

# AFGHANISTAN

**ARTICLE 4 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2022**  
 (UNCLEAR WHETHER ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE)

<b>PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE</b>	2017	2016
<b>Problem understood</b>	7	7
<b>Target date for completion of cluster munition clearance</b>	6	6
<b>Targeted clearance</b>	7	7
<b>Efficient clearance</b>	7	7
<b>National funding of programme</b>	5	5
<b>Timely clearance</b>	7	6
<b>Land-release system in place</b>	7	7
<b>National mine action standards</b>	7	7
<b>Reporting on progress</b>	6	6
<b>Improving performance</b>	6	5
<b>PERFORMANCE SCORE: AVERAGE</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>6.3</b>

## PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

Afghanistan resumed clearance of CMR-affected areas in 2017 after a year in which funding constraints and insecurity stalled progress towards meeting its clearance targets and Article 4 deadline under the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Most of Afghanistan's clearance, though, concerned an area in which no submunitions were found.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) should set out a detailed schedule and timelines for clearing cluster munition remnant (CMR)-affected sites.
- DMAC should ensure the consistency of data across all reporting formats.

## CONTAMINATION

Afghanistan reports CMR contamination in four provinces which, at the end of 2017, was reported to affect a total area of 6.86km<sup>2</sup>. Nearly half of the contamination was in a single district of north-eastern Takhar province. The other affected provinces were Nangahar, Paktia, and Wardak. Despite some CMR clearance undertaken in 2017, DMAC said one CMR hazard affecting 1.86km<sup>2</sup> was added to the database during the year.<sup>1</sup>

All the identified sites are affected by remnants of the 1,228 cluster munitions containing some 248,056 BLU-97B submunitions dropped by the United States between October 2001 and early 2002.<sup>2</sup> CMR are said to affect less than 7,000 people, but block access to grazing and agricultural land.<sup>3</sup>

CMR contamination, however, is more widespread than the clearly defined US cluster strike sites. Soviet forces used cluster munitions during the decade-long war of

resistance to the Soviet-backed government and demining operators continue to find unexploded submunitions on demining and battle area clearance tasks.<sup>4</sup>

### Other Explosive Remnants of War and Landmines

Afghanistan's CMR problem is a tiny part of explosive contamination totalling 640km<sup>2</sup> at the end of 2017, including 206km<sup>2</sup> of mined area containing anti-personnel mines, 302km<sup>2</sup> of mined area containing anti-vehicle mines, and 112km<sup>2</sup> of explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination, which includes NATO firing ranges. The total did not include extensive contamination by victim-activated improvised landmines which account for a major share of Afghanistan's munition casualties (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Afghanistan for further information).<sup>5</sup>

## PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) is led by DMAC, which comes under the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority. It received operational support in planning, prioritising and information management from UNMACA, which changed its name to "UNMAS in support of DMAC" (UNMAS/DMAC) in November 2016.<sup>6</sup>

DMAC staff increased to 159 working in 15 departments by the end of 2017 after personnel transitioned from UN to DMAC contracts.<sup>7</sup> Department heads were due to continue as UNMAS advisers to DMAC until also coming under DMAC management by the end of June 2018.<sup>8</sup> A total of 240 personnel were still employed in UNMAS/DMAC in 2017 but the number was due to fall to 209 in 2018.<sup>9</sup>

The MAPA employed a total of 7,156 people at the end of 2017 but the sector has been facing severe financial constraints and the number was due to fall to 5,376 in 2018.

### Strategic Planning

At the end of 2016, the government circulated a proposal to donors to complete clearance of all 17 identified sites of CMR contamination, at a cost of \$1.85 million, but the plan did not attract donor funding.<sup>10</sup>

### Legislation and Standards

There is no national law governing CMR survey and clearance.

### Quality Management

DMAC had 26 QA/QC staff working in 7 regions, which conducted 2,399 monitoring visits in 2017. The staff reported 57 major and 59 minor non-conformities.<sup>11</sup>

### Information Management

DMAC uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. In 2017, there were problems of consistency in reporting on contamination and clearance.

### Operators

Clearance of explosive contamination is conducted by five long-established national and two international NGOs and a total of 18 national and international commercial companies.<sup>12</sup> The Afghan NGOs are: Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC), Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA), Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA), Mine Detection and Dog Centre (MDC), and the Organization for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation (OMAR). AREA, a national non-governmental organisation (NGO) accredited in 2014, became operational at the end of 2016.

The most active international NGOs are Danish Demining Group (DDG) and The HALO Trust. Since 2012, the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) has had a small operation near the border with Tajikistan. Janus

Demining Afghanistan (previously Sterling International) has been contracted to undertake clearance of firing ranges used by militaries serving with the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force.<sup>13</sup>

## LAND RELEASE

### Survey in 2017

No area of CMR was reported to have been released by survey in 2017.

### Clearance in 2017

DMAC had not reported any CMR clearance for 2016, but told Mine Action Review that in 2017 two operators cleared four CMR-affected sites and a total area of 2,497,625m<sup>2</sup>. This did, though, encompass clearance by

AREA of 1,625,000m<sup>2</sup> (including 225,200m<sup>2</sup> subsurface clearance), which destroyed 77 UXO items but no submunitions. DAFA conducted subsurface clearance of three areas covering 872,625m<sup>2</sup> destroying 108 submunitions and 295 other UXO items.<sup>14</sup> In addition, HALO Trust destroyed three submunitions and twelve items of UXO in the course of clearing a battle area of 328,650m<sup>2</sup>.<sup>15</sup> Afghanistan's Article 7 transparency report for 2017 reports a total clearance figure of 2,887,952m<sup>2</sup>, with 418 "devises" destroyed.<sup>16</sup>

## ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

Under Article 4 of the CCM, Afghanistan is required to destroy all CMR in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2022.

Afghanistan's Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Article 5 deadline extension request in 2012 provided for clearance of all ERW, including unexploded submunitions, by the end of 2020.<sup>17</sup> CMR clearance has been overshadowed by funding constraints, competing priorities, and insecurity, which has hindered access to some CMR-affected areas, but DMAC continues to assert that with financial support Afghanistan can meet its Article 4 deadline in 2019, more than two years ahead of its Article 4 deadline.<sup>18</sup>

**Table 1: Five-year summary of CMR clearance<sup>19</sup>**

Year	Area cleared (km <sup>2</sup> )
2017	2.8
2016	0
2015	0
2014	0
2013	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.8</b>

1 Email from DMAC, 11 April 2018. The estimate of remaining CMR contamination does not appear consistent with newly recorded contamination added to the database and the extent of reported clearance.

2 Human Rights Watch and Landmine Action, *Banning Cluster Munitions: Government Policy and Practice*, Mines Action Canada, Ottawa, May 2009, p. 27.

3 Email from DMAC, 11 April 2018; Statement of Afghanistan, CCM intersessional meetings (Clearance and Risk Education Session), Geneva, 15 April 2013.

4 Interviews with MACCA implementing partners, Kabul, May 2013.

5 Email from DMAC, 11 April 2018; UNAMA, "Afghanistan, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Annual Report 2017", February 2018, pp. 31–32.

6 Email from Mohammad Wakil Jamshidi, Chief of Staff, UNMAS/DMAC, 16 May 2017.

7 Email from /DMAC, 11 April 2018. DMAC said staff responsibilities included Front office, Communications, Operations, Plan and program, Human Resources, Finance, ICT, Logistics, Mine Risk Education, Quality Management, Regional offices, Security, Transport, Victim Assistance and NATO Firing Ranges.

8 Email from Abdul Qudos Ziaee, UNMAS/DMAC, 10 May 2017.

9 Email from DMAC, 11 April 2018.

10 "Proposal for Complete Removal of the Known Cluster Sub-munitions Contamination in Afghanistan", UNMAS/DMAC, undated but 2016.

11 Email from DMAC, 11 April 2018.

12 Ibid.

13 Email from MACCA, 10 May 2011.

14 Email from DMAC, 11 April 2018.

15 Email from Calvin Ruysen, Desk Officer, Central Asia Desk, HALO Trust, 16 May 2018.

16 CCM Article 7 Report (for 2017), p. 15.

17 APMB Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 29 March 2012, p. 194.

18 Interview with Mohammad Shafiq Yosufi, Director, DMAC, in Geneva, 16 February 2018.

19 See Cluster Munition Monitor and Mine Action Review reports on clearance in Afghanistan covering 2013–16.