

KEY DATA

CLUSTER MUNITION CONTAMINATION:

NATIONAL ESTIMATE

10.02 km²

SUBMUNITION
CLEARANCE IN 2022

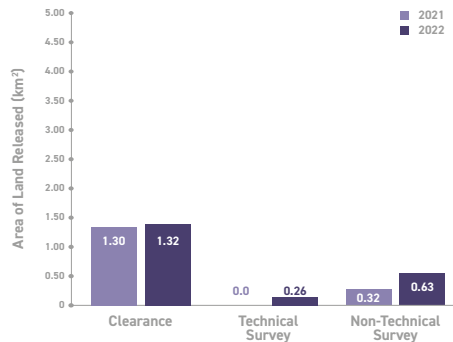
1.32 km²

SUBMUNITIONS
DESTROYED IN 2022

161

(INCLUDING 1 SUBMUNITION
DESTROYED DURING A
SPOT TASK)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- While formal accession to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) is not currently possible for Kosovo, as it is not recognised as a State by the depositary, Kosovo should submit a letter to the UN Secretary-General pledging to comply fully, on a voluntary basis, with the CCM and submit voluntary Article 7 reports on an annual basis.
- The Kosovo Mine Action Centre (KMAC) should seek to complete clearance of cluster munition remnants (CMR) as soon as possible and should elaborate a new mine action strategy with realistic annual targets and a timeline for completion.
- The Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) should be updated to the latest version, to have accurate and up-to-date information for the new mine action strategy.
- In addition to survey of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), Kosovo should also review the basis on which confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) are established. In particular, it should conduct survey to confirm evidence of CMR contamination before embarking on full clearance.

CLUSTER MUNITION SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Kosovo Mine Action Centre (KMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Kosovo Security Force (KSF)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- The Kosovo Force (KFOR), a NATO-led international peacekeeping force

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2022, Kosovo reported 10.02km² of CMR contamination across 42 hazardous areas, comprised of 25 CHAs covering a total of 4.95km² and 17 SHAs covering 5.06km² (see Table 1).¹ In a positive development, Kosovo has provided an estimate of CMR contamination that has been classified into CHAs and SHAs. The overall estimate has decreased by 1.34km² from 11.36km² at the end of 2021. In 2022, The HALO Trust (HALO)'s non-technical survey (NTS) project resulted in eight areas of previously unrecorded CMR contamination totalling 339,217m² being added to the mine action database.²

Table 1: Cluster munition-contaminated area reported by KMAC (at end 2022)³

District	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area	Total area (m ²)
South	3	375,000	4	610,000	7	985,000
North	6	2,182,951	3	3,395,089	9	5,578,040
Centre	4	800,000	1	250,000	5	1,050,000
East	3	790,000	1	50,000	4	840,000
West	9	806,614	8	757,375	17	1,563,989
Totals	25	4,954,565	17	5,062,464	42	10,017,029

Kosovo has a reasonable if imperfect understanding of CMR contamination remaining on its territory as a result of two decades of mine action, including surveys in 2013 and 2015. In September 2022, HALO completed an NTS project that was designed to create CHAs and SHAs, as this was not done during the 2013 survey; prior to the NTS project there was no classification of CHAs and SHAs in Kosovo.⁴ In 2023, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) was planning to conduct NTS of seven tasks in the municipalities of Leposavic, Mitrovica, and Zubin Potok, where no activities have been done since the initial NTS in 2015.⁵ KMAC believes that once these surveys are completed the baseline of contamination in the northern municipalities will be finalised.⁶

In 2013, HALO and KMAC conducted joint NTS of cluster munition strikes and mined areas across Kosovo, with the exception of four municipalities in the north. The survey identified 130 CHAs: 51 cluster munition strikes, covering 7.63km², and 79 mined areas over 2.76km².⁷ In 2015, NPA, in

coordination with KMAC and local municipality authorities, conducted NTS of the four northern municipalities.⁸ The NPA survey confirmed 8.9km² of CMR contamination in three of the four municipalities surveyed (Leposavic, Zubin Potok, and Zvecan). No CMR were found in the fourth (Mitrovica North). NPA believes that 83 cluster bombs were dropped in this region, dispersing a total of 17,041 submunitions.⁹

Contamination is primarily a result of conflict between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in the late 1990s; and between the FRY and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1999. During Operation Allied Force, NATO aircraft bombed 333 locations between 24 March and 10 June 1999, dropping 1,392 bombs that released more than 295,700 submunitions.¹⁰ FRY forces also used cluster munitions during the 1998–99 conflict in Kosovo. A large clearance programme followed in 1999 under a UN mandate, but this ended prematurely in 2001, leaving many CMR-contaminated areas still needing to be cleared.¹¹

OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND LANDMINES

Kosovo is also contaminated with anti-personnel mines (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Kosovo for further information). It remains affected by explosive remnants of war (ERW) other than CMR. Most ERW consists of unexploded aircraft bombs and items of abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) from the conflicts in the 1990s. However, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams continue to encounter items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) dating back to the Second World War.¹² The Kosovo Force (KFOR) and Kosovo Security Force (KSF) EOD teams regularly dispose of ERW in response to information provided by the public and demining organisations.¹³

1 Email from Ahmet Sallova, Head, KMAC, 24 April 2023.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Email from Michael Montafi, Programme Manager, HALO, 18 April 2023.

5 Email from Vanja Sikirica, Country Director, NPA, 19 June 2023.

6 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 May 2022.

7 A. Moore, HALO, "Action on cluster munitions in Kosovo", Side event, First CCM Review Conference, Dubrovnik, 10 September 2015.

8 NPA, "Cluster Munition Remnants in Northern Kosovo: non-technical survey of contamination and impact", September 2015; and email from Goran Peršić, NPA Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13 May 2016.

9 NPA, "Cluster Munition Remnants in Northern Kosovo: non-technical survey of contamination and impact."

10 ICRC, "Explosive Remnants of War, Cluster Bombs and Landmines in Kosovo", rev. June 2001, pp. 4 and 6; and HALO, "Action on cluster munitions in Kosovo", 10 September 2015, at: <https://bit.ly/30P1X70>.

11 A. Moore, HALO, "Action on cluster munitions in Kosovo", Side event, First CCM Review Conference, Dubrovnik, 10 September 2015.

12 UNMIK, "OKPCC EOD Management Section Annual Report 2008", Pristina, 12 January 2009, p. 4.

13 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 1 August 2012.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

KMAC is responsible for managing survey and clearance of mines and ERW throughout Kosovo. The Centre prepares an annual work plan in cooperation with the international demining non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and coordinates their operations along with the national demining teams of the KSF. It also coordinates survey, quality assurance (QA), risk education, public information, and victim assistance.¹⁴ KMAC's role and responsibilities as head of the national mine action programme under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence were established and institutionalised by Kosovo's 2012 Law on Humanitarian Demining.¹⁵

NGO operators in Kosovo report a constructive working relationship with KMAC and say there is an enabling environment for mine action in Kosovo with clear administrative processes in place for obtaining visas and annual accreditation.¹⁶

In 2022, the Kosovo Government provided €1.1 million in financial support to KMAC and to the KSF for mine and CMR clearance.¹⁷ Kosovo's current Mine Action Strategy, for 2019–24 sets an objective of ensuring greater financial stability through intensified fundraising efforts.¹⁸ In 2021, the United States (US) Department of State's Office of Weapon Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) approved a grant to NPA for land release of cluster munition-contaminated areas in northern Kosovo and for the Merdare Tunnel Project.¹⁹ HALO was also able to secure further funding, in May 2021, for three years from the US Government with support from KMAC.²⁰ In December 2022, the European Union (EU) committed to funding a joint project from NPA and HALO, which will run for 34 months, with €2 million assigned to NPA for CMR clearance and €1.9 million assigned to HALO for mine clearance.²¹

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Kosovo has a national mine action standard on the environment which was updated in line with International Mine Action Standard (IMAS) 07.13 on environmental management in mine action during 2022.²²

NPA Kosovo has conducted an initial desk assessment of the environmental impact of its operations with the highest impact coming from the use of very old diesel vehicles. NPA plans to partly mitigate this impact through the procurement of nine new vehicles and by minimising the number of vehicles used to transport equipment and staff during operations. NPA also has a single-use plastic policy in place and during 2023 planned to draft a separate standing operating procedure (SOP) on the environment.²³

In HALO's Kosovo programme there is no specific environmental SOP in place. An organisational environmental policy and global SOP are currently under review.²⁴

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Kosovo's mine action strategy 2019–24 stipulates that all mine action activities and assistance must reflect the needs of different ages and gender in a targeted and non-discriminatory manner, and that mine action and community liaison data are to be collected and systematically disaggregated according to sex and age.²⁵ Both KMAC and KSF have gender policies in place. KMAC reported that the KSF's gender policy aims to facilitate the consultation of all groups affected by mines and ERW, expressly women and children.

14 Ibid.

15 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 16 June and 3 July 2017; and Ministry of Defence, "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 3.

16 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023; and Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

17 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023.

18 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 14.

19 Email from Ahmet Sallova, Head, KMAC, 24 May 2022.

20 Email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

21 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

22 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023.

23 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

24 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

25 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 8; and email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

Table 2: Gender composition of operators in 2022

Organisation	Total staff	Women employed	Total staff in managerial or supervisory positions	Women in managerial or supervisory positions	Total staff in operational positions	Women in operational positions
KMAC	4	1	3	0	1	1
KSF	115	6	8	1	95	4
NPA	82	22	5	3	74	16
HALO	102	28	15	5	71	20

Kosovo's mine action strategy recognises the barriers that exist against equal employment in Kosovo society, including significant differences in employment levels between men and women, despite the number of men and women of working age being broadly similar. The Strategy notes that, as at 2019, more than four-fifths of women of working age were not employed in Kosovo's labour market, and less than one in eight has been employed annually over the past five years. The primary reasons given for female unemployment are child- and family-care obligations, which traditionally in Kosovo society fall on women.

The Strategy notes the efforts of mine action operators to overcome these challenges and barriers to employment, such as through the provision of childcare and parental leave, and gender-sensitive recruitment practices that encourage women to apply for positions traditionally seen as jobs for men. It further recalls the importance of employment of not only multi-gender, but also multi-ethnic survey and clearance teams and the particular benefits of recruitment in areas affected by high unemployment and poverty.²⁶

KMAC recognises that explosive ordnance contamination affects women, girls, men and boys differently and that gender specific mobility patterns, roles and responsibilities, mean that females and males of various ages and ethnic backgrounds will have different information on areas that are contaminated in their communities, and also different priorities for clearance and post-release land use.²⁷

HALO has a gender policy in place which was developed in consultation with the Kosovo Women's Network. The policy aims at both increasing the recruitment of women and at retaining existing female employees and includes provision for increased family leave and child-care allowances for those taking care of children, in order to remove barriers to women's employment.²⁸ HALO continues to explore options for attracting more female applicants to clearance operators vacancies such as creating a video showcasing female HALO employees and liaising with women's networks in Kosovo.²⁹

HALO continues to ensure that as many household members as possible are consulted during pre- and post-clearance surveys. It stated that it continues to ensure inclusion of women, children, and ethnic minorities in community liaison (CL) activities; there is always a CL Officer woman supporting the NTS teams, and senior management staff who are fluent in relevant languages are deployed for CL activities.³⁰

NPA has a target of 25% female staff which it achieved in 2022 with women making up 27% of the staff total. At the beginning of 2023, NPA recruited 32 new operational staff of whom half were women.³¹

NPA confirmed its survey and CL teams were gender balanced and ensured that the participation of all relevant social groups is always taken into account when conducting activities in local communities. The NPA Impact assessment team comprises two women: one Serbian and one Albanian speaker.³² NPA's efforts to recruit and train multi-ethnic survey and clearance teams have also been a critical factor in allowing the deployment of teams in areas of particular ethnic and political sensitivities, extending the reach of mine action operations in northern Kosovo, while also building bridges and friendships between the individual staff members and through their community liaison activities.³³ NPA has reported that in its areas of operations both Albanian and Serbian communities have been previously surveyed and NPA teams conducted clearance in all communities based on the approved annual operational plan.³⁴ At the end of 2022, approximately 60% of NPA staff were Albanian and 40% Serbian.³⁵

26 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, pp. 8–9.

27 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023.

28 Email from Olivia Meader, HALO, 22 May 2020.

29 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

30 Email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

31 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

32 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 25 April 2019.

33 Emails from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 25 April 2019 and 1 September 2020.

34 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 1 June 2022.

35 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

KMAC uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation version for its national mine action database. Data are disaggregated between mines, CMR, and other ERW.³⁶ Operators were positive in their assessments of the quality and accessibility of data contained in the database and of KMAC's information management systems in general.

Operators report to KMAC on a weekly basis; NPA reported all data collection forms are consistent and enable collection of the necessary data.³⁷ HALO reported similarly, and added that the database is checked in comparison to HALO's quarterly reports; once every task is completed or when KMAC agrees and signs off on a re-survey or survey conducted by an NTS team, the data is fed into IMSMA.³⁸

The land release data reported to Mine Action Review by clearance operators and the KMAC were more or less aligned. This is an improvement compared to previous years' reports, which typically contained greater discrepancies.

KMAC reported to Mine Action Review that at the time of writing the voluntary submission of Article 7 reports was under consideration.³⁹

PLANNING AND TASKING

Kosovo's Mine Action Strategy for 2019–24 declares that all known mined and CMR-contaminated areas will be addressed by the end of 2024, leaving only residual contamination to be managed. It contains annual projections for CMR clearance, including:

- All high-priority CMR tasks (four as at October 2018) to be cleared by 2020;
- All medium-priority CMR tasks (30 as at October 2018) to be cleared by 2022; and
- All low-priority CMR tasks (16 as at October 2018) to be completed by 2024.⁴⁰

In 2022, KMAC, with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), conducted a mid-term review of the strategy through a stakeholder workshop with active participation from KMAC, the KSF, HALO, and NPA. The greatest impediments to implementation of the strategy, identified during the mid-term review include:

- COVID-19 related lockdowns and restrictions.
- The discovery of previously unrecorded contaminated areas, which significantly increased the contamination baseline.
- Substantial delays in the multi-year EU grant that fund HALO and NPA activities until 2025.
- Operational assets, including survey and clearance equipment and vehicles, are old and need to be repaired or replaced.
- Seasonal factors mean that some areas can be accessed for only up to six months a year. Also, the geographic locations of some hazardous areas make them difficult to access throughout the year.⁴¹

In light of these challenges and that Kosovo is not on track to meet the objectives in its current strategy KMAC, in consultation with operators, will elaborate a new strategy in partnership with the GICHD that will include an updated contamination baseline, clearance objectives, and completion timeline.⁴² As at June 2023, the four high-priority CMR tasks identified in 2018 had been cleared but since then eight additional high-priority tasks have been identified by HALO that have not yet been cleared. The medium- and low-priority tasks have also not yet all been cleared and the remaining tasks will be addressed in the new strategy.⁴³

In 2019, HALO developed a new prioritisation system that considers the "community profile" for a task. This system draws on several factors, such as socio-economic status, planned land use, government development plans, and demographics. All information is collected from government and public data as well as from extensive community survey. New prioritisation information was added during 2021 and early 2022 through the NTS project by providing an individual rank for prioritisation based on set parameters.⁴⁴

36 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 30 April 2019.

37 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO, 1 May 2019; Terje Eldøen, NPA, 25 April 2019; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 1 June 2022.

38 Email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

39 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 8 June 2023.

40 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 12.

41 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023.

42 Ibid.

43 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 8 June 2023.

44 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO, 22 May 2020; and Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In 2022, the national mine action standard for land release in Kosovo was updated in accordance with IMAS and made available to operators in March 2023.⁴⁵ The terms “mine/ERW” were replaced by “explosive ordnance” throughout. The definition of “clearance” was updated, along with the addition of a section on IEDs and booby-traps.⁴⁶

In the beginning of 2023, HALO Kosovo reviewed and updated its SOPs on manual mine clearance, battle area clearance (BAC), and task management to reflect HALO’s global best practice.⁴⁷ In the SOP for BAC the primary search detector drill was amended to include both large-loop detectors and Schonstedt “one operator, one box” searches. The detector type will be chosen in discussion with KMAC, which will depend on the task terrain. In 2022, NPA made updates to its SOP for BAC and quality management system.⁴⁸ Both HALO and NPA use large-loop detectors on certain CMR tasks, which increases clearance productivity.⁴⁹

Since 2018, NPA has been implementing the Cluster Munition Remnants Survey (CMRS) methodology to carry out technical survey (TS) on CMR-contaminated areas in Kosovo. According to this methodology, which NPA has modified to reflect the specific conditions in Kosovo (and in line with the IMAS), operators are permitted to enter a cluster munition strike area and to walk on ground with subsurface contamination, increasing the efficiency of the survey process and offering the ability to accurately define confirmed hazardous areas.⁵⁰

The HALO Kosovo Programme continues to conduct its research and development activities to increase safety and operational efficiency and share innovative technological means. The Scorpion detection system from US Humanitarian Demining Research and Development Program (HDRD) was successfully trialled in 2019 and is now deployed to support BAC tasks. The Scorpion detector integrates a large-loop electromagnetic induction (EMI) sensor and caesium vapour total-field magnetometer and applies differential global positioning system (DGPS) for centimetre accuracy in targeting. It is essentially two integrated detectors mounted on a trolley, which can be deployed over an open task to identify desired magnetic anomalies in the ground.

The Scorpion system has the potential to significantly improve BAC productivity in certain areas.⁵¹ In 2022, HALO trained a new team of Scorpion operators, but the BAC tasks worked on during the year only had small, isolated areas suitable for the Scorpion. This reduced the overall productivity gain compared to the large, open areas available when the Scorpion was first deployed in 2020. In 2022, the average area cleared per day was 444m², which is higher than the average area cleared by other handheld detectors on BAC tasks during the year, but the Scorpion cannot be used in densely vegetated areas or on steep terrain.⁵²

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2022, Kosovo’s national mine action programme’s capacity consisted of two international operators, HALO and NPA, and a national operator, the KSF. The KSF, also provided a round-the-clock EOD emergency response. KFOR also supports the KSF and Kosovo Police with EOD response tasks and organising mine and ERW demolitions in Mitrovica and the north of Kosovo, including in NPA’s areas of operations.⁵³

Table 3: Operational NTS, TS, and clearance capacities deployed in 2022⁵⁴

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS personnel	Manual CMR clearance teams	Total CMR clearance personnel
KSF	0	0	3	45
KFOR	0	0	0	0
HALO	2	8	9	63
NPA	N/A	N/A	8	*54
Totals	2	8	20	162

* Average for 2022

45 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 May 2022.

46 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023.

47 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

48 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

49 Emails from Olivia Meader, HALO, 1 May 2019; and Terje Eldøen, NPA, 25 April 2019.

50 Interview with Terje Eldøen, NPA, Pristina, 5 April 2019; and email, 25 April 2019.

51 Email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 23 April 2021.

52 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

53 “Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo”, 4 April 2019, p. 4; and interview with Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, Pristina, 5 April 2019.

54 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 8 June 2023; Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023; and Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

HALO's operational personnel are cross-trained for mine clearance and BAC and can move readily between activities.⁵⁵ There was an increase in the number of clearance personnel deployed in 2022 due to the cessation of mine clearance funding in 2021 which led to a redeployment personnel to CMR clearance. HALO expected a decrease in the number of NTS personnel in 2023 as the NTS project was completed in 2022. Personnel will be redeployed as clearance teams.⁵⁶

NPA's area of operations in Kosovo cover the five northern municipalities of Leposavic, Mitrovica, Podujevo, Zubin Potok, and Zvecan.⁵⁷ There was a decrease in staff numbers in 2022 as six staff left but NPA expected an increase in 2023 of more than 30 operational staff due to new EU funding.⁵⁸

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2022

A total of 2.2km² of cluster munition-contaminated area was released in 2022, of which 1.32km² was cleared, 0.26km² was reduced through TS, and 0.63km² was cancelled through NTS.

SURVEY IN 2022

In 2022, 0.63km² was cancelled through NTS (see Table 4) and 0.26km² of CMR-contaminated area was reduced through TS (see Table 5).⁵⁹ This is an increase from the 0.32km² of CMR-contaminated area cancelled through NTS in 2021 while no land was released through TS.⁶⁰ The increase in area cancelled through NTS in 2022 was due to an increase in the number of tasks assessed compared to 2021.⁶¹ The increased reduction through TS by NPA in 2022 followed fade-out during BAC.⁶²

Table 4: Cancellation through NTS in 2022⁶³

District	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Gjakovë	HALO	103,484
Pejë	HALO	161,745
Prishtinë	HALO	96,836
Prizren	NPA	266,356
Totals		628,421

Table 5: Reduction through TS in 2022⁶⁴

District	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Prishtinë	NPA	132,881
Mitrovica	NPA	122,874
Totals		255,755

CLEARANCE IN 2022

In 2022, over 1.32km² of CMR-contaminated area was cleared, with the destruction of 160 submunitions (see Table 6).⁶⁵ This is a small increase from the nearly 1.30km² of CMR-contaminated area cleared in 2021, with the destruction of 43 submunitions.⁶⁶ In addition, KMAC reported that one submunition had been destroyed during spot tasks in 2022.⁶⁷

55 Email from Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

56 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

57 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 26 August 2020.

58 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

59 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023; Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023; and Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

60 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 May 2022; and Megan Dwyer, HALO, 11 May 2022.

61 Email from Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

62 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

63 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023; and Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

64 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

65 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023; Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023; and Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

66 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 14 June 2022; Megan Dwyer, HALO, 8 June 2022; and Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 May 2022.

67 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023.

Table 6: CMR clearance in 2022⁶⁸

District	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	Submunitions destroyed	Other UXO destroyed
Mitrovica	NPA	496,120	64	9
Prishtinë	NPA	387,175	11	42
Ferizaj	HALO	198,794	3	0
Gjakovë	HALO	58,205	29	0
Pejë	HALO	154,445	51	0
Prishtinë	HALO	28,555	2	0
Prizren	HALO	300	0	0
Spot tasks	KSF	N/A	1	0
Totals		1,323,594	161	51

In addition, KSF was reported to have cleared a total of 1.16km² of BAC, with 91,000m² cleared in the east with 81 items of UXO destroyed, and 1,070,000m² cleared in the west with only 15 items of UXO destroyed. KMAC reported that the clearance undertaken by KSF in the west was mandatory according to the regulations in Kosovo as part of the process of ensuring the area was free of contamination before being used for military training.⁶⁹ However, the extremely low number of items of UXO found indicates that pre-clearance survey would have been beneficial. In 2022, there was one submunition found and destroyed during spot tasks.⁷⁰

In 2022, KSF was reported to have cleared a total of 1.16km² with no submunitions destroyed and to have destroyed a single submunition during a separate spot task. A total of 96 other items of UXO were found and destroyed meaning that this was in effect a BAC task.

In Prishtinë, NPA cleared 287,405m² across two tasks with CMR expected and not found, although CMR fragments were found and, on one of the tasks, other items of UXO.⁷¹ Two task areas were cleared by HALO with no CMR found totalling 65,444m². The first was an area of 12,340m² in Belince, Ferizaj, which was re-cleared at the request of KMAC due to an item found in the cleared area, which was suspected to have been placed in the area after the task had been completed. The second was an area of 53,104m² in Devetak, Ferizaj, suspended for winter stand-down in 2022 and which was due to re-open for further clearance in 2023. As no submunitions have been found to date, reduction of the task area was being actively considered.⁷²

HALO reported an increase in CMR clearance output in 2022 compared to the previous year, the result of more staff working in BAC following the closure of HALO's mine clearance operations.⁷³ There was no significant change in NPA's clearance output from 2021 to 2022.⁷⁴

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Kosovo cannot formally adhere to the CCM and therefore does not have a specific clearance deadline under Article 4. Nonetheless, it has obligations under international human rights law to clear CMR as soon as possible.

Kosovo's Mine Action Strategy 2019–24 aims to complete mine and cluster munition clearance by the end of 2024.⁷⁵ It is now understood by KMAC and operators that meeting this clearance deadline will not be possible, and a new mine action strategy is in development which will include an updated deadline for completion.⁷⁶ NPA reported that the delayed EU funding, which was initially supposed to start in 2019 but did not begin until the end of 2022, has been a significant impediment as operators were not able to increase clearance capacity as planned. In addition, the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led to a significant reduction in clearance output for that year, and there has been previously unrecorded CMR contamination that has been found and added to the database every year. For NPA working in northern Kosovo, the remaining contaminated areas are located at high altitudes where due to local weather conditions it is only possible to conduct clearance from May to September thus restricting annual clearance output.⁷⁷

68 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023; Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023; and Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

69 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 4 July 2023.

70 Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 19 June 2023.

71 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

72 Emails from Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April and 16 June 2023.

73 Ibid.

74 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

75 "Mine Action Strategy 2019–2024 in Republic of Kosovo", 4 April 2019, p. 6.

76 Emails from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023; Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023; and Michael Montafi, HALO, 18 April 2023.

77 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 30 March 2023.

That said, it is now nearly 25 years after the end of the conflict between the FRY forces and NATO and it has taken Kosovo until 2022 to provide an estimate of contamination that has been classified into CHAs and SHAs and large areas are still being cleared with no CMR contamination found.

Table 7: Five-year summary of CMR clearance

Year	Area cleared (m²)
2022	1.32
2021	1.30
2020	0.34
2019	1.26
2018	1.24
Total	5.46

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

KMAC has reported that a strategy for the management of residual contamination will be developed in conjunction with the new mine action strategy.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Email from Ahmet Sallova, KMAC, 24 April 2023.