmed anti-personnel mined area likely amounts to only a small percentage of the overall SHA. The creation of “MSAs” appears to have confused the actual size of remaining mined area.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	5	National ownership of mine action in BiH falls under the responsibility of the Demining Commission and BHMAL. The mandate of the most recent Commission ended on 30 April 2022 and a new Commission was appointed on 28 July 2022. BiH’s National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 was adopted in January 2019, but as at July 2022, the amended demining law (2017) was still awaiting parliamentary adoption. Governance of the national mine action programme needs to be strengthened and Article 5 implementation better coordinated. Regrettably, the Country Coalition established between BiH and Germany in 2020 to strengthen coordination of APMBC Article 5, and to monitor progress against the 2018–25 strategy, did not meet in 2021.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	5	The National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 supports the 2003 Law on Gender Equality. Within BHMAL’s own programme, and those of clearance operators too, women make up only a small proportion of the total number of staff, and an even smaller proportion of operations staff in the field. This is despite BHMAL’s pledge to ensure that all relevant actors in the national programme will include gender in all phases of all mine action activities.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	5	BHMAL is in the process of migrating from its own information management system to the new web-based system, IMSMA (Information Management System for Mine Action) Core. The first stage of the migration has been completed, having incorporated data from the EU-funded “country assessment” project, with the support of UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). In a positive development, BHMAL disaggregated mined area released through non-technical survey, technical survey, and clearance in its 2021 data provided to Mine Action Review – a notable improvement on previous years.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	7	The EU-funded “country assessment” project resulted in the creation of 478 “MSAs” (groups of SHAs and CHAs), which are then tasked to operators as single units for land release. The results of the project inform the planning, prioritisation, and realisation of the Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 and of BiH’s future Article 5 implementation, as outlined in its 2020 extension request. A first revision of BiH’s Mine Action Strategy for 2018–25 was scheduled for 2020, but is now said to have been delayed until 2023.

Criterion	Score (2021)	Score (2020)	Performance Commentary
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	7	There is considerable national and international demining capacity, and the full demining toolbox is deployed. It is now essential that all implementing partners, in all parts of the country, including BHMAL regional offices, consistently apply efficient, evidenced-based land release methodology. In particular, non-technical and technical survey must be used to help confirm and better delineate mined areas prior to clearance. Only BHMAL can formally conduct and cancel area through non-technical survey, with operators restricted to release through technical survey and clearance only. Despite plans to do so, BHMAL did not review its national mine action standards in 2021.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	5	4	In 2020, BiH was granted a six-year extension to its Article 5 deadline to 1 March 2027. This target is only achievable with existing capacity if efficient land release methodology is applied routinely by all operators and annual targets are met. In 2021, BiH cleared under 0.69km ² of mined area, an increase on the previous year but below the unambitious 0.9km ² annual clearance target in BiH's extension request targets. In 2021, cancellation through non-technical survey (14.43km ²) and reduction through technical survey (9.02km ²), were also higher than the previous year, but fell far short of the extension request targets of 75.1km ² and 15.4km ² , respectively. The shortfall in the amount cancelled, however, could be due to the fact that BHMAL only cancels mined area upon completion of each MSA.
Average Score	5.4	5.4	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- The Demining Commission (representatives from three ministries (Civil Affairs, Security, and Defence) elected to represent BiH's three main ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs))
- Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMAL)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Armed Forces of BiH
- BHMAL
- Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska (CPA RS)
- Federal Administration of Civil Protection (FACP)
- Non-governmental organisations:
 - DEMIRA
 - Mine Detection Dog Centre (MDDC)
 - Pro Vita
 - Stop Mines

- Commercial demining companies:

- Detector
- Heksogen d.o.o
- In Demining N.H.O
- N&N Ivsa
- Udruga "Pazi mine"
- UEM d.o.o (UEM is also an NGO)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- European Union Force Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

BiH is heavily contaminated with mines, primarily as a result of the 1992–95 conflict related to the break-up of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. All warring factions in BiH laid mines, primarily between confrontation lines.² More than twenty-five years after the end of the conflict, BiH is still one of the most heavily mined countries in Europe. The country is also contaminated with explosive remnants of war (ERW), including cluster munition remnants (CMR) (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on BiH for further information).

Minefields in BiH generally contain relatively small numbers of mines, which are typically either "in groups or randomly laid". The quality of approximately 30% of minefield records was not sufficiently accurate for the identification of the precise minefield location and shape. Furthermore, it seems that approximately 40% of minefield records were never made or handed over, and records were often destroyed or lost for several reasons, such as the death or emigration of the persons who created the

2 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 4.

minefield records.³ In its Article 7 report submitted in 2021, BiH reported that it had collected 70% of minefield records to-date.⁴ Physical changes to mined areas (such as in vegetation), and a lack of witnesses to the laying of the mines, pose additional challenges.⁵

BHMAC reported that as January 2022, there was more than 922km² of mined area remaining in BiH (see Table 1), including more than 19km² of CHA.⁶ This is a decrease compared to the 956km² of mined area remaining in BiH as at the end of 2020, and is only partly explained by the 18km² released through survey and clearance in 2021. It is also a reduction on the 933km² of remaining mined area (which equated to 1.82% of its total territory), as reported by BiH at the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties in November 2021.⁷

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by Category (at end 2021)⁸

Canton	Category I (km ²)	Category II (km ²)	Category III (km ²)	Total (km ²)
Unsko-Sanki	38.39	36.35	18.97	93.47
Posavski	3.11	9.63	1.86	14.60
Tuzlanski	14.04	18.14	45.96	78.14
Zenicko-Dobojski	27.77	11.67	72.94	112.38
Bosansko-Podrinjski	3.01	8.15	32.89	44.05
Srednje-Bosanski	24.52	38.91	47.34	110.77
Hercegovacko-Neret	13.47	24.55	106.94	144.97
Zapadno Hercegovacki	0.00	0.00	0.82	0.82
Sarajevo	14.63	11.71	26.71	53.05
Canton 10	9.22	12.22	53.59	75.03
BiH Federation	148.16	171.33	408.02	727.28
Brcko district	0.90	9.20	2.81	12.90
Republika Srpska	57.73	64.48	60.00	182.20
Totals	206.79	245.01	470.83	922.38

A 2016 national audit office report on the efficiency of the demining system in BiH concluded that: "Twenty years after the war ended, the Mine Action Centre still does not have complete information on the locations of landmines in BiH, which is to say it does not know the total suspected hazardous area."⁹ Similarly, 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."¹⁰

During 2017, plans were formalised between BHMAC, clearance operators, and the European Union (EU) for a country assessment to establish a more accurate baseline of mine contamination and improve the efficiency of clearance operations.¹¹ The resultant "Country assessment of mine-suspected areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2019" project (hereafter, the "country assessment" project), was conducted between 16 August 2018 and 15 May 2020, and involved nationwide non-technical survey of mined areas conducted by BHMAC (nine non-technical survey teams), the Armed Forces of BiH (two teams), and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA, three teams). The project processed data for 143 municipalities, in which the mined areas were confirmed in 118.¹² The project did not involve any technical interventions, so no area was reduced or cleared as part of it.

3 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

4 Article 7 report (covering 2020), Form C.

5 Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", 4 November 2016, p. 26.

6 BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2021, undated, p. 5.; and emails from Ljiljana Ilić, Interpreter, BHMAC, 15 April 2022 and Mirjana Marić, Senior officer for analysis and reporting, BHMAC, 21 September 2022.

7 Statement of BiH on Article 5, APBMC 19th Meeting of States Parties (virtual meeting), 15 to 19 November 2021.

8 Emails from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022 and Mirjana Marić, BHMAC, 21 September 2022; and BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2021, undated, p. 5. In the Table provided by BHMAC and included in its draft Mine Action Report for 2020, the Category III total was reported as 470.82km² and the total mined area as 922.37km². This is most likely due to rounding issues.

9 Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Performance Audit Report. Efficiency of the Demining System in Bosnia and Herzegovina", 4 November 2016, p. 5.

10 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13 May 2015, p. 17.

11 Interviews with Darvin Lisica, then Programme Manager and Regional Director, NPA, Sarajevo, 8 May 2017; Fotini Antonopoulou, EU, Sarajevo, 8 May 2017; and Tarik Serak BHMAC, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017.

12 BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2020, undated draft, p. 11.

A total of 103km² was released during the period of implementation of the County Assessment Project. Total mined area fell from 1,069km² in 2018 to 966m² at project completion (15 May 2020), with an estimated 180,000 mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) remaining to be cleared.¹³ As a result of the non-technical survey, the GEO position of 1,151 minefields was corrected, 300 new minefield records were collected, and 6,023 minefield records were deleted from the database.¹⁴

The mined area remaining at the end of the country assessment project was subdivided into 478 MSAs, averaging 1.94km² in size.¹⁵ MSA is a BiH-specific term, not consistent with IMAS. It is defined by BHMAL as "an area made up of SHAs and CHAs which encompasses one or more impacted communities and due to economic, cultural or geographical and other reasons is selected as a logical unit".¹⁶ MSAs have been selected by BHMAL in close cooperation with municipal authorities. It is hoped that their creation will simplify the tasking process by assigning clearance operators a larger geographical area in which to conduct land release operations (i.e. survey and clearance of the SHAs and CHAs within the MSAs), with MSAs each averaging 1.7/2.5km² in size.¹⁷ However, the creation of MSAs has also created some confusion in terms of the size of the actual remaining mined area.¹⁸

The country assessment was entirely based on non-technical survey, however it did not result in a significant amount of cancellation, as had been the external expectation of the international community. In fact the 93.5km² cancelled during the assessment was less than 10% of the total mined area at the start of the project.¹⁹ Significant further cancellation of uncontaminated land is therefore expected during land release of the MSAs and it is crucial that non-technical survey is used effectively to identify the location of mine contamination more accurately, before technical survey is subsequently conducted. However, current national mine action standards (NMAS) and standing operating positions (SOPs) in BiH stipulate that only BHMAL can formally conduct non-technical survey and formally cancel land – something which it does at the end of the process, once technical survey and clearance of all hazardous areas within each MSA has been completed.²⁰ The Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and NPA do, however, provide supplementary information collected during survey and community liaison to support BHMAL's non-technical survey.²¹

The intended use of the remaining mined area in BiH is as follows: 70% forest, 19% agriculture, 2% infrastructure, 1% water resources, and 8% other usages.²²

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND 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.²³ The Demining Commission is composed of representatives from three ministries (Civil Affairs, Defence, and Security) elected to represent BiH's three main ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs). Whereas the Minister for Civil Affairs remains ultimately responsible for mine action, the Demining Commission is the body responsible for setting mine action policy, and it proposes the appointment of BHMAL senior staff, for approval by the Council of Ministers.²⁴ The mandate of the most recent Commission ended on 30 April 2022, and a new Commission was appointed on 28 July 2022.²⁵ BHMAL is responsible for regulating mine action and implementing BiH's survey and clearance plans.²⁶ BHMAL operates from its headquarters in Sarajevo, two main offices in Sarajevo and Banja Luka, and eight regional offices (Banja Luka, Bihac, Brčko, Mostar, Pale, Sarajevo, Travnik, and Tuzla).²⁷

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. As at June 2020, however, an amended text from 2017 was still awaiting parliamentary adoption, and in July 2021, BHMAL reported that the process had been suspended.²⁸ The Geneva

13 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 5 and 10–11; BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2020, undated draft, pp. 3 and 13; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form C.

14 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, Country Director, NPA, 26 March 2020.

15 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 5 and 10–11; BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2020, undated draft, pp. 3 and 13; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form C.

16 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 6 and 16.

17 Ibid., p. 11.

18 Email from GICHD, 27 April 2022.

19 Based on BiH's draft Mine Action Report for 2020, undated draft, p. 11. In BiH's 2020 Revised Article 5 extension request, August 2020, the amount of mined area cancelled was reported to be nearly 966.7km² (p. 5), but this figure is believed to be an error, given that 1,030km² mined area was addressed during the country assessment (p. 11) and remaining mined area as at the beginning of 2020 was nearly 966.7km² (p. 16 and Annex 2). The 966.7km² referred to incorrectly as cancelled on p. 5 is believed by Mine Action Review to refer to the total remaining mined area as at the end of the assessment at the beginning of 2020, as indicated on pp. 7 and 16, and in Annex 2.

20 Emails from Clement Meynier, Country Director, MAG, 14 March 2022; and Charles Frisby, Country Director, NPA, 11 April 2022.

21 Emails from Clement Meynier, MAG, 14 March 2022; and Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

22 "Draft Demining plan in BiH for 2020", Annex 5 to the 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline extension request, August 2020, p. 4.

23 BHMAL Organisational chart, accessed 6 May 2022 at: <http://bit.ly/2Ycj4xl>.

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

25 Email from Mirjana Marić, BHMAL, 21 September 2022.

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

27 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 8.

28 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAL, 2 July 2021.

International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) believes the amended demining law should be revised further and re-submitted for adoption, with the topics of "All Reasonable Effort" and liability discussed in parallel to the revision.²⁹ Clearer legislation on liabilities related to mine action activities would be beneficial to all mine action stakeholders in BiH.

The governance of BiH's mine action programme needs to be strengthened and would benefit from improved communication and coordination with clearance operators, including through the re-establishment of technical working groups (TWGs), which provide a platform for operators to discuss, learn from each other, and work in synergies on matters related to operations.

After a 10-year hiatus, Board of Donors meetings resumed in September 2015.³⁰ BiH's new National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 specifies that at least two such meetings should be organised every year.³¹ In a positive development, a Board of Donors meeting took place in April 2022,³² after a significant gap since its last meeting in November 2017.³³ The next Board of Donors meeting was scheduled for the end of 2022.³⁴

Although official Board of Donor meetings have not taken place in recent years, before 2022, a number of important multi-stakeholder workshops have. Among others, a workshop on BiH's Article 5 planning took place on 6 March 2020, organised by BHMAC in cooperation with the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the APMBBC, and attended by State institutions, clearance operators, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and representatives of international organisations.³⁵ However, aside from this meeting, there was no further consultation with implementing partners during BiH's elaboration of its 2020 Article 5 extension request.

In its 2020 Article 5 extension request, BHMAC and the Demining Commission committed to strive to increase their interaction with the donor community to ensure that partners are kept informed of progress in implementation of plans.³⁶ It had been hoped that the "Country Coalition", established between BiH and Germany, would provide a forum for regular dialogue among all mine action stakeholders, help

demonstrate national ownership, strengthen coordination of APMBBC Article 5 and CCM Article 4 implementation, identify and overcome challenges, and monitor progress against the 2018–25 strategy. The first Country Coalition meeting, convened jointly by BiH and Germany, took place on 13 October 2020. The online forum was attended by over 40 participants including representatives from a wide range of mine action stakeholders, including NGO clearance operators and donors.³⁷ Unfortunately, no Country Coalition meeting took place in 2021, and as at July 2022, no further Country Coalition meetings had yet been convened.

BiH's second goal, in its National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, is that the "Mine action programme in BH is promoted on both national and international level to increase its visibility and improve liability, commitment and support of the state", and the strategy includes operational objectives linked to this strategic goal.³⁸ As committed to in its national mine action strategy, BiH published a separate financial plan for implementation of the BiH mine action strategy for 2018–25. The plan sees BiH commit a national budget of BAM 4.5 million (over US\$2.4 million) per annum for the Armed Forces and almost BAM 5.95 million (US\$3.1 million) per annum for BHMAC, for 2019 and 2020. These amounts were forecast to increase to a total of BAM 21.55 million (over US\$11.4 million, at current exchange rates) per annum in 2025.³⁹ This national funding is in addition to forecast international funding, which is also budgeted in BiH's financial plan.⁴⁰

In order to fulfil its Article 5 obligations by 1 March 2027, BiH claims to require a total of BAM 336 million as at 2020.⁴¹ According to a statement of the Demining Commission in November 2020, the ratio of donor funds was 55% compared to 45% from national funding.⁴² Of the national contributions, funds for non-technical survey activities by BHMAC will be ensured from the budgets of BiH's institutions, and implemented through operational activities of BHMAC. Budgets of BiH's institutions will also ensure funds for technical survey and mine clearance activities, to be implemented by Armed Forces. Entity governments' budgets will also ensure funds for technical survey and mine clearance operations, to be implemented by entity civilian protections. In addition, national funding will be provided from Brčko District, cantons and municipalities,

29 Email from GICHD, 14 May 2021.

30 Interview with Tarik Serak, BHMAC, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017; and emails from Fotini Antonopoulou, EU, 19 June 2017; and Suad Baljak, Mine Action Officer, UNDP, 15 June 2017; and UNDP BiH, "Mine Action Board of Donors Meeting", 31 March 2016, at: <http://bit.ly/300f4lp>.

31 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 20.

32 BHMAC website, "Board of Donors for Mine Action", 11 April 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3BYuc8a>.

33 Emails from Suad Baljak, UNDP, 14 July 2020; and Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 17 July 2020.

34 BHMAC website, "Board of Donors for Mine Action", 11 April 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3BYuc8a>.

35 BHMAC website, "Workshop "Article 5 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Production, Stockpiling and Transfer of AP Mines", 6 March 2020, at: <http://bit.ly/3hVCAZO>; and BiH Mine Action Report for 2020, undated draft, p. 27.

36 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 25.

37 BHMAC website, "Embassy of the Republic of Germany in Bosnia and Herzegovina in cooperation with the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs, organized online Country Coalition conference", 14 October 2020, at: <http://bit.ly/2NwxatH>; and Statement of Germany, Second CCM Review Conference (Part 1), virtual format, 25–27 November 2020.

38 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, pp. 1 and 19–20.

39 BiH, Financial Plan for Implementation of the BiH Mine Action Strategy 2018–25, pp. 6–7.

40 Ibid.

41 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 6–7, and 23.

42 Statement of BiH, APMBBC 18th Meeting of States Parties, 16 to 20 November 2020.

and public and private companies.⁴³ According to BiH, as at 2020, available financial resources had not met the projected funding of the Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, which may not allow “full realisation” of the goals set.⁴⁴

In 2021, BHMAC was funded by BiH to the sum of almost BAM 5.57 million (almost US\$3 million): BAM 3.34 million for planning and nearly BAM 2.23 million for quality assurance (QA). In addition, nearly BAM 9.58 million were allocated by domestic institutions for demining in 2021 (almost BAM 2.58 million by the BiH Armed Forces; BAM 3.60 million by FACP; more than BAM 3.17 million by the CPA RS; and more than BAM 0.23 million by the Government of Brčko District of BiH.⁴⁵

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

BiH does not have a NMAS on environmental management. However, BHMAC said that, in general, existing humanitarian demining procedures (methods for vegetation removal, removal of metals and waste, use of machinery, etc.) contribute to the management and protection of the environment. BHMAC also said that, in certain cases, procedures are modified in order to protect the environment and that when approving demining execution plans, it consults the local community where necessary. The use of threshing machines has been banned on agricultural areas, because the machines disturb soil deeper than 20cm and compact the soil, leaving it impermeable to water and preventing sowing for up to three years. BHMAC also does not use machines on mountain pastures in order to help protect against removal of layers of grasses that have taken many years to grow and which do not renew fully after machines have been used. In forested areas, as part of its procedures to ensure the use of metal detectors at the required height, BHMAC consults landowners regarding which vegetation can be removed, and what density and type of trees should be left untouched.⁴⁶

MAG is increasingly examining the interaction between wildfires, landslides, and explosive ordnance contamination. In BiH, the high contamination by explosive items exacerbates the human, environmental, and socio-economic impact

of wildfires, hinders the response to tackling fires, and increases the risk of landslides. MAG is working alongside affected municipalities to help them promote MSAs most vulnerable to wildfires and landslides up to high priority for clearance. In addition, MAG BiH coordinates with BHMAC in instances when a MSA contains tree species identified as protected. This information is taken into account during operations and during quality control (QC). In addition, MAG BiH does not cut down trees that are over 10cm in diameter.⁴⁷

NPA is implementing an Environmental Assessment and Management System (EAM) for its country programmes, starting with assessing offices and administration. In addition, NPA's BiH country programme has an Environment and Climate Country Policy in place.⁴⁸ NPA BiH follows its “do no harm” principle and said that it takes seriously environmental considerations in the deployment of operational assets and strives to minimise its environmental footprint. NPA safely disposes all of non-degradable waste found in its area of operations, including all materials and tools used. All human waste and rubbish are regularly cleared and deposited in pre-designed areas. As land release operations are often conducted in forested areas, NPA also maintains close cooperation with relevant forest administrations, helping prevent unintended environmental consequences and reducing deforestation.⁴⁹

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 specifies that: “Under the leadership of BHMAC, relevant actors will include gender and diversity into all phases of planning, realisation and follow-up of all mine activities”.⁵⁰ The mine action strategy considered and supported the 2003 Law on Gender Equality in BiH, which includes equal treatment of the genders and equality of opportunity, and prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of gender. The Law on Gender Equality determines that equal representation of men and women exists when the percentage of either gender in bodies at all levels in BiH (State, entity, cantonal, and municipality level) is at least 40%. BiH's national mine action strategy also considered the 2017 Gender Equality Action Plan.⁵¹ However, as at April 2022, only 21% of BHMAC's employees were female (37 of 171 employees), with women employed in 16% of managerial/supervisory positions (4 of 25) and 18% of operational positions (25 of 139).⁵² BHMAC reported having a gender and diversity policy in place and stated that BHMAC upholds the Law on Gender Equality and routinely includes it in the development of strategies and standards.⁵³ A new Demining Commission was appointed on 28 July 2022, in which one of the three new members is female.⁵⁴

43 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 23–24.

44 Ibid., p. 7.

45 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 22 March 2022; and BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2021, undated, p. 32.

46 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 22 March 2022.

47 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 14 March 2022.

48 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 19 March 2022.

49 Ibid.

50 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 14.

51 Ibid.

52 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 22 March 2022.

53 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 24 April 2019.

54 Email from Mirjana Marić, BHMAC, 6 October 2022.

BHMAC consults all groups affected by mines, including women and children, during survey and community liaison activities, and BHMAC's survey and community liaison teams are inclusive with a view to facilitating this. BHMAC also reported that relevant mine action data are disaggregated by gender and age.⁵⁵ However, BiH's Article 5 deadline extension request, granted in 2020, did not contain information on what steps BHMAC plans to take to mainstream gender and diversity within its survey and clearance programme.

The CPA RS reported that nearly 24% of its staff were female, including 30% of managerial/supervisory positions. It has six female medics, but none of its operations staff is a woman.⁵⁶ During survey and community liaison activities, it cooperates with the local population, regardless of ethnicity, and where needed has representatives from different ethnic groups.⁵⁷

As at July 2022, the Demining Battalion of the Armed Forces of BiH had a workforce of 455 personnel, including 28 women (6% of the total). This included 1 (2%) of the 55 managerial/supervisory positions and 27 (7%) of the 391 operations positions.⁵⁸

FACP reported that of its 204 employees deployed in demining and destruction of UXO, 41 (20%) are women, including five (42%) of the twelve managerial/supervisory positions, and 17 (11%) of the 153 operational positions.⁵⁹

MAG has a gender policy and equal employment opportunities for suitably qualified females and males.⁶⁰ However, of MAG's 80 total staff in BiH in 2021, only 10 (13%) were women, including 7 (9%) of its survey and clearance personnel (including medics), and 4 (22%) of its managerial/supervisory positions.⁶¹ With the support of MAG's community liaison team and impact assessments conducted on completed tasks,

MAG BiH has developed a better understanding of gender dynamics in the field. While task dossiers from BHMAC generally list mostly men as key informants for the tasks, MAG also interviews women living in those communities. MAG systematically involves women in its community liaison work as they often provide valuable and different insights and perspectives about the risk in those areas, based on their knowledge, use of land, and appreciation of key landmarks in the locations (trees, cemeteries, rocks, rivers, etc.)⁶²

NPA reported that the overall gender split of its staff as at March 2022 was 13% female, with women only accounting for 10% of operational staff deployed in the field, a minor increase on the previous year. However, some 40% of managerial positions in NPA's BiH programme are held by women. NPA said it would continue its work to ensure that a gender balanced workplace policy is in place as well as to ensure that the needs of all staff are accommodated with access to equal opportunities regardless of gender, age, ethnic and religious backgrounds.⁶³

Mixed gender representation is an obligation for NPA teams conducting community liaison and risk education.⁶⁴ NPA said its explosive risk ordnance education (EORE)/community liaison team continuously implements activities in a gender and diversity sensitive and responsive way to respond to the diverse needs within affected communities and target minority ethnic groups, women, persons with disabilities, and people of different age groups. Through its focal points, NPA planned to liaise with local associations/organisations working in the field of Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in 2022, to share experience and knowledge for stronger gender mainstreaming. It also planned two all-staff Gender and Diversity training sessions for the year.⁶⁵

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

BHMAC currently uses its own paradox-based information management system, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Information System (BHMAIS),⁶⁶ but implementation of Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core has been ongoing since 2019. The first phase of IMSMA Core implementation was completed with support from UNDP and the GICHD, and financing from the EU, and created a system capable of managing data from the EU-funded "country assessment" project, which was completed in May 2020.⁶⁷ A contract with the German Federal Foreign Office for a new project to migrate the remaining data and workflows from BHMAIS to IMSMA Core was signed in August 2022 and was expected to take around 18 months to implement.⁶⁸

55 Emails from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 24 April 2019; and Goran Šehić, NPA, 25 February 2019; and BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025, p. 52.

56 Emails from Milisav Pantic, on behalf of Dragan Kos, Assistant Director, Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska (CPA RS), 3 June 2021 and 12 September 2022.

57 Emails from Dragan Kos, CPA RS, 2 April 2020; and Milisav Pantic, CPA RS, 12 September 2022.

58 Email from Brig. Dzevad Zenunovic, Demining Battalion of the Armed Forces of BiH, 13 July 2022.

59 Email from Muamer Husilović, Federal Administration of Civil Protection (FACP), 7 July 2022.

60 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 3 April 2020.

61 Email from Adam Komorowski, Regional Director, MAG, 7 September 2022.

62 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 14 March 2022.

63 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 19 March 2022.

64 Email from Goran Šehić, NPA, 25 February 2019.

65 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 19 March 2022.

66 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 22 March 2022.

67 2020 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5; and email from GICHD, 27 April 2022.

68 Emails from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 22 March 2022; Charles Frisby, NPA, 19 March and 7 September 2022; and GICHD, 27 April 2022.

While the country assessment project contributed to updating much of the data in BHMAIS, BiH's national information management system still needs to be improved in terms of accuracy and sustainability. During the implementation and migration from BHMAIS to IMSMA Core, the data quality will be checked and improved wherever feasible. Data-collection forms will be also reviewed and improved as part of the process.⁶⁹ BHMAL has said that the migration to IMSMA Core will fully enable "operational works" and provide a better and more transparent system.⁷⁰ NPA believes that IMSMA Core will help ensure BiH has accurate, transparent, and reliable mine action data stored and managed by BHMAL. It will also contribute to better operational planning, including with respect to BiH's APMBL and CCM treaty commitments.⁷¹

In addition, UNDP has developed a Geographic Information System (GIS) mobile application, which was released in November 2020. This allows the general public to access information on the location of hazardous areas, as well as other features, through Android and Apple iOS devices.⁷²

At present, while clearance operators do have access to data on specific tasks being undertaken, they do not have access to BHMAL's full Information Management database.⁷³

As at September 2022, BHMAL had yet to submit its APMBL Article 7 transparency report covering the 2021 reporting period. However, in data provided to Mine Action Review, BHMAL disaggregated mined area released through non-technical survey, technical survey, and clearance in 2021 – a notable improvement on previous years. Cancellation of mined area can only be reported by BHMAL itself, at the end of the process, once technical survey and clearance have been completed.⁷⁴

PLANNING AND TASKING

In 2017, BiH developed a new national mine action strategy for 2018–25, with support from the GICHD, which addresses all mine and cluster munition remnant contamination. The strategy was formally adopted in January 2019.⁷⁵ The BiH previous Mine Action Strategy for 2009–19, adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2008,⁷⁶ set the target of the country becoming free of mines by 2019. It failed by some distance to meet this target.

The new Strategy contains a general plan and timeframe for the completion of mine clearance, as well as for cluster munition remnants. BHMAL planned to have the first revision of the Strategy at the end of 2020, based on the results of the country assessment project and progress in implementation of the strategy to date,⁷⁷ and according to the strategy, a second revision is planned for 2023.⁷⁸ In November 2020, the Demining Commission reported that a request would be sent to the Council of Ministers to initiate a first revision of the Mine Action Strategy for 2018–25, in line with the latest information.⁷⁹ However, BHMAL subsequently reported that the *first* revision was only expected to be completed in 2023.⁸⁰

BHMAL also elaborates and implements annual work plans, which are adopted by the Demining Commission. Political

issues can result in delay in adoption of annual work plans, for example the six-month delay in the appointment of the new Demining Commission from October 2019 to April 2020.

A three-day multi-stakeholder workshop took place on 28–30 January 2020 in Sarajevo, to present the preliminary results of the EU-funded country assessment project and discuss how they inform mid-term planning for Article 5 implementation.⁸¹ During the workshop, working groups elaborated three mid-term action plans for 2020–25, based on low, medium, and high scenarios for Article 5 implementation (with completion targets of 2029, 2027, and 2026 respectively), based on different projected capacities.⁸² BiH elected to request an Article 5 deadline extension to 2027, in its extension request which was granted in 2020.

According to BiH's 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request, from 2020 to 2027 BiH plans to release a total of 967km²: 816.6km² through cancellation; 141.7km² through reduction; and 7.8km² through clearance.⁸³ Annually, BiH planned to release 71.8km² in 2020; 91.3km² in 2021; 110.3km² in 2022; 126.4km² in 2023; 145.5km² in 2024; 155.7km² in 2025; 131.4km² in 2026; and 134.6km² in 2027. While BiH did disaggregate the amount cancelled, reduced, and cleared

69 Email from GICHD, 27 April 2022.

70 Statement of BiH on Article 5, APMBL 19th Meeting of States Parties (virtual meeting), 15–19 November 2021.

71 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 19 March 2022.

72 Email from Suad Baljak, UNDP, 18 February 2021.

73 Emails from Kristina Duric, NPA, 30 July 2021; and Clement Meynier, MAG, 30 July 2021.

74 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 14 March 2021.

75 BHMAL website, "Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Strategy 2019–2025 adopted by the Council of Ministers", available at: <http://bit.ly/2VnPNDj>.

76 CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2015), Form B.

77 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 7.

78 BiH, "National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025", p. 34.

79 Statement of BiH, APMBL 18th Meeting of States Parties, 16 to 20 November 2020.

80 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAL, 2 July 2021.

81 BHMAL website, "Workshop on Definitions of Productivity Indicators and Resources Required for Implementation of the Land Release Method and Development of a Medium-Term Action Plan", 30 January 2020, at: <http://bit.ly/37WS3UN>.

82 Interview with Saša Obradovic, BHMAL, Geneva, 11 February 2020.

83 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 24.

each year, in its operational plan, the totals in several columns did not correctly sum to the annual total.⁸⁴ BiH has fallen well behind the land release targets in 2020 and 2021.

The 478 MSAs created through the country assessment project, are intended to enable mine action operations to better respond to the needs of the community through the strengthening of community liaison and by ensuring that community needs are better prioritised and addressed.⁸⁵ During the country assessment, local administrations and BHMAC agreed upon the size and priority of MSAs. In its extension request, BiH describes its prioritisation system for releasing MSAs, which is said to accord with humanitarian, developmental, and safety needs of municipality and local communities, as well as the level of threat (high, medium, or low).⁸⁶ Of the 478 MSAs created, 189 were high-risk MSAs, 274 medium-risk MSAs, and 15 low-risk MSAs.⁸⁷ Conversion of MSAs from "classic" to "land release" projects can reportedly take months at a central level.⁸⁸ BHMAC has not yet completed the preparation of project documentation/

task dossiers for all 478 MSAs created during the country assessment.⁸⁹

In 2021, non-technical/general survey activities were performed on an area of 40.12km² and a total of 24 new projects were prepared ready for land release.⁹⁰ Operators are assigned whole MSAs by BHMAC, inside of which BHMAC then designates specific areas (CHA or SHA polygons) for either systematic technical survey or targeted technical survey, and clearance (if contamination is confirmed). Officially, only BHMAC can conduct non-technical survey and release mined area through cancellation.⁹¹ The FACP said that task dossiers are not always provided in a timely manner, as the BHMAC regional offices do not have sufficient personnel to issue project documentation.⁹² NPA reported that while MSAs were tasked in a timely manner, task dossiers did not always contain comprehensive non-technical survey information required for efficient technical survey and clearance operations.⁹³ (See section on 'Standards and land release efficiency' for further details).

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Results of mine action in BiH show that the applied land release model was efficient in the period 2005–09, and prior to 2009, BHMAC cancelled significant amounts of land annually through non-technical survey.⁹⁴ Since then, however, non-technical survey output has declined, but there remains very significant potential for further reduction in the size of the SHA through survey.

In recent years, various land release projects, which have included use of systematic technical survey and technical survey with targeted investigation, have revealed around 90% of mined area can be cancelled through non-technical survey; around 8 or 9% reduced through technical survey; and less than 2% cleared.⁹⁵ These and previous land release data indicate that actual anti-personnel mine contamination in BiH is only a small proportion of the total hazardous area currently on the database and deployment of clearance assets will therefore only be required for relatively small areas.⁹⁶

No changes were made to the NMAS during the year.⁹⁷ In 2020, BHMAC organised a TWG, with representatives from different demining organisations, with regards to the development of a new NMAS chapter on QA and QC, but no agreement on elaboration of the new chapter was reached.⁹⁸ No further progress was reported in respect to QA and QC NMAS, as at April 2022.⁹⁹ BHMAC did, however, say that an update of the NMAS was currently underway in order to comply with current IMAS and apply good practices.¹⁰⁰ Any revision to the NMAS should be clearly written, so that all implementing partners in all parts of BiH can update their SOPs accordingly, and a QA process is required to ensure NMAS are being applied in all instances. The review and updating of the relevant NMAS need not be a protracted process and should not prevent efficient release of mined areas in the interim.

84 Ibid., Table, p. 24.

85 Ibid., p. 11; and BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2020, undated draft, p. 11.

86 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, pp. 6 and 19–22.

87 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form C.

88 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 11 March 2021.

89 Email from Mirjana Marić, BHMAC, 21 September 2022.

90 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022.

91 Emails from Muamer Husilović, FACP, 12 March 2021; Clement Meynier, MAG, 11 March 2021; and Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 14 March 2021.

92 Email from Muamer Husilović, FACP, 18 March 2022.

93 Emails from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 14 March 2021; and Charles Frisby, NPA, 2022.

94 Email from Suad Baljak, UNDP, 15 September 2017; and Darvin Lisica, "Application of targeted technical survey in Bosnia and Herzegovina: development of advanced techniques for data collection and assessment, standard operating procedures and building of national capacities", NPA, undated.

95 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 5 and 10; and 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 7.

96 BiH, National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025", pp. 6 and 11; and 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 17.

97 Emails from Clement Meynier, MAG, 28 July 2021; and Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

98 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 14 March 2021.

99 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

100 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022.

NPA BiH said it will continue to work to promote the IMAS and compliance of the NMAS on land release, and to advocate for further development of national procedures to increase operational efficiency and increase confidence in the land release process itself.¹⁰¹ MAG believed that in general, the NMAS in BiH are suitable to enable the conduct of efficient land release. However, it continued to notice differences in the processes and approach to land release between the BHMAL regional offices.¹⁰² NPA also reported noticing differences in the understanding of the land release process between the three BHMAL regional offices which oversaw NPA's land release activities in 2021.¹⁰³

NPA believes it is crucial that the NMAS reflect the best practices in land release, and the need to ensure that they are implemented in a consistent manner throughout BiH. It is important that land release workshops are organised at all levels, including BHMAL headquarters and all BHMAL regional offices, to ensure consistent application of land release methodology.¹⁰⁴ International operators believe a renewed dialogue among the mine action community would strengthen the sector, including through TWG meetings between operators, the BHMAL, and its regional offices, sharing lessons learned, challenges, and successes across the different parts of BiH.¹⁰⁵

BHMAL has stated previously that it will ensure through quality management (QM) that all organisations accredited for technical survey and clearance comply with the principles of land release.¹⁰⁶ On 24–26 January 2022, BHMAL organised a workshop on improving the process of non-technical survey in BiH, in cooperation with UNDP and funded by Germany. The workshop, attended by BHMAL staff from head office and regional offices, included survey, QC and QA.¹⁰⁷

As previously mentioned, operators are assigned whole MSAs by BHMAL, and within an MSA BHMAL then designates specific areas (CHA or SHA polygons) for technical survey and clearance, and only BHMAL can conduct non-technical survey and release mined area through cancellation.¹⁰⁸ However, task dossiers for release of MSAs often lack fully comprehensive information. INGOs have found they also need to conduct additional survey/community liaison to collect and analyse additional or missing information to help provide additional information to BHMAL to supplement that contained in the task dossiers received.¹⁰⁹ Upon completion of technical survey and clearance by the operators, BHMAL then cancels uncontaminated area.¹¹⁰

NPA stressed the importance of BHMAL enabling operators to effectively plan and implement land release projects in line with international best practice. NPA believes this requires further development and adaptation of QA procedures for the overall land release process and the adaptation of non-technical survey procedures, where BHMAL should consider the possibility of allowing operators with adequate capacity and experience to take responsibility for cancellation through non-technical survey.¹¹¹

MAG said introduction of non-technical survey capacities, as an additional and required tool in the land release toolbox of operators, could possibly benefit the efficiency of the land release process, by alleviating the strain on critical BHMAL resources currently in charge of non-technical survey, including the preparation of land release projects. MAG believes operators should make recommendations for cancellation to the BHMAL, with the latter formally approving and therefore taking responsibility for the cancellation, as part of the overall site completion and handover process.¹¹²

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2021, a total of 26 organisations are accredited for mine action in BiH: four government organisations (Armed Forces of BiH, Federal Administration of Civil Protection (FACP), Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, and Brčko District Civil Protection); the Red Cross Society of BiH; nine commercial organisations (all national); and twelve NGOs (10 national and 2 international). Overall demining capacity totalled 1,200 persons in accredited organisations, comprising 850 deminers and 350 others (including team leaders, site leader, operational officers, QA officers, and dog trainers). The accredited organisations also have at their disposal a total of 28 accredited machines (for vegetation removal, ground disturbance, and removal of debris), 1,109 metal detectors, and 52 accredited mine/explosive detection dogs (MDDs). In addition, BHMAL has at its disposal 44 surveyors (i.e. 22 survey teams for non-technical survey and emergency marking), 8 officers for planning non-technical survey operations, and 12 inspectors and 28 senior clerks for QC/technical supervision/inspection.¹¹³

101 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

102 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 28 July 2021/14 March 2022.

103 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

104 Ibid.

105 Emails from Clement Meynier, MAG, 11 March 2021; and Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 14 March 2021.

106 Draft Demining plan in BiH for 2020, Annex 6 to the 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline extension request, August 2020, p. 20.

107 BHMAL website, "Workshop on improving the process of non-technical survey in BiH", 26 January 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3PfvM8G>.

108 Emails from Muamer Husilović, FACP, 12 March 2021; Clement Meynier, MAG, 11 March 2021; and Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 14 March 2021.

109 Email from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 14 March 2021.

110 Emails from Kristina Duric, NPA, 30 July 2021; and Clement Meynier, MAG, 11 March 2021.

111 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

112 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 14 March 2022.

113 Email from Mirjana Marić, Senior officer for analysis and reporting, BHMAL, 21 September 2022.

According to BHMAC's survey and clearance tables for 2021, technical survey and/or clearance of anti-personnel mines was conducted by the BiH Armed Forces, the Federal Administration of Civil Protection (FACP), the Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska (CPA RS), and other clearance organisations, comprising the NGOs (DEMIRA, MAG, Mine Detection Dog Centre (MDDC), Pro Vita, and Stop Mines) and commercial organisations (Detector, Heksogen d.o.o., In Demining N.H.O, N&N Ivsa, Udruga "Pazi mine", and UEM d.o.o.). International NGO, NPA, was not listed by BHMAC as having released mined area in BiH in 2021, most likely because BHMAC only reports land release data upon completion of tasks, but NPA did conduct survey and clearance of mined areas during the year.

Officially, only BHMAC can conduct non-technical survey and release mined area through cancellation. While MAG does not conduct its own non-technical survey in BiH, it does contribute to non-technical survey through its community liaison capacity in partnership with the BHMAC regional offices during technical survey and clearance operations, which includes identification and interviews with informants to collect additional evidence-based information.¹¹⁴ Similarly, NPA has one non-technical survey team, of two personnel, which conducts additional non-technical survey and reports information collated to BHMAC to feed into BHMAC's non-technical survey data.¹¹⁵

BHMAC began integrating drones into non-technical survey, following their use in the country assessment project. According to BHMAC, drone records help show confrontation line trenches, roads, areas in use, and other important elements for the development of demining projects. BHMAC uses targeted investigation during non-technical survey to identify risk areas.¹¹⁶

Clearance and technical survey operations in BiH include mechanical preparation of land, manual clearance, and the use of MDDs depending on the geographical conditions.¹¹⁷ Much of the remaining mined area is in hilly or mountainous terrain, which restricts the use of machinery.

The BiH Armed Forces' survey and clearance operations, which include use of machinery and explosive detection dogs, are fully engaged from March to November, and with reduced activity, predominantly in southern BiH, from December to February.¹¹⁸ Since 2010, NPA has increasingly focused on building the capacity of the Army's Demining Battalion. This involves direct operational support on clearance tasks of the Demining Battalion (including demining machines, MDDs, and detectors/locators. Through the close cooperation with national stakeholders, NPA BiH elaborated a

Capacity Development Plan for 2022–25, focused on capacity development of the BiH Demining Battalion as a key national resource, with a key role in the implementation of the BiH Mine Action Strategy. As per the plan, NPA's focus in 2022 is on the construction of the information management (IM) system of the BiH Armed Forces, including development of related SOPs, software solutions, and transfer of knowledge through training on the use and maintenance of the system. Implementation of the plan will depend on available funds.¹¹⁹

As at September 2022, the BiH Demining Battalion had 34 manual demining teams (which includes cluster munition remnant clearance), 4 MDDs, and 4 mechanical assets for ground preparation. Its humanitarian demining operations are financed through the budget of the MoD. In 2021, the Battalion also received a donation from the United States of 200 protective visors and 250 demining protective vests. The head of the BiH Demining Battalion said that as the Battalion had received new personal protective equipment (PPE) and demining equipment, it now had sufficient quantities of both for its current capacity.¹²⁰

The State operators, the BiH Armed Forces' Demining Battalion and the Civil Protection entities, are good partners and have effective capacities, but have suffered from logistical challenges and equipment deficits, which can prevent them from working at full capacity.¹²¹ Deminers in the BiH Armed Forces, however, are forced to stop demining at the age of 38 (this upper limit, until recently, had been 35). This results in experienced deminers being forced to retire at a very early age and results in a high turnover of personnel.¹²²

FACP teams are spatially distributed to cover the entire territory of the Federation of BiH and are located in Bihac, Busovaca, Gorazde, Livno, Mostar, Orasje, Sarajevo, Travnik, Tuzla, and Zepce.¹²³ FACP's capacity for clearance and technical survey in 2021 remained constant compared to the previous year, at 4 technical survey teams totalling 32 personnel, 11 demining teams totalling 73 personnel, 4 MDD handlers with 4 dogs, and 2 mechanical assets.¹²⁴

According to FACP, BiH has not updated the standards related to explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) since 2002. FACP therefore initiated a revision of the standard and forwarded a new proposed draft standard for EOD and demolition of landmines and UXO, harmonised to the IMAS and national legislation, to BHMAC in September 2021. FACP believes that the training system for EOD would benefit from being strengthened in BiH's national standards to bring it in line with the CWA 15464:2005 system (the 'Humanitarian Mine Action – EOD Competency Standards', under CEN (European Committee for Standardization)).¹²⁵

114 Emails from Clement Meynier, MAG, 11 March 2021 and 14 March 2022.

115 Emails from Jonas Zachrisson, NPA, 14 March 2021; Kristina Duric, NPA, 30 July 2021; and Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

116 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022.

117 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 11.

118 Interview with Lt.-Col. Dzevad Zenunovic, Demining Battalion of the Armed Forces of BiH, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017.

119 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

120 Email from Lt.-Col. Dzevad Zenunovic, Demining Battalion of the Armed Forces of BiH, 21 September 2022.

121 UNDP, Draft Mine Action Governance and Management Assessment for BiH, 13 May 2015, p. 29; and interviews with Darvin Lisica, NPA, Sarajevo, 8 May 2017; Haris Lokvancic, Swiss Embassy, Sarajevo, 9 May 2017; and Tarik Serak, BHMAC, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017.

122 Interview with Lt.-Col. Dzevad Zenunovic, Demining Battalion of the Armed Forces of BiH, Sarajevo, 10 May 2017.

123 Email from the Cabinet, Federal Administration of Civil Protection, 29 August 2019.

124 Email from Muamer Husilović, FACP, 18 March 2022.

125 Emails from the Cabinet, Federal Administration of Civil Protection, 16 July 2020; and Muamer Husilović, FACP, 18 March 2022.

The teams of the FACP are trained in fast response to remove injured persons (both civilians and deminers) from mined areas. The FACP believes that accident and incident investigation, which is currently only conducted by BHMIC staff, should be expanded to include representatives from the wider demining community, such as the entities civil protection authorities, the Armed Forces, and EUFOR, to help improve the safety and quality of operations. According to the FACP, there are no obstacles to including representatives from the wider demining community in mine/demining accident investigation.¹²⁶

The Civil Protection of Brčko District only conducts removal and destruction of ERW, not mine clearance.

The CPA RS conducts survey and clearance of mines, CMR, and other ERW. In 2021, it deployed six manual teams, totalling approximately thirty-six deminers (some deminers were not engaged during the entire demining season), and two MDDs and dog handlers. In addition, a demining machine was deployed for one technical survey task in 2021.¹²⁷

MAG received operational accreditation in April 2017 and began technical survey and mine clearance operations in mid-May 2017.¹²⁸ In 2021, MAG maintained the same capacity as the previous year and deployed seven clearance teams, totalling 49 deminers, and four MDDs and dog handlers.¹²⁹

NPA deployed eight manual clearance teams (which also conduct technical survey), totalling forty-eight deminers; five MDDs and dog handlers; and two machines. NPA uses MDD for clearance and technical survey tasks, including targeted technical survey.¹³⁰ As mentioned above, since 2010, NPA has also focused on building the capacity of the Armed Forces Demining Battalion.

With the exception of MAG and NPA, clearance operators in BiH typically compete for international tenders in order to secure their funding. The UNDP evaluation suggested that this resulted in considerable capacity being 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.¹³¹ National demining NGOs, such as Stop Mines or Pro Vita, which are registered in a similar way to companies, potentially have capacity to quickly mobilise additional resources and up-scale operations.¹³²

The Demining Commission is responsible for considering the periodic re-accreditation of field operators, following the recommendation from BHMIC. Any delay in the appointment of the Demining Commission can therefore impact the re-accreditation process and have a knock-on impact on survey and clearance operations.¹³³ This was the case for a six-month period from late October 2019, when the previous Demining Commission's term expired, until 30 April 2020, when the new Demining Commission was put in place and accreditations could again be renewed or approved. The delay in appointing the new Demining Commission negatively impacted operations, in some instances preventing the initiation of clearance at the start of the demining season.¹³⁴

QC and QA is conducted by BHMIC.¹³⁵

Demining organisations, under the supervision of BHMIC, conducted a short training of demining personnel before the demining season and several courses were held for newly recruited personnel. According to the CPA RS, the lack of demining personnel in BiH is becoming a problem.¹³⁶

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2021

According to data provided to Mine Action Review by BHMIC, a total of more than 24km² of mined area was released in 2021, of which more than 0.69km² was cleared (see Table 4); more than 9.02km² of mined area was reduced through technical survey (see Table 3); and almost 14.43km² was cancelled through non-technical means (see Table 2).¹³⁷

This is an increase on the 16km² of mined area was released in 2020, of which almost 0.53km² was cleared; 2.57km² was reduced through technical survey; and almost 13.04km² was cancelled through non-technical means.¹³⁸

BHMIC said that the reason for the better land release results achieved in 2021, compared to 2020, was because in 2020 there had been delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, partly due to compliance with epidemiological measures and partly due to the involvement of government organisations to prevent further spread of the infection.¹³⁹

126 Emails from the Cabinet, Federal Administration of Civil Protection, 29 August 2019; and Muamer Husilović, FACP, 18 March 2022.

127 Emails from Milisav Pantic, CPA RS, 12 and 23 September 2022.

128 Interview with Josephine Dresner, MAG, Sarajevo, 9 May 2017; and email from Kathy Keary, MAG, 5 April 2018.

129 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 4 March 2022.

130 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 7 September 2022.

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

132 Email from Fotini Antonopoulou, EU, 18 September 2017.

133 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.

134 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, September 2020, p. 5.

135 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request, August 2020, p. 8.

136 Email from Milisav Pantic, CPA RS, 23 September 2022.

137 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMIC, 15 April 2022.

138 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMIC, 2 July 2021; and BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2020, undated draft.

139 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMIC, 15 April 2022.

According to BHMAC's Annual Mine Action Report for 2021, the number of mines discovered and destroyed during the year was 1,717 anti-personnel mines and 229 anti-vehicle mines.¹⁴⁰

As at September 2022, BHMAC had yet to submit its Article 7 transparency report covering the previous calendar year.

BHMAC only records survey and clearance data upon completion of tasks,¹⁴¹ which likely accounts for the differences between BHMAC land release data and operator land release data, as the latter is reported on an ongoing basis.

SURVEY IN 2021

In 2021, over 9.02km² was reported to have been reduced through technical survey (excluding 32,024m² cleared during technical survey, which is included in Table 4 on clearance), according to BHMAC data disaggregated by reduction in separate technical survey tasks and reduction in completed MSA tasks (see Table 3); and almost 14.43km² was cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 2). Survey output in 2021 was a small increase on the 2.57km² reduced and 13.05km² cancelled in 2020.¹⁴²

BHMAC is directly responsible for reporting all cancellation of mined areas in BiH and does so only upon completion of whole MSAs. The operators, therefore, do not report cancellation data to Mine Action Review. Furthermore, BHMAC only records reduction upon completion of tasks,¹⁴³ whereas operators report reduction on an ongoing basis. This accounts for the differences between BHMAC data and operator data for technical survey.

Table 2: Cancellation in 2021 by canton¹⁴⁴

Canton	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Bosnian-Podrinje	MAG	2,387,299
Canton 10	Udruga "Pazi mine"	3,501,293
Canton 10	Udruga "Pazi mine"	288,160
Posavina	Federal Administration of Civil Protection	1,001,178
Sarajevo	Mine Detection Dog Centre (MDDC)	282,535
Sarajevo	MDDC	867,701
Sarajevo	MDDC	1,499,853
Tuzla	MDDC	268,863
Tuzla	MAG	596,581
Tuzla	MAG	1,326,925
Zenica-Doboj	MDDC	308,395
Total BiH Federation		12,328,783
Total Republika Srpska	MDDC	2,098,408
Grand totals		14,427,191

¹⁴⁰ BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2021, undated, p. 35.

¹⁴¹ Email from Mirjana Marić, BHMAC, 21 September 2022.

¹⁴² Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 2 July 2021; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form C.

¹⁴³ Email from Mirjana Marić, BHMAC, 21 September 2022.

¹⁴⁴ Emails from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022 and Mirjana Marić, BHMAC, 21 September 2022. MAG did not report the amount cancelled through non-technical survey in 2021, as BHMAC is responsible for reporting cancellation and does so only upon completion of whole MSAs (email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 14 March 2022). NPA reported that it cancelled a total of 8,923,286m² through non-technical survey in of Central Bosnia and Una-Sana cantons and in Republika Srpska (email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022).

Table 3: Technical survey in 2021 (reduction in technical survey tasks and in MSAs)¹⁴⁵

Technical survey in 2021 in separate technical survey tasks that are not part of MSAs		
Canton	Operator	Area reduced* (m ²)
Bosnian-Podrinje	Federal Administration of Civil Protection	95,360
Canton 10	Federal Administration of Civil Protection and Armed Forces of BiH	185,261
Herzegovina-Neretva	Detektor, Federal Administration of Civil Protection, and Armed Forces of BiH	378,795
Sarajevo	Federal Administration of Civil Protection and Armed Forces of BiH	264,636
Central Bosnia	"In Demining" N.H.O. and N&N Ivša	59,922
Zenica-Doboj	"In Demining" N.H.O. and Federal Administration of Civil Protection	121,097
Tuzla	Armed Forces of BiH	66,246
Una-Sana	Armed Forces of BiH	147,947
Total BiH Federation		1,319,264
Total Republika Srpska	Armed Forces of BiH, Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, and Stop mines	645,758
Total Brcko District	Detektor, N&N Ivša, Armed Forces of BiH, Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska, UEM d.o.o., and DEMIRA	1,229,074
Subtotals		3,194,096
Technical survey in 2021 in completed MSAs tasks		
MSA Name		Area reduced (m ²)
Orahovica Jug		417,076
Donji Svilaj - Novi Grad		97,381
Orahovica		747,524
Lendici		383,943
Zuc		126,291
Oras Planje		207,552
Nebocaj		358,694
Donji Malovan		1,021,101
Gora-Kamenica		558,868
Istocni Stari Grad		226,519
Mlinista - Paripovac		1,094,064
Nekopi		590,596
Subtotals		5,829,609
Grand totals		9,023,705

*Excludes 32,024m² cleared during technical survey, which is included in Table 4.

145 Emails from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMIC, 15 April 2022; and Mirjana Marić, BHMIC, 6 October 2022. BHMIC only records technical survey data upon completion of tasks, which likely accounts for the differences between BHMIC and operator reduction data, as the latter is reported on an ongoing basis. FACP reported that it reduced 724,868m² in 2021 across the cantons of Central Bosnia, Herzegovina-Neretva, Posavina, Sarajevo, Zenica-Doboj, and Una-Sana (email from Muamer Husilović, FACP, 18 March 2022). MAG reported that it reduced 1,481,079m² across the cantons of Herzegovina-Neretva and Zenica-Doboj, and in Republika Srpska (email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 28 July 2021/4 March 2022). NPA reported that it reduced 1,587,346m² across the cantons of Central Bosnia and Una-Sana, and in Republika Srpska (email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022).

FACP reported that it reduced 724,868m² in 2021 across the cantons of Central Bosnia, Herzegovina-Neretva, Posavina, Sarajevo, Zenica-Doboj, and Una-Sana.¹⁴⁶

MAG itself reported having reduced a total of 1,481,079m² across Herzegovina-Neretva, Zenica-Doboj, and Republika Srpska in 2021. MAG said that there was an increase in the size of area reduced compared to the previous year, due to area reduction for each investigation (polygon) occurring near the end of the land release process in BiH. A number of large investigations (polygons) were started in 2020 but only completed in 2021, allowing reduction then.¹⁴⁷

NPA reported that it reduced 1,587,346m² in 2021, across the cantons of Central Bosnia and Una-Sana, and in the Republika Srpska.¹⁴⁸

CLEARANCE IN 2021

According to data reported by BHMAC to Mine Action Review, a total of 694,856m² of mined area was cleared in 2021. This included 60,166m² during clearance in clearance tasks (i.e. separate clearance tasks that are not part of MSAs) in 2021, during which 83 anti-personnel mines were destroyed; 32,020m² cleared in technical survey tasks, during which 144 anti-personnel mines and 10 anti-vehicle mines were destroyed; and 602,670m² of clearance in MSAs, during which 2,869 anti-personnel mines and 31 anti-vehicle mines were destroyed (see Table 4).¹⁴⁹ (The 2,869 anti-personnel mines and 31 anti-vehicle mines destroyed during clearance of MSAs corresponds to MSAs completed and certified in 2021, and therefore the number of mines found does not only refer to those found in 2021.)¹⁵⁰ According to BHMAC's Annual Mine Action Report for 2021, the number of mines discovered and destroyed in the 2021 calendar year was 1,717 anti-personnel mines and 229 anti-vehicle mines.¹⁵¹

The 2021 total clearance output is an increase on the total of 529,455m² of mined area was cleared in 2020, during which 1,342 anti-personnel mines and 22 anti-vehicle mines were cleared.¹⁵²

Table 4: Mine clearance in 2021 ("clearance tasks", technical survey tasks, and MSAs) (BHMAC data)¹⁵³

Mine clearance in 2021 in separate clearance tasks that are not part of MSAs				
Canton	Operator	Area cleared in CHAs (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Bosnian-Podrinje	Federal Administration of Civil Protection	7,789	3	0
Sarajevo	Armed Forces of BiH	16,459	58	0
Tuzla	Heksogen d.o.o, Pro Vita, and Armed Forces of BiH	4,959	0	0
Zenica-Doboj	Federal Administration of Civil Protection and Detektor	21,540	18	0
Total BiH Federation		50,747	79	0
Total Republika Srpska	In Demining N.H.O and Civil Protection Administration of Republika Srpska	9,419	4	0
Subtotals		60,166	83	0

146 Email from Muamer Husilović, FACP, 18 March 2022.

147 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022.

148 Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

149 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022.

150 BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2021, undated, p. 11.

151 Ibid., p. 35.

152 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 2 July 2021.

153 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022; and BiH draft Mine Action Report for 2021, undated, pp. 14–16. BHMAC only records clearance data upon completion of tasks, which likely accounts for the differences between BHMAC and operator clearance data, as the latter is reported on an ongoing basis. FACP itself reported that it cleared 41,727m² across the cantons of Bosnian-Podrinje, Canton 10, Posavina, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Una-Sana, and Zenica-Doboj, with the destruction of 91 anti-personnel mines (email from Muamer Husilović, FUCZ, 18 March 2022). MAG reported that it cleared 591,641m² of mined area (including 300,861m² of lanes cleared during technical survey) in the cantons of Herzegovina-Neretva and Zenica-Doboj, and in Brcko District and Republika Srpska, with the destruction of 493 anti-personnel mines and 4 anti-vehicle mines (email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 14 March 2022). NPA reported that it cleared 78,441m² across the cantons of Central Bosnia and Una-Sana, and in Republika Srpska, with the destruction of 249 anti-personnel mines and 28 UXO (email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022).

Mine clearance in 2021 in technical survey tasks				
Canton	Operator	Area cleared in CHAs (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Bosnian-Podrinje	Federal Administration of Civil Protection	1,006	11	0
Herzegovina-Neretva	Armed Forces of BiH	9,336	23	0
Canton 10	Federal Administration of Civil Protection and Armed Forces of BiH	7,867	31	3
Sarajevo	Federal Administration of Civil Protection and Armed Forces of BiH	1,203	6	0
Central Bosnia	N&N Ivša	5,200	2	0
Una-Sana	Armed Forces of BiH	1,546	33	0
Zenica-Doboj	Federal Administration of Civil Protection	298	1	0
Total BiH Federation		26,456	107	3
Total Brcko district	N&N Ivša, Armed Forces of BiH, Federal Administration of Civil Protection, UEM d.o.o., and UG Demira	4,365	31	6
Total Republika Srpska	Armed Forces of BiH, Federal Administration of Civil Protection, and Stop mines	1,199	6	1
Subtotals		32,020	144	10

Mine clearance in 2021 in completed MSA tasks				
Canton	Operator	Area cleared in CHAs (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed
Canton 10	Pazi mine	138,143	637	13
Canton 10	Pazi mine	272,504	1,049	4
Bosnian-Podrinje	MAG	34,511	158	0
Posavina	Federal Administration of Civil Protection	397	1	0
Sarajevo	MDDC	1,100	8	0
Sarajevo	MDDC	5,970	35	0
Sarajevo	MDDC	22,462	174	8
Tuzla	MDDC	1,704	20	0
Tuzla	MAG	23,797	89	2
Tuzla	MAG	58,565	467	0
Zenica-Doboj	MDDC	7,016	45	1
Total BiH Federation		566,169	*2,683	*28
Total Republika Srpska	MDDC	36,501	186	3
Subtotals		602,670	2,869	31
Grand totals		694,856	3,096	41

AP mine = anti-personnel mine AV mine = anti-vehicle mine

*Corresponds to MSAs completed and certified in 2021, and therefore the number of mines found does not only refer to those found in 2021.¹⁵⁴

According to BHMAL, the total cleared area in 2021 in which no mines were found was 11,531m².¹⁵⁵

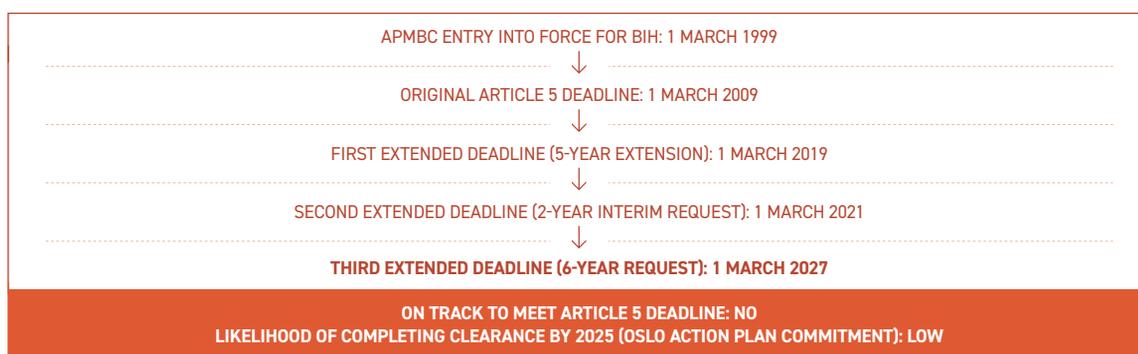
As previously mentioned, the clearance data for 2021 reported to Mine Action Review by operators is on an ongoing basis for tasks in progress, rather than upon completion of tasks (as is reported by BHMAL).

The FACP itself reported that it cleared 34,206m² in 2021, across the cantons of Bosnian-Podrinje, Canton 10, Posavina, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Una-Sana, and Zenica-Doboj, with the destruction of 91 anti-personnel mines.¹⁵⁶

MAG reported that it cleared 591,641m² of mined area (including 300,861m² of lanes cleared during technical survey) in the cantons of Herzegovina-Neretva and Zenica-Doboj, and in Brcko District and Republika Srpska, with the destruction of 493 anti-personnel mines and 4 anti-vehicle mines.¹⁵⁷

NPA reported that it cleared 78,441m² across the cantons of Central Bosnia and Una-Sana, and in Republika Srpska, with the destruction of 249 anti-personnel mines and 28 UXO. All of the areas in which NPA conducted clearance in 2021 contained mines.¹⁵⁸

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC and in line with the third extension (for six years) of its clearance deadline, BiH is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2027. BHMAL said that based on the existing capacities, it expected to complete clearance by its deadline.¹⁵⁹

The 2020 extension request, granted by the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties, was for the purpose of non-technical and technical survey "to better define the precise perimeter of mined areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina".¹⁶⁰ It is, however, assumed that there was an accidental omission of land release through clearance, and that BiH intends to complete both survey and clearance of remaining mined areas by the requested deadline. Prior to this, BiH had been granted a second extension request in 2018, for an interim two-year extension to 1 March 2021, during which it conducted a "country assessment", to better understand the remaining anti-personnel mine contamination and plan more effectively for its release.¹⁶¹

Over the last five years, BiH has released less than 4km² thorough clearance (see Table 5). Since the ten-year extension to its initial Article 5 deadline, granted in 2008, BiH has continuously fallen far short of its annual land release targets. The painfully slow pace of survey and clearance has resulted in lack of confidence in the national mine action programme from donors but also from people living in mine-affected communities, who felt disillusioned that the mines have not been cleared.¹⁶²

According to BiH's 2020 Article 5 extension request, BiH planned to release 91.3km² in 2021 (75.1km² through cancellation; 15.4km² through reduction, and 0.9km² through clearance, although this sums to 91.4km², and not 91.3km² as reported in the extension request).¹⁶³ BiH's actual land release output in 2021 fell significantly short of this and only totalled 18km² (with more than 0.69km² cleared, almost 3.23km² reduced, and 14.43km² cancelled).¹⁶⁴

155 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAL, 15 April 2022.

156 Email from Muamer Husilović, FACP, 20 September 2022.

157 Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 14 March 2022.

158 Ibid.

159 Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAL, 15 April 2022.

160 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request estimate, August 2020, p. 17.

161 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 19; and "BiH Statement on Interim Request for Extension to the Deadline for Fulfilling Obligations as per Article 5", 7 June 2018, Geneva.

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

163 2020 Revised Article 5 deadline Extension Request estimate, August 2020.

164 From Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAL, 15 April 2022.

Table 5: Five-year summary of anti-personnel mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2021	*0.69
2020	*0.53
2019	0.54
2018	0.92
2017	0.69
Total	3.37

* Combined technical survey and clearance output for MSAs

BHMAC said that in 2021, there were no significant delays caused by COVID-19.¹⁶⁵ FACP also reported that COVID-19 did not significantly affect its operations in 2021.¹⁶⁶ MAG said that it continued to maintain health protocols throughout the year and the impact of COVID-19 was limited on MAG's operations in 2021, aside from a five-day stand-down of one team in February after deminers tested positive for COVID.¹⁶⁷ NPA said COVID-19 did not affect anti-personnel mine survey or clearance operations in 2021. NPA BiH continuously adhered to national public health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and maintained an internal contingency plan to protect health and wellbeing of all NPA personnel and people living in the area of operations.¹⁶⁸

In order to ensure that completion of mine clearance by BiH's Article deadline of 2027 becomes an achievable goal, key challenges must be addressed. While harmonising the NMAS with IMAS will certainly be beneficial in enhancing survey and clearance operations, the current NMAS do already allow for efficient, evidence-based land release. However, BHMAC (both headquarters and its regional offices) must ensure stronger coordination and a more consistent and efficient approach to land release operations by all stakeholders across the country, including more sustained and efficient mobilisation of strategic national demining resources such as the Demining Battalion and Civil Protection entities, and an enabling operating environment. This will, however, require political will and strong oversight and commitment from BHMAC, the Demining Commission, and their superiors in the government, which is lacking at present.

It is disappointing that no Country Coalition meeting took place in 2021. BiH should fully embrace and use the Country Coalition formed with Germany, as a useful platform to help strengthen coordination and actively address and overcome the ongoing challenges in Article 5 implementation. In order to achieve completion, BiH must sustain national and international funding to its Mine Action Programme, and mechanisms such as the Country Coalition and Board of Donor meetings are an essential element in achieving this.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

The National Mine Action Strategy for 2018–2025 requires the development of a strategy for the management of residual contamination by 2022. As at April 2022, the strategy had still to be developed.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 15 April 2022.

¹⁶⁶ Email from Muamer Husitović, FACP, 18 March 2022.

¹⁶⁷ Email from Clement Meynier, MAG, 14 March 2022.

¹⁶⁸ Email from Charles Frisby, NPA, 11 April 2022.

¹⁶⁹ Email from Ljiljana Ilić, BHMAC, 22 March 2022.