

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

State not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Not reported

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km²)	Release in 2023 (km²)
Clearance	Not reported	Not reported
Technical Survey	Not reported	Not reported
Non-Technical Survey	Not reported	Not reported
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	2023
AP Mines destroyed	Not reported	Not reported

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2024:

■ Not reported

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Available data on contamination and release of anti-personnel (AP) mined areas in Iran continue to be extremely limited. Although Iran is contaminated by AP and anti-vehicle (AV) mines, mainly as a result of the 1980–88 war with Iraq, there are several reports and allegations of use of AP mines by Iran as part of border security systems in the last few years. Evidence suggests that limited clearance of AP mined area took place in 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Iran should immediately halt all use of AP mines and accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Iran should clear AP mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, consonant with its obligations under international human rights law.
- Iran should report publicly on the extent and location of mined areas and prepare a plan for their clearance and destruction.

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Iran Mine Action Center (IRMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- IRMAC
- Iranian Army
- Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps
- Commercial operators

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Iran is contaminated by AP and AV mines, mainly as a result of the 1980–88 war with Iraq, but there are also reports and allegations of use of AP mines by Iran as part of border security systems in recent years. The extent of the remaining mined areas is unknown. Mined areas are concentrated in five western provinces bordering Iraq.

According to the Iran Mine Action Center (IRMAC), the initial estimation of undefined “contamination” in Iran was 42,000km² (Ilam province, 17,000km²; Kermanshah province, 7,000km²; Khuzestan province, 15,000km²; Kurdistan province, 1,500km²; and West Azerbaijan, 1,500km²); which by February 2020 had reportedly been reduced by “90%”.¹

There are also said to be additional mined areas around military bases.² Some of the remaining contamination is said to be in hard-to-reach areas, including “impassable mountainous areas” or in marshes.³ Türkiye has also recorded AP mined area in the province of Ağrı, which borders Iran to the east. In its APMBC Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2025, Türkiye notes that, regarding 94 minefields that it had planned to address in Ağrı, after the construction of a border wall, “the mined areas located in Ağrı were not included in [the] total number” as they “remained on the Iranian side, and the operation of this field was not completed”.⁴

A further complication in understanding the extent of mined area in Iran pertains to reports of continuing casualties in areas that were supposed to have been cleared, calling into question whether mine clearance has been conducted to international standards. For example, in 2012, Kermanshah province was declared “free from landmines” but several people were killed or injured by landmines only a few days after the announcement, which led the government to

consider re-clearing the area.⁵ As recently as March 2024, it was reported that a mine in Kermanshah had detonated while a farmer was grazing cattle, resulting in one fatality.⁶ A June 2024 online article noted that “evidence and testimonies from citizens in the western provinces and border regions” do not “align” with frequent claims by government media that more than 90 per cent of mined areas have been cleared. The article claims that Iranian citizens “often encounter landmines not just in former military zones but also in their everyday environments like pastures, forests, and villages”, declaring that “kolbars⁷ in the western provinces are frequently injured or killed by landmine explosions”. It suggested that of the 230km border between Iraq and Kurdistan province in Iran, 136km remained mined.⁸

At least one recent explosive ordnance (EO) incident injuring border force personnel has been documented. In May 2025 a soldier serving in Iran’s border guard was seriously injured in a “landmine explosion” in the Piranshahr border area. The article stated that Iran’s state-run Mehr News Agency had confirmed the incident.⁹

New use of AP mines by Iran in recent years has been documented. In a November 2024 article, Humanity & Inclusion (HI) includes Iran in a list of countries having used AP mines between the middle of 2023 and October 2024.¹⁰ Another June 2024 article claims that Iran’s security strategies for the borders and western provinces have been re-laying landmines, stating that “local witnesses have reported seeing IRGC [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps] forces planting landmines at borders such as those near Baneh and Piranshahr”,¹¹ which is in West Azerbaijan province. No dates are given for when this new use may have occurred.

1 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation, available at: <http://bit.ly/38ALojt>; and presentation by Mr. Pourbagher, Deputy Director of IRMAC, National Directors Meeting, Geneva, 12 February 2020.

2 “Landmines Still a Major Menace in Iran”, *Atlantic Council*, 25 August 2016, at: <https://bit.ly/3dVTKp2>.

3 “The ominous legacy of war still takes victims”, *Iranian Labour News Authority*, 22 May 2020, at: <https://bit.ly/351UfBk>.

4 2025 Türkiye Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.

5 F. Aman, “Landmines Still a Major Menace in Iran”, Blog post, *Atlantic Council*, 25 August 2016, at: <https://bit.ly/3dVTKp2>.

6 “Decades-Old Landmine Kills One in Iran”, *Iranwire*, 28 March 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3M2LpkQ>.

7 Kolbars are workers who, legally or illegally, carry goods on their back across the borders of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Türkiye.

8 “Government Claims Contradicted as Landmine Danger Persists in Western Iran”, *Iranwire*, 24 June 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3yGKljx>.

9 “Piranshahr: Iranian soldier severely injured by landmine explosion”, Report, Hengaw Organisation for Human Rights, 2 May 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/44gHppM>.

10 HI, “Landmines: 22% more victims in one year”, 20 November 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/464zxKd>.

11 “Government Claims Contradicted as Landmine Danger Persists in Western Iran”, *Iranwire*, 24 June 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3yGKljx>.

As well as incidents along Iran's western border areas, outlined above, there have been reports of EO incidents along Iran's eastern borders, as a result of people entering new minefields, particularly in the Saravan district of Sistan and Baluchestan province, along Iran's borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. No information is available on exactly when these minefields were laid. Landmine Monitor lists multiple reports by media outlets and others in late 2023 and early 2024, which allege new mine victims and/or new use of AP mines by the IRGC in those two provinces.¹² No estimate of AP mined area in this eastern border province or in any province outside of Iran's western border provinces is available.

The Iranian government reportedly asserts that it uses landmines as "defence tools" to guard its borders and deter movement of drug traffickers.¹³ New mines are said to have

been laid "in limited quantities and in specific areas of the borders".¹⁴ It is not possible to state with certainty which organisations or units of Iran's defence and security forces have laid AP mines in recent years, as responsibility for border control in Iran passes periodically from one force or unit to another in any given location (for example, from the IRGC to the army or police). It is said that, when responsibility from one party is handed over to another, if the minefields have already been laid by the current unit, it will hand over its maps to the next unit.¹⁵ The extent to which an accurate and comprehensive database of new minefields in Iran is maintained is also not known. Customary international humanitarian law (IHL), however, requires that minefields should be recorded wherever possible.¹⁶

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Iran is also believed to have cluster munition remnants (CMR) remaining on its territory (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2025* report on Iran for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

IRMAC was established as the national mine action centre in 2005, taking the place of a Mine Action Committee within the Ministry of Defence. In 2014, IRMAC reported that it was responsible for planning, data, managing survey, procurement, and the accreditation of demining operators. It was also tasked with setting standards, providing training for clearance operators, concluding contracts with demining operators, and ensuring quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) of their operations. IRMAC also coordinates mine action operations with the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Interior, the Management and Planning Organisation of Iran, and other relevant ministries and organisations, and handles international relations.¹⁷

Several IRMAC staff are believed to be serving or former military personnel, including its director, while others are civilians employed by the Ministry of Defence. At the time of writing, Mine Action Review had not been able to establish if this detailed description of IRMAC's role and responsibilities remains up to date.

As part of an ongoing mine action programme in Iran, which also includes victim assistance and mine risk education, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has undertaken technical training of mine action actors in co-operation with IRMAC, though no dates for this have been

given. In 2020, the ICRC reported signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for a mine action partnership with IRMAC, which included support to Iran for safe procedures of humanitarian demining.¹⁸

Iran has engaged in activities to promote regional and international co-operation for mine action in recent years. In 2019, Iran opened its first international demining training centre in Tehran, with the aim of offering courses to other countries in the region struggling with mine contamination.¹⁹ In 2022, an MoU for mutual co-operation in mine action was signed between the national mine action centres of Iran and Armenia.²⁰ In June 2023, it was reported that demining would begin in the near future on the Armenian side of the border with Iran.²¹

Iran's Minister of Defence stated in April 2023 that "Iran has acquired the knowledge to produce demining equipment and is ready to use its resources to sweep land mines." He added that Iran "is also ready to help other countries and relevant international organisations."²² In May 2025, Mine Action Review made renewed inquiries to IRMAC about its mine action programme and AP mined area, and mine survey and clearance in Iran. IRMAC declined to provide information on these issues.

12 Landmine Monitor, "Iran", accessed 19 June 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/44jBnWp>.

13 "On the Borders That Divide Kurdistan, Landmines Devastate Communities", Gordyaen Benyamin Jermai Kurdish Peace Institute, 4 June 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4lbn0Jl>.

14 Ali Asghar Faridi, "Landmines: Silent Killers Lurking in the Earth's Core", *Our Law Magazine*, undated but accessed 19 June 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/3T0qoe7>.

15 Ibid.

16 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Customary IHL Rule 82: "Recording of the Placement of Landmines", at: <https://bit.ly/4eaDCPh>.

17 IRMAC PowerPoint Presentation, Tehran, 9 February 2014; and IRMAC, "Presentation of IRMAC".

18 F. Arabpour (Weapon Contamination Coordinator, ICRC delegation in Tehran), "ICRC Mine Action activities in the I.R. of Iran", Presentation to the 23rd International Meeting of National Mine Action Program Directors and United Nations (UN) Advisors, Geneva, 11–14 February 2020, at: <https://bit.ly/43EjVZD>.

19 "1st International Humanitarian Demining Training Center opens in Tehran", *Mehr News Agency*, 12 November 2019, available at: <http://bit.ly/2C7wRzG>.

20 "Iran, Armenia ink MoU on humanitarian demining cooperation", *Iran Press News Agency*, 19 September 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3WyeHpJ>.

21 Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 6 June 2023.

22 "Defense Minister: Iran ready to help other countries for demining", *Iran Press News Agency*, 4 April 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3S0lwYz>.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The extent to which gender and diversity are mainstreamed into mine action in Iran is not known.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

It is not known whether Iran has a national mine action standard on environmental management and/or a policy on environmental management. It has been reported, however, that Iran's Ministry for the Environment does regulate environmental practices in mine action to some extent.²³

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

It is not known to what extent IRMAC is able to disaggregate AP mine contamination and clearance from that relating to other explosive ordnance. It was reported in 2023 that IRMAC's database is accurate and that operators provide regular activity reports to IRMAC on both humanitarian and commercial mine action projects.²⁴

In 2020, IRMAC reported having a geographic information system (GIS), web-based, integrated information management system, which integrates information on quality, safety, and

the environment.²⁵ In 2022, IRMAC launched an application for smartphones, which is reported to contain all data from historical and current clearance operations and intended to provide mine action organisations with a comprehensive view of contaminated and cleared areas identified by IRMAC. The application is also said to contain information about explosive incidents and is updated on a regular, even daily, basis. The application is available to operators and interested parties upon request.²⁶

PLANNING AND TASKING

It is not known whether Iran has a national mine action strategy or an annual work plan for the survey and clearance of AP mines or agreed and specified criteria for the prioritisation of tasks.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In 2023, Mine Action Review was informed that Iran has national mine action standards in place,²⁷ though these are said to not strictly follow the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).²⁸ No information was available on quality management (QM) procedures for clearance in Iran, although it was reported in 2023 that a subsidiary of IRMAC performs QA and QC of commercial demining.²⁹ IRMAC undertakes two

main types of clearance activity: shallow and deep.³⁰ After Kermanshah province was declared "free from landmines" in 2012 (but several people were killed and injured by landmines only a few days later), an Iranian Member of Parliament commented that the clearance had not respected the minimum depth set in national standards.³¹

23 Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 26 April 2023.

24 Email from Reza Amaninasab, Director, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 23 March 2023.

25 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation, available at: <http://bit.ly/38ALojt>; and presentation by Mr Pourbagher, IRMAC, 23rd International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and UN Advisers, Geneva, 11–14 February 2020.

26 Emails from Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 23 March 2023; and Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 26 April and 6 May 2023.

27 Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 6 June 2023.

28 Information provided on condition of anonymity by two separate sources in 2023 and 2025.

29 Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 26 April 2023.

30 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation, 2020, p. 5.

31 "Landmines Still a Major Menace in Iran", Blog post, Atlantic Council, 25 August 2016.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

At the time of writing, no up-to-date, detailed information was available on Iran's survey and clearance capacity. In March 2024, the Deputy of Iran's Armed Forces spoke of the army Engineering Units' ongoing efforts to "clear millions of mines and bullets from contaminated border areas", with a "significant number of personnel" dedicated to this.³²

IRMAC combines the roles of regulator and operator and, in 2019, was reported to have demining teams and support staff deployed in five affected provinces. In Kurdistan province, IRMAC was conducting verification, mainly through mechanical clearance. IRMAC also responds to calls from the local community reporting landmines or items of unexploded ordnance (UXO). In 2019, demining capacity in Kurdistan province was believed to stand at only around 12 personnel, a reduction on earlier capacity. Available demining assets, such as mechanical assets, vary from province to province.³³

Commercial mine and ERW clearance in Iran is conducted to ensure that land is free from explosive ordnance before it is used for economic purposes or developed. It is separate to demining of areas known or suspected to contain explosive ordnance in order to make the land safe for civilian use, which comes under the remit of IRMAC. In a number of countries, commercial demining is applied to areas whether or not there is firm evidence of a threat from explosive ordnance.

In 2023, it was reported that the Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC), the development arm of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), contracts and monitors commercial operators conducting clearance of Iran's oil and gas producing areas, which are concentrated in the west and south-west of the country, close to the border with Iraq.³⁴ International operators are not believed to have been active in Iran since 2008.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2024

It is not known how much mined area was released in 2024, nor if any previously unrecorded areas of contamination were added to Iran's national database.

SURVEY IN 2024

It is not known how much mined area was released in 2024.

CLEARANCE IN 2024

It is not known how much mined area was cleared in 2024.

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

It is not possible to know when or even if Iran will become free of AP mines. In 2020, IRMAC listed the challenges it faces in clearance in Iran as follows – a high density of contamination; flooding in contaminated areas, which hinders access; displacement of munitions by flooding; displacement of mines to lower soil (up to six metres below the surface); the transformation [degradation] of mines, and vegetation.³⁵

32 "Over five million landmines cleared from contaminated border areas: commander", *Tehran Times*, 3 March 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4aHFag2>.

33 Information provided by Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for Development without Borders, September 2019.

34 Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 6 June 2023.

35 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation, 2020; and presentation by Mr Pourbagher, IRMAC, UN-National Directors Meeting, Geneva, 12 February 2020.