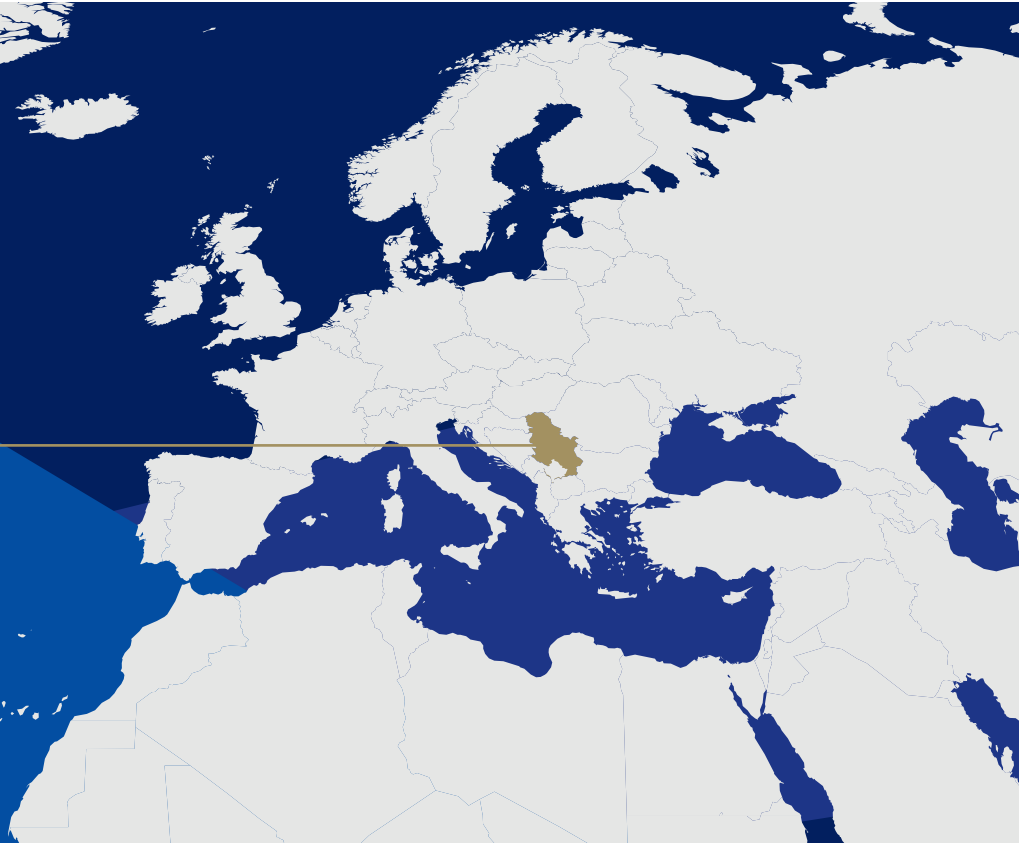


SERBIA



PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

	2017	2016
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	5
Improving performance	4	4
PERFORMANCE SCORE: POOR	4.2	4.2

PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

In 2017, Serbia cleared a small amount of area contaminated by cluster munition remnants (CMR), but continued to be hindered by a lack of international funding. Furthermore, the Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) reports that, for the time being, any funding which is secured will be used to prioritise survey and clearance of anti-personnel mines, to contribute towards meeting its obligation under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC). A re-assessment by the SMAC of the potential for increased use of technical survey 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, and elaborate an action plan for clearance of CMR and then clear all remaining contamination as soon as possible.
- Serbia should consider using its armed forces to conduct clearance of CMR as well as unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), which they already clear.
- The SMAC should reconsider its decision to prioritise full clearance over technical survey, 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

At the end of 2017, Serbia had five areas confirmed to contain CMR covering almost 0.64km², while a further nine areas over almost 1.9km² are suspected to contain CMR (see Table 1).¹ This compares to reported

contamination as at the end of 2016 of 10 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) over a total of 0.83km², and 13 areas suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) over 2.0km².²

Table 1: CMR contamination by municipality (as at end 2017 and unchanged as at March 2018)³

Municipality	Village	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Bujanovac	Borovac	2	210,881	1	281,169
Niš	Medoševac	0	0	1	119,344
Raška	Lisina	1	190,359	0	0
Sjenica	Čedovo	2	89,450	2	74,474
Sjenica	Vapa	1	338,416	2	94,496
Tutin	Istočni Mojstir	0	0	1	514,682
Užice	Bioska	0	0	1	585,268
Totals		6	829,106	8	1,669,433

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, Kuršumlija, Leposavic, Niš city-Crveni Krst, Niš city-Medijana, Preševo, Raška, Sjenica, Sopot, Stara Pazova, and Vladimirci.⁴ In late 2014, a suspected area was newly identified in Tutin, a municipality not previously thought to be contaminated by CMR.⁵

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.⁶

Other Explosive Remnants of War and Landmines

Serbia is also contaminated by other UXO, including aircraft bombs, both on land and in its internal waterways, and by anti-personnel mines (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Serbia for further information).⁷

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).⁸ The NMAA is responsible for developing standard operating procedures (SOPs); accrediting demining operators; and supervising the work of SMAC.⁹

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.¹⁰

As from 1 January 2014, according to a Government Decree on Protection against Unexploded Ordnance, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior, is responsible for accrediting demining operators. Previously, the SMAC was responsible for accrediting demining operators.¹¹

A new director of SMAC was appointed by the Serbian government in the autumn of 2015,¹² and as at 2018, SMAC had a total of eight staff.¹³ SMAC reported that, in 2016, restructuring resulted in a greater proportion of operational posts.¹⁴

Strategic Planning

The Government of Serbia adopts SMAC's workplan, as well as the Annual Report on its work.¹⁵

Legislation and Standards

According to SMAC, survey and clearance operations in Serbia are conducted in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).¹⁶

National mine action standards (NMAS) were said to be in the final phase of development as at September 2015.¹⁷ 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 and SOPs to define methods and techniques for demining in Serbia.¹⁸ However, this process has been hindered due to lack of capacity,¹⁹ and as at April 2018, the development of the NMAS was still "in progress".²⁰

Under new directorship, SMAC has reassessed its land release methodology to prioritise full clearance over technical survey of hazardous areas.²¹ This does not correspond to international best practice, and is an inefficient use of scarce 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.²²

SMAC's position on its preferred land release methodology remained the same as at April 2018. However, SMAC is prepared to conduct technical survey, in a form adjusted to the context of Serbia, in response to the stated preference of international donors for technical survey above clearance, where appropriate.²³ While no CMR survey took place in 2017, the reduction of mined area through technical survey in the municipality of Bujanovac in 2017²⁴ could indicate SMAC's greater willingness to adopt more efficient land release practices.

Quality Management

SMAC and its partner organisations undertake quality assurance (QA) and QC of clearance operations in mine- and ERW-affected areas.²⁵ Previously, on every clearance project, SMAC QC and QA officers were said to sample between 5% and 11% of the total project area, depending on project complexity and size.²⁶ However, due to limited SMAC quality management capacity, as at April 2018, the total project area to be sampled by SMAC had been reduced to 3%.²⁷

Information Management

SMAC does not use the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) at present, but in 2015 had been discussing for some time the possibility of the system's future installation with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).²⁸ There had been no further developments as at April 2018.²⁹

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. Demining is conducted by commercial companies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which are selected through public tender procedures executed by ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF), through international donations.³⁰

The Ministry of Interior issues accreditation valid for a period of one year. In 2018, 14 companies/organisations were accredited for demining: seven from Serbia, four from Bosnia and Herzegovina, two from Croatia, and one from Russia.³¹

In 2017, a total of 30 deminers from the demining company Saturnia D.O.O. Belgrade, were deployed for CMR clearance in Serbia.³² SMAC expected survey and clearance capacity to increase in 2018, pending approval of additional funding.³³

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.³⁴

LAND RELEASE

In 2017, a total of almost 0.18km² of CMR-contaminated area was released by clearance. No CMR-contaminated area was released by survey.³⁵

Survey in 2017

No area of CMR was reported to have been released by survey in 2017.³⁶ This represents a decrease compared to 2016, when 0.9km² was reduced by technical survey.³⁷

However, following new findings in Bujanovac municipality, SMAC conducted non-technical survey which resulted in an increase in the total size of SHA by 9,154m².³⁸

In 2017, however, SMAC did report that it used data obtained from unmanned aerial vehicles during its process to develop CMR clearance and technical survey projects.³⁹

Clearance in 2017

In 2017, one area totalling 177,120m² was cleared by contractors in the municipality of Sjenica (see Table 2).⁴⁰ This represents a decrease in output over 2016, when 247,032m² was cleared.⁴¹

Table 2: Clearance of CMR-contaminated areas in 2017⁴²

Municipality	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	Submunitions destroyed	Other UXO destroyed
Sjenica	Saturnia D.O.O. Belgrade	5 CHAs (in one micro-location/village)	177,120	76	1
Total		5	177,120	76	1

SMAC reported that while it had prepared several CMR clearance projects, these could not be implemented due to lack of funding in 2017.⁴³

SMAC did not have available data on the number or type of individual items of ERW destroyed by the EOD department within the Sector for Emergency Management during spot tasks in 2017.⁴⁴

Deminer Safety

One deminer was injured in 2017 during the CMR clearance project in the municipality of Sjenica, when a BLU 97 A/B submunition exploded during excavation. The deminer, who was reported to be following SOPs and was wearing personal protective equipment, sprained his right ankle and was scratched above the right eye.⁴⁵

ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

Serbia is not a state party 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 4km² in total has been cleared in the last five years (see Table 3).

Table 3: Five-year summary of CMR clearance⁴⁶

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2017	0.18
2016	0.25
2015	0.18
2014	0.29
2013	2.40
Total	3.30

SMAC is funded by Serbia, including staff costs and running costs, as well as survey activities, development of project tasks for demining/clearance of areas contaminated by mines, submunitions and other UXO, follow-up on implementation of project tasks, and QA and QC of demining.⁴⁷ Around €150,000 per year is allocated to the work of SMAC from the national state budget.⁴⁸ In addition, the UXO disposal work of the Sector for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Interior is also state funded.⁴⁹

In 2017, SMAC received \$200,000 of United States Department of State funding, through ITF, for a clearance project in the municipality of Sjenica. As at April 2018, however, SMAC had not secured any additional funding for the next demining period.⁵⁰

Since 2015, Serbia has also been allocating national funds for survey and clearance, with roughly €100,000 allocated per year.⁵¹ In 2017, the €100,000 allocated from the national budget for technical survey in the municipality of Bujanovac, was matched by US\$283,330 of US Department of State funding through ITF.⁵² However, the national funding allocated in 2017 was allocated entirely for mine-related operations, rather than CMR, as part of Serbia's efforts to comply with its obligations under Article 5 of the APMBC.⁵³

In 2018, the Serbian Government allocated double the amount of funds for demining operations, and it continues to seek international funding.⁵⁴ However, for the time being, and due to funding restraints, SMAC will continue to prioritise its national funding towards mine survey and clearance, rather than CMR.

In the draft of its latest APMBC Article 5 deadline extension request, dated 31 March 2018, Serbia includes a workplan for completion of CMR and UXO clearance by 2023, at a predicted total cost of €20 million, but CMR are not disaggregated from other ERW.⁵⁵ Progress in CMR clearance is contingent on funding. Serbia predicts that if adequate funds for implementation of survey and clearance projects were secured, CMR clearance could be finished in three years.⁵⁶

- 1 Email from Slađana Košutić, Planning and International Cooperation Advisor, SMAC, 12 April 2018; and Second APMBC Article 5 Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 24.
- 2 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 3 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April and 5 July 2018; and Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 24. Baseline contamination as at the end of 2017, compared to the end of 2016, does not reconcile, taking into account land release during 2017. This is because contamination in Sjenica municipality as at the end of 2016 incorrectly contained five SHAs totalling 342,241m² which were included by error, as SMAC has confirmed to Mine Action Review.
- 4 Statement of Serbia, APMBC intersessional meetings (Standing Committee on Mine Clearance), Geneva, 21 June 2011; interview with Petar Mihajlović, Director, and Slađana Košutić, SMAC, Belgrade, 25 March 2011; and SMAC, "About us", accessed 3 June 2016, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/o-nama.php>.
- 5 Email from Branislav Jovanović, SMAC, 4 May 2015.
- 6 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 7 "Mine situation", SMAC, accessed 5 May 2018, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/minska-situacija.php>; email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018; and Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018.
- 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 second APMBC Article 5 Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 17.
- 11 Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 17.
- 12 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 13 Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 16.
- 14 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017; and interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 15 Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 16.
- 16 "Mine Situation, April 2018", SMAC, accessed 12 April 2018, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/minska-situacija.php>.
- 17 Interview with Branislav Jovanović, SMAC, in Dubrovnik, 10 September 2015.
- 18 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 19 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 20 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 21 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 24 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 25 Email from Branislav Jovanović, SMAC, 4 May 2015.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 28 Email from Branislav Jovanović, SMAC, 4 May 2015.
- 29 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 30 Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 18.
- 31 Ibid., p. 17.
- 32 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.
- 35 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 38 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 5 July 2018.
- 39 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017.
- 42 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April and 5 July 2018.
- 43 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Data from Mine Action Review and Cluster Munition Monitor reports on Serbia covering 2013–16.
- 47 "About us", SMAC, accessed 3 June 2016; and Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 16.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 "Mine situation", SMAC, accessed 5 May 2018, at: <http://www.czrs.gov.rs/eng/minska-situacija.php>;
- 50 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 51 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 6 April 2017; interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 31 March 2018.
- 52 Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), 31 March 2018, p. 16.
- 53 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.
- 54 Second APMBC Article 5 Extension Request (draft), received 31 March 2018, p. 9.
- 55 Ibid., p. 33.
- 56 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018.