

# SERBIA



## PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

	2016	2015
Problem understood	5	5
Target date for completion of cluster munition clearance	4	4
Targeted clearance	4	4
Efficient clearance	4	4
National funding of programme	4	4
Timely clearance	4	4
Land release system in place	4	4
National mine action standards	4	4
Reporting on progress	5	4
Improving performance	4	4
<b>PERFORMANCE SCORE: POOR</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>

## PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

In 2016, Serbia cleared a small amount of area contaminated by cluster munition remnants (CMR), but was hindered by a lack of international funding. A re-assessment by the Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) into the potential for increased use of technical survey, taking into account Serbia's context-specific challenges and risk management requirements, is needed to improve land release efficiency and may help Serbia attract greater international support.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Serbia should identify funding, including from national sources, for clearance of CMR and then clear all remaining contamination as soon as possible.
- The SMAC should reconsider its decision to conduct full clearance in areas where technical survey would be far more efficient in defining the actual hazardous area.
- Serbia should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.

## CONTAMINATION

As at 1 April 2017, Serbia had 10 areas covering a total of 0.83km<sup>2</sup> confirmed to contain CMR, while a further 13 areas over 2km<sup>2</sup> are suspected to contain CMR (see Table 1).<sup>1</sup> This compares to reported contamination as at the end of 2015 of 11 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) over a total of 0.89km<sup>2</sup>, and 14 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) over 2.24km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 1: CMR contamination by municipality (as at 1 April 2017)<sup>3</sup>**

Municipality	CHAs	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	SHAs	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Raška	1	190,359	0	0
Sjenica	7	427,866	9	511,211
Tutin	0	0	1	514,682
Niš	0	0	1	119,344
Bujanovac	2	210,881	1	272,015
Užice	0	0	1	585,268
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>829,106</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2,002,520</b>

CMR contamination results from North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) air strikes in 1999. According to Serbia, NATO cluster munitions struck 16 municipalities: Brus, Bujanovac, Cacak, Gadžin Han, Knic, Kraljevo, Kuršumljija, Leposavic, Niš city-Crveni Krst, Niš city-Medijana, Preševo, Raška, Sjenica, Sopot, Stara Pazova, and Vladimirci.<sup>4</sup> In late 2014, a suspected area was newly identified in Tutin, a municipality not previously thought to be contaminated by CMR.<sup>5</sup>

Contamination in Serbia has a socio-economic impact as well as posing a humanitarian threat, impeding safe access to forest products, cattle, and mushroom picking. These represent main sources of income in some of the most underdeveloped municipalities, including Bujanovac, Sjenica, and Tutin. In addition, CMR-contamination impacts transport infrastructure, as well as the development of tourism.<sup>6</sup>

### Other Explosive Remnants of War and Landmines

Serbia is also contaminated by other unexploded ordnance (UXO), both on land and in its waterways, and by anti-personnel mines.<sup>7</sup>

## PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

According to a Government Decree on Protection against Unexploded Ordnance, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior, acts as the national mine action authority (NMAA).<sup>8</sup> The NMAA is responsible for developing standard operating procedures; accrediting demining operators; and supervising the work of SMAC.<sup>9</sup>

SMAC was established on 7 March 2002, with a 2004 law making it responsible for coordinating demining; collecting and managing mine action information (including casualty data); and surveying SHAs. It also has a mandate to plan demining projects, conduct quality control (QC) and monitor operations, ensure implementation of international standards, license demining organisations, and conduct risk education.<sup>10</sup> A new director of SMAC was appointed by the Serbian government in the autumn of 2015.<sup>11</sup>

SMAC reported that in 2016, restructuring resulted in a greater proportion of operational posts more related to survey, project development, and quality control.<sup>12</sup>

## Standards

According to SMAC, survey and clearance operations in Serbia are conducted in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).<sup>13</sup>

National mine action standards (NMAS) were said to be in the final phase of development as at September 2015.<sup>14</sup> In February 2016, however, the new director of SMAC reported that the NMAS were still being developed, and due to more pressing priorities within SMAC, would not be finalised until 2017.<sup>15</sup> In April 2017, SMAC reported that along with the relevant national authorities, it was in the process of establishing a commission to develop national standards/national standing operating procedures to define methods and techniques for humanitarian demining in Serbia.<sup>16</sup> However, this process has been hindered due to lack of capacity.<sup>17</sup>

Under new directorship, SMAC has reassessed its land release methodology to prioritise full clearance over technical survey of hazardous areas.<sup>18</sup> This does not correspond to international best practice, and is an inefficient use of valuable clearance assets. In February 2016, the new director of SMAC reported to Mine Action Review that while SMAC supports the use of high quality non-technical survey to identify areas suspected of containing CMR, it will fully clear these areas, rather than using technical survey to more accurately identify the boundaries of contamination.<sup>19</sup>

SMAC's preferred land release methodology, in particular with regard to addressing mine contamination, remained the same as at May 2017. However, in response to the stated preference of international donors for technical survey above clearance, where appropriate, SMAC is prepared to conduct technical survey, in a form adjusted to the context of Serbia.<sup>20</sup>

## Operators

SMAC does not itself carry out clearance or employ deminers but does conduct survey of areas suspected to contain mines, CMR, or other ERW. Clearance is conducted by commercial companies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which are selected through public tender procedures executed by ITF Enhancing Human Security.<sup>21</sup>

In 2016, a total of 30 deminers and 4 mine detection dogs (MDDs) were deployed for CMR clearance in Serbia. This comprised one demining team of eight deminers and four MDDs, plus a machine for mechanical preparation in Raska municipality, and two demining teams of 22 deminers deployed in Sjenica municipality.<sup>22</sup>

Non-technical survey in 2016 was conducted by SMAC staff.<sup>23</sup> Previously, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) personnel seconded to SMAC conducted all survey in Serbia,<sup>24</sup> but NPA did not conduct any survey in Serbia in 2016.<sup>25</sup>

An explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) department within the Sector for Emergency Management, in the Ministry of Interior, responds to call-outs for individual items of ERW discovered, and is also responsible for the demolition of items found by SMAC.<sup>26</sup>

## Quality Management

SMAC and its partner organisations undertake quality assurance (QA) and QC of clearance operations in mine- and explosive remnants of war (ERW)-affected areas.<sup>27</sup> On every clearance project, SMAC QC and QA officers are said to sample between 5% and 11% of the total project area, depending on project complexity and size.<sup>28</sup>

## Information Management

SMAC does not use the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) at present, but has been discussing for some time the possibility of the system's future installation with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).<sup>29</sup>

## LAND RELEASE

In 2016, a total of 0.25km<sup>2</sup> of CMR-contaminated area was released by clearance, while 0.09km<sup>2</sup> was reduced by technical survey.<sup>30</sup>

### Survey in 2016

In 2016, a total of 92,150m<sup>2</sup> was reduced by technical survey.<sup>31</sup> This represents a decrease compared to 2015, when 1.4km<sup>2</sup> was reduced by technical survey and 1km<sup>2</sup> was cancelled by non-technical survey.<sup>32</sup>

**Table 2: Clearance of CMR-contaminated areas in 2016<sup>35</sup>**

Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )	Submunitions destroyed
Saturnia, Belgrade Stop Mines, Pale, BiH	1	69,912	9
Saturnia, Belgrade Stop Mines, Pale, BiH	1	177,120	Clearance in progress
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>247,032</b>	<b>9</b>

### Clearance in 2016

In 2016, two areas totalling 247,032m<sup>2</sup> were cleared by contractors (see Table 2).<sup>33</sup> This represents an increase in output over 2015, when 0.18km<sup>2</sup> was cleared.<sup>34</sup>

### Deminer Safety

One deminer was injured in August 2016, during a CMR clearance project on Kopaonik mountain in the municipality of Raška.<sup>36</sup>

## ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

Serbia is not a party or signatory to the CCM and therefore does not have a specific clearance deadline under Article 4 of the Convention. Nonetheless, Serbia has obligations under international human rights law to clear CMR as soon as possible.

In 2010–13, significant progress was made in clearing CMR-contaminated areas, but since then progress has stalled. Less than 5km<sup>2</sup> in total has been cleared in the last five years (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Clearance of CMR in 2012–16<sup>37</sup>**

Year	Area cleared (km <sup>2</sup> )
2016	0.25
2015	0.18
2014	0.29
2013	2.40
2012	1.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.54</b>

Since 2015, Serbia has been allocating funds for demining. In 2016, around €150,000 was allocated to SMAC from the Serbian national budget for salaries and running costs, in addition to its survey activities, in addition to €100,000 for survey and clearance operations.<sup>38</sup>

According to SMAC, progress in CMR clearance is contingent on funding. In April 2017, Serbia predicted that if adequate funds for implementation of survey and clearance projects were secured, CMR clearance could be finished in three years.<sup>39</sup> However, if international funds are not secured for 2017, SMAC will prioritise its national funding towards mine-related survey and clearance operations, rather than CMR.<sup>40</sup>

SMAC is funded by Serbia.<sup>41</sup> According to SMAC, clearance progress is contingent on funding. In March 2015, Serbia predicted that if adequate funds for implementation of survey and clearance projects were secured, CMR clearance could be finished in three years.<sup>42</sup> However, in February 2016, SMAC's new director declined to predict when CMR clearance would be completed.<sup>43</sup>

- 1 Email from Slađana Košutić, Planning and International Cooperation Advisor, Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC), 6 April 2017.
- 2 Email from Jovica Simonović, Director, SMAC, 26 July 2016.
- 3 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 4 Statement of Serbia, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) intersessional meetings (Standing Committee on Mine Clearance), Geneva, 21 June 2011; and interview with Petar Mihajlović, Director, and Slađana Košutić, International Cooperation Advisor, SMAC, Belgrade, 25 March 2011.
- 5 Email from Branislav Jovanovic, then Director, SMAC, 4 May 2015.
- 6 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 7 "Mine situation", SMAC, accessed 3 June 2016, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/minska-situacija.php>.
- 8 Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 70/13.
- 9 Emails from Darvin Lisica, Regional Programme Manager, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 6 May and 12 June 2016.
- 10 "Law of Alterations and Supplementations of the Law of Ministries", Official Gazette, 84/04, August 2004; interview with Petar Mihajlović, and Slađana Košutić, SMAC, Belgrade, 26 April 2010; and SMAC, "About us", accessed 3 June 2016, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/o-nama.php>.
- 11 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 12 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017; and interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 13 "About us", SMAC, accessed 3 June 2016, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/o-nama.php>.
- 14 Interview with Branislav Jovanovic, SMAC, in Dubrovnik, 10 September 2015.
- 15 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 16 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 17 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 18 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 21 Interview with Petar Mihajlović and Slađana Košutić, SMAC, Belgrade, 26 April 2010.
- 22 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Emails from Darvin Lisica, NPA, 13 April and 6 May 2016.
- 25 Email from Darvin Lisica, NPA, 11 April 2017.
- 26 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 27 Email from Branislav Jovanović, SMAC, 4 May 2015.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Email from Darvin Lisica, NPA, 13 April 2016; and responses to questionnaire by Miroslav Pisarevic, Project Manager, Humanitarian Disarmament Programme, NPA, Serbia, 19 March and 30 June 2015.
- 33 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 34 Emails from Jovica Simonović, Director, SMAC, 26 July 2016, and Darvin Lisica, NPA, 13 April 2016.
- 35 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017; and interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 36 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 37 See Mine Action Review and Cluster Munition Monitor reports on Serbia covering 2012–15.
- 38 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017; interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and "About us", SMAC, accessed 10 April 2017, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/o-nama.php>.
- 39 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 40 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 41 Email from Branislav Jovanovic, SMAC, 23 March 2015; and "About us", SMAC, accessed 3 June 2016, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/o-nama.php>.
- 42 Email from Branislav Jovanovic, SMAC, 23 March 2015.
- 43 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.