

LEBANON

MINE
ACTION
REVIEW

CLEARING CLUSTER MUNITION REMNANTS 2024

ARTICLE 4 DEADLINE: 1 MAY 2026
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

CLUSTER MUNITION CONTAMINATION: LIGHT

NATIONAL ESTIMATE

4.65 km²

SUBMUNITION
CLEARANCE IN 2023

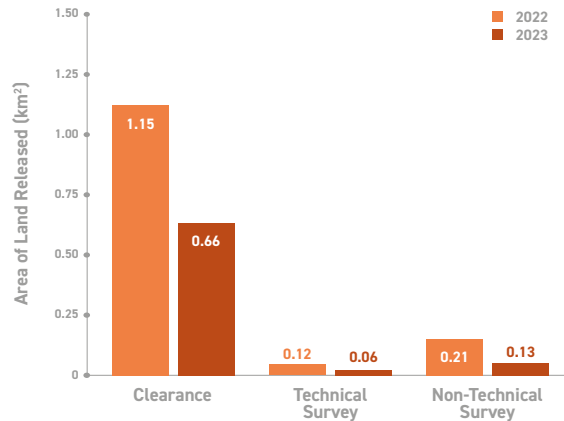
0.66 km²

SUBMUNITIONS
DESTROYED IN 2023

1,956

(INCLUDING 508
DESTROYED IN CALL-OUTS
AND MINE CLEARANCE)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) continued to strengthen Lebanon's mine action programme during 2023 with a review of the national mine action standards (NMAS) and a mid-term review of its strategy. However, there was a decrease in both clearance and overall release of cluster munition-contaminated area in 2023. Lebanon continues to see a drop in clearance capacity, a reduction in international funding, and the absence of national funding to clear cluster munition remnants (CMR). In addition, the situation in South Lebanon involving hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah since 7 October 2023 is an obstacle to clearance with operations having been suspended there. As a result, Lebanon is not on track to meet its extended Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) Article 4 clearance deadline of 1 May 2026, and at current capacity predicts it will not meet its obligations until 2030.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Following the updates to the NMAS, all implementing agencies in Lebanon should routinely conduct technical survey (TS) in the release of CMR tasks.
- LMAC should determine how it plans to address CMR in especially difficult terrain, such as deep canyons and very steep cliffs, and should publicly report on the number and size of CMR tasks concerned and LMAC's plans to address these areas.
- Lebanon should regularly update its CCM Article 4 planning based on annual land release outputs.
- Lebanon should develop a resource mobilisation strategy to enable it to meet its annual CMR clearance targets as set out in its 2020 Article 4 deadline extension request.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	8	8	LMAC has a good baseline understanding of its CMR contamination. New previously unrecorded CMR contamination added to the database in 2023 was the result of re-survey through non-technical survey (NTS), which is conducted on a three-year cycle, or through the correction to the perimeters of existing CMR polygons, also following NTS. As of writing, no use of cluster munitions had been identified in Lebanon in the cross-border hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel that began on 8 October 2023.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	8	LMAC continued to show strong national ownership and commitment in 2023, further strengthening programme management. Coordination with implementing partners was maintained through regular Mine Action Forum and technical working group (TWG) meetings. The Lebanese government contributed US\$7.5 million in 2023 to support the running of LMAC and the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) engineering regiments. Regrettably, however, set against the backdrop of continued political and financial unrest in the country, none of the 50 billion Lebanese pounds (approx. US\$33 million) pledged for CMR clearance in 2019–23 had been provided.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	8	8	LMAC is committed to promoting the mainstreaming of gender and diversity in Lebanon. Gender and diversity considerations are included in the National Mine Action Strategy 2020–25 and LMAC has a gender work plan and Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee in place. In 2023, LMAC conducted a full review of NMAS to integrate gender and diversity considerations.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION* (10% of overall score)	7	Not Scored	LMAC does not have an environmental management policy in place but does have an NMAS on Safety and Occupational Health – Protection of the Environment (10.70) which it reports aligns with IMAS (07.13). LMAC reports that environmental assessments are conducted during the planning and delivery of survey and clearance tasks and that climate-related and extreme weather risks are considered when planning and prioritising survey and clearance tasks.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	8	8	LMAC and operators continued to make efforts to improve the accuracy of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core database in 2023. Lebanon submitted an Article 7 report covering 2023 but there were some inconsistencies with the data.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	8	8	LMAC has a National Mine Action Strategy for 2020–25 and an accompanying plan for its implementation and monitoring of progress. In 2023, LMAC conducted a mid-term review of the strategy to align it with a theory of change model which had been adapted for Lebanon. In 2023, Lebanon cleared only 34% of its 1.9km ² clearance target from its 2020 Article 4 extension request.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM** (10% of overall score)	8	8	LMAC has steadily strengthened its NMAS over the last five years. In 2023, LMAC conducted a review of the NMAS in consultation with all implementing partners to ensure compliance with IMAS and incorporate case studies and lesson learnt. Unfortunately, capacity for CMR TS and clearance decreased further in 2023.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	5	6	CMR-contaminated area clearance decreased in 2023 compared to 2022. Lebanon will not meet its 2026 deadline and has stated that at current capacity clearance will not be completed until 2030. Obstacles to the completion of clearance in Lebanon include the continued drop in international funding and absence of national funds for CMR clearance, discovery of new unreported contaminated areas, the impact of working in "difficult terrains", and the ongoing situation since 8 October 2023 which has led to the suspension of operations in South Lebanon.
Average Score	7.3	7.6	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

* New criterion introduced in 2024 to assess performance.

** The weighting of this criterion was previously 20% of overall performance score, but is now given a 10% weighting.

CLUSTER MUNITION SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Lebanon Mine Action Authority (LMAA)
- Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC)
- Regional Mine Action Centres (RMAC-N and RMAC-RB)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF)/Engineering Regiment (ER)

- Peace Generation Organization for Demining (POD)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- Humanity and Inclusion (HI)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)
- UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2023, Lebanon had a total of 4.65km² of confirmed hazardous area (CHA) containing CMR (see Table 1).¹ This shows a decrease from the end of 2022, when the hazardous area was 5.23km² across 662 CHAs.² This reduction is the result of continued survey and clearance efforts in 2023.

In 2023, a total of 268,339m² of previously unrecorded CMR contamination was added to the database. Of this, 42,196m² was discovered through non-technical survey (NTS) conducted by Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and DanChurchAid (DCA).³ A further 226,143m² was added to the baseline due to the unpredictable increase of the fade-out because of the high density of CMR found in some tasks.⁴

Table 1: Cluster munition-contaminated area by province (at end 2023)⁵

Province	CHAs	Area (m ²)
Beqaa	29	88,283
Janoub and Nabatiyeh (South of Lebanon)	497	4,432,477
Jabal Loubnan (Mount Lebanon)	35	132,726
Totals	561	4,653,486

With support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), LMAC migrated to Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core in 2021. This migration revealed that several villages were registered in the wrong province, which has changed the distribution but not the total amount of CMR contamination.⁶

During a 2018 database review, LMAC standardised the size of CHAs with no defined boundaries to 10,000m².⁷ However,

operators have found that the standardised 10,000m² area can sometimes overestimate or underestimate the actual task size.⁸ LMAC continues to believe in this approach and in its CCM Article 4 planning it has increased the size of these areas by 250% (to 25,000m²) to factor in fade-out.⁹

The accuracy of the baseline is further complicated by clearance conducted in the aftermath of the 2006 cluster munition strikes, which was not compliant with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and was mostly limited to rapid surface clearance. This included emergency clearance undertaken by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in and around infrastructure, schools, and roads, and clearance contracted out to NGOs, commercial operators, and government groups by the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre – south Lebanon (MACC-SL), in cooperation with the National Demining Office (now known as LMAC).¹⁰ To improve accuracy and inform Article 4 planning, LMAC completed a nationwide non-technical re-survey of all remaining CMR areas in November 2020, with NTS teams revisiting sites every three years.¹¹ LMAC also agreed with the NGO operators the option for each to have a NTS team to re-survey each new task prior to starting clearance.¹²

CMR contamination is largely the result of the conflict with Israel in July–August 2006. During the conflict, Israel fired an estimated four million submunitions on south Lebanon, 90% of which were dispersed in the last 72 hours of the conflict.¹³ An estimated one million submunitions failed to explode.¹⁴ Some Israeli bombing data was provided—most recently through the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)—but has proved to be very inaccurate.¹⁵ In addition, some CMR still remain from earlier conflicts with Israel in 1978 and 1982,¹⁶ and there is a small amount of new CMR contamination on the north-east border with Syria, resulting from spill-over of the Syrian conflict onto Lebanese territory in 2014–17.¹⁷ Types of submunitions found in Lebanon include Israeli, Soviet,

1 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, EORE and Media Section Head, LMAC, 2 May 2024; and CCM Article 7 report (covering 2023), Form F.

2 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, Operations Section Head, LMAC, 15 May 2023; Article 7 report (covering 2022), Form F; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2022", p. 15.

3 Emails from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024; Sylvain Lefort, Country Director, MAG, 13 May 2024; and Mohamed Chour, Head of Mine Action Lebanon, DCA, 30 April 2024.

4 Email from Lt. Col. Charbel Njeim, Operations Section Head, LMAC, 2 July 2024.

5 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024; and Article 7 report (covering 2023), Form F.

6 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F; and email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 29 March 2022.

7 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 7 March 2019; LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", p. 13; Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F; and revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, p. 10.

8 Email from Valerie Warmington, Programme Manager, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 28 May 2020.

9 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 2 September 2020.

10 Human Rights Watch, "Flooding South Lebanon. Israel's use of cluster munitions in Lebanon in July and August 2006", 16 February 2008.

11 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F.

12 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 5 April 2019 and 19 March 2020.

13 Landmine Action, "Foreseeable Harm: the use and impact of cluster munitions in Lebanon: 2006", 2006.

14 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, Director, LMAC, 27 April 2018; and Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F.

15 Interview with Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif and Brig.-Gen. Fakh, Head of Operations, LMAC, Beirut, 11 April 2016; presentation by Brig.-Gen. Fakh, LMAC, Beirut, 16 November 2016; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.

16 Landmine Action, "Foreseeable Harm: the use and impact of cluster munitions in Lebanon: 2006", 2006; interview with Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif, Director, and Brig.-Gen. Fakh, LMAC, Beirut, 11 April 2016; and Article 7 Report (covering 2022) Form F.

17 Revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, p. 2.

and United States (US)-made submunitions, types AO-2.5 RT, BLU-18, BLU-26, BLU-61, BLU-63, M42, M43, M46, M77, M85, MK118, and MZD-2.¹⁸ Some areas contain unexploded

submunitions resulting from both ground-launched and air-dropped cluster munitions, which can further complicate the picture.¹⁹

OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND LANDMINES

Lebanon is also contaminated by other unexploded ordnance (UXO), booby-traps, and anti-personnel mines (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Lebanon for more information).

On 8 October 2023, Hezbollah launched attacks on Israel in solidarity with the Palestinian people. Israel and Hezbollah have engaged in thousands of attacks against each other across the border. The majority of attacks had involved artillery or missile, around a quarter were air or drone

strikes, while a much smaller proportion concerned armed clashes, destruction of property, and the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).²⁰ At the time of writing, there were no known reports of cluster munitions having been used by Israel or by Hezbollah or other armed groups in Lebanon. In October 2023, Amnesty International reported that the Israeli army had used white phosphorus artillery shells during an attack on the southern border town of Dhayra, a populated civilian area, in violation of international humanitarian law.²¹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Lebanon's mine action programme is under the control of the military. The Lebanon Mine Action Authority (LMAA), which has overall responsibility for Lebanon's mine action programme, is the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and is chaired by the Minister of Defence. In 2007, a national mine action policy outlined the structure, roles, and responsibilities within the programme, and LMAC was tasked to execute and coordinate the programme on behalf of the LMAA.²²

LMAC, part of the LAF, is based in Beirut. Since 2009, the Regional Mine Action Centre-Nabatiyeh (RMAC-N), which is a part of LMAC, has overseen operations in south Lebanon and western Beqaa, under LMAC supervision.²³ At the end of 2018, a new regional centre, the RMAC-Ras Baalbek (RMAC-RB), was established in the north-east of Lebanon to oversee the mine action operations there.²⁴ LMAC has a capacity that, in general, functions well, but as the staff are army officers, the senior management of LMAC and RMAC are typically routinely rotated every two years or so, which hampers development and continuity in the management of the three mine action centres.²⁵ The current director of LMAC started in March 2019.²⁶

A new standing operating procedure (SOP) for LMAC was approved in November 2020. The SOP specifies the roles of each section of LMAC and clarifies the responsibilities and cooperation between sections. It is hoped that it will help preserve institutional memory, assist new LMAC staff, and reduce the impact of staff rotations.²⁷

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) personnel, funded by the Netherlands, are also seconded to LMAC, providing support for capacity building, including for studies, NTS, community liaison, and information management.²⁸ In 2023, four UNDP personnel were supporting LMAC.²⁹

The United States (US) started a project in 2022 to support LMAC through International Trust Fund (ITF) Enhancing Human Security, aimed at sustaining LMAC during the financial crisis (e.g. car maintenance, solar power systems, demining equipment, training).³⁰

The GICHD provides support to LMAC on information management and on gender and diversity. LMAC and Regional School for Humanitarian Demining in Lebanon (RSHDL) staff have benefitted and co-supported the GICHD with courses under the regional framework of the Arab

18 Ibid., p. 23.

19 Interview with Oussama Merhi, UNDP, in Geneva, 26 June 2015.

20 Al Jazeera, 15 April 2024, Mapping Israel-Lebanon cross-border attacks, at: <https://bit.ly/3V1YtWy>.

21 Amnesty International, 31 October 2023, Lebanon: *Evidence of Israel's unlawful use of white phosphorus in southern Lebanon as cross-border hostilities escalate*, at: <https://bit.ly/3VBUXt4>.

22 LMAC, "Mid-term Review to Strategy 2011–2020, Milestone 2013", August 2014, pp. 4–5.

23 LMAC, "Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2011–2020", September 2011, p. 4.

24 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 21 August 2019.

25 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020–25, signed June 2020, p. 4.

26 Email from Brig.-Gen. Ziad Nasr, LMAC, 26 March 2019.

27 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020 and 15 March 2021; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2020", p. 28.

28 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 May 2023.

29 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

30 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 May 2023.

Regional Cooperation Programme (ARCP). Information management (IM) staff from LMAC have also supported the GICHD to deliver global IMSMA Core training. In addition, the GICHD is partnering with LMAC on a study of contamination in “difficult” terrain (for details see the section below, “Article 4 Deadline and Compliance”).³¹

MAG supports LMAC on key areas such as information management, the introduction of GPS for completion tasks, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), new detection systems, and enhancing the Centre’s gender approach. The MAG quality assurance manager facilitated a basic demining course for 24 staff members (20 men and 4 women) over four weeks. In addition to training and mentoring, MAG delivered several courses to LMAC staff covering IMAS, operational efficiency and analysis, quality management, and TS. The first course, held in July 2023, trained 17 staff members (14 men and 3 women), and the second in October trained 15 staff (14 men and 1 woman).³²

DCA supported LMAC to train new NTS teams from LMAC and other NGOs by demonstrating how IMSMA Core can be used in NTS.³³

There is good coordination and collaboration between LMAC/ the RMAC and clearance operators, with the operators consulted before key decisions are taken.³⁴ International clearance operators reported that an enabling environment exists for mine action in Lebanon, with LMAC facilitating the processing of visas for international staff and assisting with the importation of equipment, including exemption of customs fees for equipment.³⁵ In 2022, however, Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) reported that a challenge was the length of time needed to obtain security clearances for new local staff. This process can take more than three months,³⁶ although usually it takes less than a month, during which the operator is allowed to start training the new staff.³⁷ NPA noted that this situation remained unchanged in 2023.³⁸

A “Humanitarian Mine Action Forum” was established in Lebanon in close partnership between LMAC and Norway.

The forum aims to meet twice a year, with UNDP designated as the secretariat for the Forum.³⁹ In 2021, the Netherlands took over from Norway as Forum co-chair.⁴⁰ In 2023, the Forum met once.⁴¹ It focused on the challenges posed by difficult terrain, discussing the implications for funding and completion of clearance.⁴² A technical working group (TWG), established in March 2018 under the auspices of LMAC, met three times in 2023.⁴³ The TWG is a useful forum for LMAC/ the RMACs to meet with clearance operators.⁴⁴ Discussions in 2023 concentrated on revising the NMAS, promoting TS and the use of machines, responses to the emergency situation in November 2023, and operations in difficult terrain.⁴⁵

The Lebanese government contributed approximately US\$7.5 million in 2023 towards the mine action programme (for both landmine- and CMR-related work), to support costs associated with the running of LMAC (facilities and staff); two LAF Engineering Regiment battle area clearance (BAC) teams and three Engineering Regiment companies to cover rapid response across Lebanon; risk education; victim assistance; training; and advocacy.⁴⁶ This is down on the US\$9 million provided in 2022, reflecting the ongoing economic crisis in the country. This crisis affects the work of the Engineering Regiment demining teams.⁴⁷ Increased maintenance costs and fuel shortages were also major obstacles. The morale of the LMAC staff, whose income has dropped significantly, has also taken a hit.⁴⁸

The Lebanese government had pledged an additional 50 billion Lebanese pounds (approximately US\$33 million) to CMR clearance over the five years in 2019–23, in order to increase the number of CMR clearance teams and help meet the State’s Article 4 obligations under the CCM. But due to political and financial turmoil in Lebanon this national funding has not been provided.⁴⁹ LMAC had expected that a reduced amount of around US\$3 million would still be allocated to CMR clearance yearly.⁵⁰ In fact, no national funding was allocated for CMR clearance in 2020–23.⁵¹

31 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.

32 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

33 Email from Lt. Col. Charbel Njeim, LMAC, 2 July 2024.

34 Emails from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 24 March 2021; Hala Amhaz, NPA, 15 March 2021; Mahmoud Rahhal, POD, 8 March 2019; and David Ligneau, Mine Action Programme Manager, Humanity and Inclusion (HI), 21 April 2020.

35 Emails from Hiba Ghandour, Programme Manager, MAG, 7 April 2022; and Southern Craib, Operations Manager, NPA, 28 March 2022.

36 Email from Southern Craib, Programme Manager, NPA, 28 March 2022.

37 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 30 June 2023.

38 Email from Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024.

39 LMAC, “Annual Report 2018”, p. 23.

40 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 29 March 2022.

41 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

42 Emails from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024; and Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024.

43 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

44 LMAC, “Annual Report 2018”, pp. 4, 7, and 17; and emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 7 March 2019; Emile Ollivier, NPA, 19 March 2019; Hiba Ghandour, MAG, 7 April 2022; Southern Craib, NPA, 28 March 2022; and Mouhamed Chour, DCA, 4 April 2022; and Revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, pp. 8 and 54.

45 Emails from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024 and Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024.

46 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

47 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 May 2023; and Article 7 report (covering 2022), Form I.

48 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

49 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form I; and email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.

50 Revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, p. 38; and 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, answers to analysis group, 6 February 2020.

51 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 March 2021, 29 March 2022, and 15 May 2023; Article 7 Reports (covering 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023), Form I; and LMAC, “Annual Report 2022”, p. 24.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The gender and diversity-related policy applied at LMAC is that of the LAF military rules. According to LMAC, all its personnel are familiar with these rules and the specific provisions related to gender equality and inclusion, safeguarding, and behavioural codes.⁵² LMAC remains committed to promoting the mainstreaming of gender and diversity among key stakeholders and mine action operators in Lebanon.⁵³ It has taken several actions to mainstream gender in its implementation plan, including through inclusive policies, data disaggregation in risk education and victim assistance, assigning a gender focal point, and organising and participating in courses at the RSHDL.⁵⁴

MAG has supported LMAC in the implementation of the gender work plan, with LMAC engaging all implementing partners on the plan in 2023.⁵⁵ MAG has also assisted LMAC in establishment of a Gender, Diversity and Inclusion (GDI) Steering Committee led by LMAC's gender focal point and consisting of gender focal points and human resources (HR) managers from all clearance NGOs.⁵⁶ In 2023, MAG supported LMAC in the review and drafting of their GDI approach and strategy, and co-lead a training workshop on Gender in Mine Action with the LMAC for all HMA operators in March 2023 on international women's day.⁵⁷

Lebanon's National Mine Action Strategy 2020–25 includes considerations on gender and diversity.⁵⁸ Of the five objectives in the new strategy, the fifth states that: "The specific needs and perspective of women, girls, men and boys from all groups of society are considered, in order to deliver an inclusive HMA [mine action] response". LMAC also acknowledges in the strategy that mine action "is a male-dominated environment and we have therefore a particular responsibility to empower women and ensure that we have a gender sensitive approach to our work".⁵⁹

The GICHD conducted its most recent gender and diversity capacity assessment mission to the Lebanon programme in November 2021 and said LMAC had followed many of its recommendations on gender and diversity mainstreaming from that visit.⁶⁰ In July 2023, LMAC and the GICHD organised a three-day course titled 'Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming in Mine Action in Lebanon'. The objective was to strengthen the integration of gender and diversity considerations among key stakeholders and mine action operators.⁶¹

LMAC conducted a full review of its NMAS in 2023, a component of which was to integrate gender and diversity considerations to align with IMAS.⁶² MAG supported LMAC in this process and, in 2024, was reviewing its internal SOPs to ensure they are gender-sensitive and aligned with the revised NMAS.⁶³

Table 2: Gender composition in 2023⁶⁴

Operator	Total staff	Women staff	Total managerial or supervisory staff	Women in managerial or supervisory positions	Total operational staff	Women in operational positions
DCA	61	12 (20%)	20	8 (40%)	55	4 (7%)
LMAC	152	18 (12%)	20	2 (10%)	44	7 (16%)
MAG	208	32 (15%)	52	4 (8%)	184	26 (14%)
NPA	83	17 (20%)	22	3 (14%)	74	12 (16%)
HI	76	32 (42%)	17	5 (29%)	64	27 (42%)
POD	99	1 (1%)	21	1 (5%)	83	0 (0%)
Totals	679	112 (16%)	152	23 (15%)	504	76 (15%)

The number of staff at LMAC is determined by the LAF headquarters, so LMAC has limited control over the number of women, but it consistently requests that the percentage of

women be increased.⁶⁵ However, the proportion of women at LMAC is more than double the 5% average of the Lebanese armed forces and LMAC seeks to improve this ratio further.⁶⁶

52 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.

53 LMAC "Annual Report 2022", p. 33.

54 LMAC, "Annual Report 2018", p. 5; and email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 7 March 2019.

55 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

56 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 14 April 2023.

57 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

58 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March and 22 July 2020.

59 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020–25, p. 8.

60 Email from the GICHD, 6 April 2023.

61 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

62 Ibid.

63 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

64 Emails from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024; Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024; Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024 and Aurélien Thienpont, Country Manager, HI, 30 May 2024.

65 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020 and 15 March 2021; and LMAC, "Plan for the Implementation and Monitoring of the LMAP Strategy (2020–25)", p. 19.

66 LMAC, "Annual Report 2020", p. 37.

LMAC now has seven female members of staff in operational role, and an increase from one in 2022.⁶⁷

MAG, NPA, DCA, HI, and Peace Generation Organization for Demining (POD) all reported having gender policies in place.⁶⁸ DCA's was implemented in 2023 and it reported that all its staff participated in a training session on gender and diversity.⁶⁹

In 2022, MAG began systematic outreach to civil organisations to look for joint efforts to empower women and overcome stereotyping in the communities it works in, conducted detailed gender analysis to better disaggregate its data, and created a platform for reaching women in the community to attract more women to be involved in mine action.⁷⁰ MAG reported that it conducts annual refresher training for all staff on gender mainstreaming in mine action and MAG's gender policy. Revisions to explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) materials to ensure accessibility for

persons with disabilities were approved in 2023 and will be implemented during 2024.⁷¹

NPA was implementing its organisational gender policy for Lebanon, based on recommendations from the GICHD. It is encouraging more women to apply for field positions through job postings and social media.⁷² In 2023, both of NPA's main support departments (finance and logistics) were led by women. A new female Programme Officer, hired in late 2023, has since been made responsible for managing NTS, which will be increasingly important in 2024. For operational staff, hiring is more challenging due to limited turnover. New positions only become available when current staff leave or retire, or when funding increases. When such positions open, NPA ensures an equal number of male and female candidates are shortlisted and undergo training. Selection is based on merit, with the highest scoring candidates securing the jobs, regardless of gender.⁷³

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

LMAC does not currently have an environmental management policy, although there is a vision to develop one in the future and it recognises its responsibility to ensure that demining operations are conducted responsibly and efficiently while also minimising the impact on the environment. Lebanon's NMAS on Safety and Occupational Health – Protection of the Environment (10.70), which is said to align with IMAS 07.13, specifically aims to achieve this.

LMAC and its implementing partners are required to coordinate with local authorities and landowners before operations start. All NTS reports and clearance plans include information on the climatic and weather characteristics of the region, their impact on the clearance operation, and the measures to be taken. After clearance has been completed at a worksite, operators must remove and dispose of appropriately all rubbish and large fragments of munitions, filling in any holes in the ground to stabilise the surface so that natural regeneration can take place.⁷⁴ Additionally, when planning and prioritising survey and clearance tasks, Lebanon considers climate-related and extreme weather risks.⁷⁵

DCA's SOPs designate specific smoking areas at task sites to prevent uncontrolled fires and monitor vegetation-cutting procedures to protect flora under Lebanese law. DCA has an environmental management policy and conducts environmental assessments to support survey and clearance tasks.⁷⁶ During the summer, DCA prioritises tasks with a lower risk of fires during demolitions. In June

2023, DCA Lebanon hosted a consultant from DCA HQ to review environmental management best practices in mine action, looking at soil degradation, wildlife and vegetation disturbance, and waste generation. Recommendations for improvements included adjustments to SOPs (for vegetation cutting, demolition, and subsurface clearance to minimise topsoil damage and protect water and air quality) and capacity-building needs.⁷⁷

HI has an environmental management system in place and its SOP21 on environmental management includes general protection for watercourses and groundwater, during vegetation clearance, in the construction and removal of temporary support facilities, during transport of toxic and hazardous materials, for livestock, wildlife, and cultural resources, and provision for the environmental awareness of clearance personnel.⁷⁸

MAG has an environmental management system and an SOP to minimize environmental impact.⁷⁹ MAG's Beirut office is now 100% solar powered with plans to introduce solar energy panels to MAG's South base upon redeployment from Nabatiyeh. MAG conducts environmental assessments for every task, incorporating a checklist into the clearance plan to evaluate potential impacts and identify necessary mitigation. Annual work plans divide tasks into dry and wet season activities, with strategies to mitigate and adapt to these risks.⁸⁰

67 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

68 Emails from Emile Ollivier, NPA, 19 March 2019; David Willey, MAG, 7 March 2019; Mahmoud Rahhal, POD, 8 March 2019; and Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024.

69 Email from Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024.

70 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 27 May 2021.

71 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

72 Email from Valerie Warmington, NPA, 28 May 2020.

73 Email from Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024.

74 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 29 March 2022 and 5 May 2023.

75 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

76 Emails from Mouhamed Chour, DCA, 4 April 2022 and 3 May 2023.

77 Email from Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024.

78 Emails from Nahed Al-Khlouf, HI, 6 August 2022; and Aurélien Thienpont, HI, 13 April 2023.

79 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 14 April 2023.

80 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

NPA Lebanon has an environmental plan in place which includes the storage of paper, plastics, and metal waste for recycling and has been upgrading its fleet for better fuel efficiency. It strives to minimise the removal of vegetation and explosive residues are removed from demolition pits where possible. NPA installed a solar system at its office in 2022, upgrading the back-up batteries to Lithium in late 2023, which reduced generator diesel usage by 19,207 litres and

saved more than US\$20,000. NPA has also begun to track its environmental footprint using an annual reporting tool.⁸¹ NPA does not conduct formal environmental assessments for survey and clearance tasks. Flash-fire risks in dry grass are mitigated by postponing demolitions, spraying water, and using sandbags. No flash-fire incidents have occurred since implementing these measures.⁸²

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Since 2021, LMAC has been using IMSMA Core.⁸³ Key improvements in the new IM system include more accurate drawing of surveyed polygons using tools based on GPS and imagery base maps; reducing instances of double counting of polygons; and recording the depth at which ordnance was discovered, its condition of, and whether it is safe to move.⁸⁴

Disclaimed areas in the database are those for which the owner of the land has not granted permission for implementing agencies to conduct land release operations. In such cases, the landowner has to sign a personal disclaimer taking full responsibility for any kind of explosive remnants of war (ERW), including CMR on the land. LMAC is trying to end the disclaimers, the records of which were mainly taken before 2009. The majority of disclaimed areas are being cancelled as a result of ongoing re-survey when the owners are found to be using the land. If clearance is required, survey and community liaison teams, along with local authorities, will encourage landowners to allow clearance in order to ensure the land is free from hazards

and will provide assurance of measures that will be taken to prevent disruption to the use of the land.⁸⁵ According to its 2020 Article 4 deadline extension request, there were 116 disclaimed areas on the database totalling 338,932m².⁸⁶

DCA has been using the Tiramisu Information Management Tool (T-IMS) for the past three years.⁸⁷ MAG adopted the Survey123 software in Lebanon in 2021.⁸⁸ In 2023, it implemented version 2 of the Operational Management Information System (OMIS), which optimises data collection, validation, visualisation, and analysis, with digitalised forms reducing errors and centralised data storage enhancing decision-making. Efforts to ensure compatibility between OMIS and IMSMA Core by allowing direct data transfer are ongoing.⁸⁹ Since 2020, NPA has been using the ARC-GIS programme for better data collection and monitoring and evaluation of its programme.⁹⁰

Lebanon submitted a timely CCM Article 7 report covering 2023. However, the land release data provided in the report did not match the data provided to Mine Action Review.

PLANNING AND TASKING

LMAC has a National Mine Action Strategy for 2020–25, developed with support from the UNDP project funded by the European Union (EU).⁹¹ One objective of the new strategy is to complete clearance of all known cluster munition-contaminated areas by the end of 2025,⁹² but LMAC will not meet this target.

LMAC also has a strategic implementation plan for the 2020–25 strategy.⁹³ In 2023, LMAC conducted a midterm review of the strategy and implementation plan in cooperation with programme stakeholders. The key outcomes of the review were that the strategy's impacts, outcomes, and outputs are aligned with the theory of change newly developed by ITAD and adapted to Lebanon's specific context.⁹⁴ A final external review of the strategy was done at the beginning of 2024.⁹⁵

81 Emails from Southern Craib, NPA, 28 March 2022; and Tomislav Vondracek, NPA, 5 May 2023.

82 Email from Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024.

83 LMAC, "Annual Report 2022", p. 31.

84 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 May 2023.

85 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 2 September 2020 and 15 June 2021.

86 Revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, p. 36.

87 Email from Matthew Benson, Country Director, DCA, 4 June 2021.

88 Email from Hiba Ghandour, MAG, 7 April 2022.

89 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

90 Email from Hala Amhaz, NPA, 15 March 2021.

91 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020–25; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2019", p. 7.

92 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2020–25, p. 4.

93 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 22 July 2020 and 15 March 2021; and LMAC, "Plan for the Implementation and Monitoring of the LMAP Strategy (2020–25)", p. 3.

94 Emails from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024; Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024.

95 Email from Lt. Col. Charbel Njeim, LMAC, 2 July 2024.

Table 3 outlines the predicted annual clearance output and capacity up to the end of 2025, as per its 2020 Article 4 deadline extension request. LMAC plans to conduct TS where appropriate, but it did not provide predictions in the request of the area it expected to be reduced as a result. Projected clearance rates in the request were based on an average of the previous three years and while LMAC expects more efficient methodologies such as TS will increase this average,

any gain is likely to be offset by the more difficult terrain that remains to be cleared.⁹⁶ Planned output also considers fade-out and the possible increase in the area to be cleared in the 10,000m² sites, using a factor of 2.5.⁹⁷ In 2023, LMAC cleared 0.65km² which is only 34% of the 2023 clearance target in the extension request.⁹⁸ In 2021 – 23, only 2.8km² was cleared of the 5.7km² that was planned.

Table 3: Planned CMR clearance and capacity (2021–25) as per 2020 Extension Request⁹⁹

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Cleared (km ²)	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.5
Teams	26	26	26	21	21

LMAC conducted a study in 2021 of tasking leading to the creation of a new national prioritisation system, based on three strategic categories: safety, economy, and treaty compliance. Each category contains subcategories which take operational considerations and impact into account.¹⁰⁰ The prioritisation of actions and allocation of resources is automated in IMSMA Core.¹⁰¹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Lebanon developed its first NMAS in 2010.¹⁰² In 2017, LMAC started revising and harmonising national standards with IMAS, adding new modules to the original standards.¹⁰³ A 2020 study on operational efficiency highlighted the need for greater emphasis on TS in the land release process in Lebanon.¹⁰⁴ These recommendations were subsequently incorporated in Lebanon's revised NMAS in 2021.¹⁰⁵ Prior to the incorporation of TS into the revised NMAS released in May 2021, TS activities had not been a routine part of the toolbox for operators for the release of cluster munition tasks.¹⁰⁶ NGO clearance operators updated their SOPs accordingly and commenced application of TS on BAC tasks.¹⁰⁷ A full review of the LAF Engineering Regiment's SOPs was completed with the support of LMAC/UNDP, with TS included for CMR operations.¹⁰⁸ LMAC found that where TS for CMR tasks was applied in 2022, an average of 51% of land was reduced.¹⁰⁹

In 2023, LMAC conducted a review of the NMAS to ensure compliance with IMAS, incorporate case studies and lessons learned, and integrate gender and diversity considerations. These updates were made in consultation with all implementing partners. All 34 of the NMAS were revised to reflect changes in content and terminology from the IMAS, improve effectiveness, and correct parts that were ambiguous or confusing.¹¹⁰ In addition, following recommendations and discussions with implementing partners in early 2021, the fade-out distance requiring full clearance was formally reduced from a 50-metre radius to a 30-metre radius in high-density CMR tasks, and to a minimum 25-metre radius in low density tasks.¹¹¹ MAG had also previously noted that excessive marking reduced productivity and increased costs. It presented and demonstrated to LMAC a new marking system for BAC tasks, which LMAC approved.¹¹²

⁹⁶ Revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, pp. 5 and 34.

⁹⁷ Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 19 March 2020.

⁹⁸ Email from LMAC; and Article 7 report (covering 2023), Form F.

⁹⁹ Revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, p. 37.

¹⁰⁰ Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 March 2021; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2020", p. 35.

¹⁰¹ Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 May 2023; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2022", p. 32.

¹⁰² Email from Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif, LMAC, 17 June 2015.

¹⁰³ Emails from Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif, LMAC, 7 July 2015; Dave Wiley, MAG, 27 April 2018 and 7 March 2019; and Craig McDiarmid, Programme Manager, NPA, 17 April 2018 and 19 March 2019; and Revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, p. 15.

¹⁰⁴ LMAC, "Annual Report 2020", p. 36.

¹⁰⁵ Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 29 March 2022.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Brig.-Gen. Elie Nassif and Brig.-Gen. Fakh, LMAC, Beirut, 11 April 2016 and with Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, Beirut, 16 April 2019; and emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 June 2020; and Hala Amhaz, NPA, 15 March 2021.

¹⁰⁷ Emails from Hiba Ghandour, MAG, 7 April 2022; and Mouhamed Chour, DCA, 4 April 2022 and 3 May 2023.

¹⁰⁸ Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 May 2023.

¹⁰⁹ LMAC, "Annual Report 2022", p. 13.

¹¹⁰ Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

¹¹¹ Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 June 2021; Hiba Ghandour, MAG, 7 April 2022; and Mouhamed Chour, DCA, 4 April 2022.

¹¹² Emails from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 24 March and 27 May 2021; Hiba Ghandour, MAG, 7 April 2022; and Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 29 March 2022.

LMAC plans to update the NMAS on demolitions. This follows discussions with operators which showed that reducing the frequency of destruction of items found in cluster munition sites to a single demolition day each week (rather than daily demolitions as suggested in the existing NMAS) would save an average of two hours per day. This means that up to eight hours per team will be saved each week.¹¹³ As at July 2023, the updates for demolitions were already in place and applied by operators wherever possible.¹¹⁴

HI has been developing innovative techniques to support land release for several years. HI employs advanced sensors to locate buried explosive ordnance, and in collaboration with

LMAC, HI has been training their teams and other operators in Lebanon, ensuring the adoption of improved surveying methodologies to enhance efficiency. In 2023, HI introduced portable body-worn camera systems to aid clearance. This technology enhances safety, communication, helps identify training needs, and provides real-time technical support. The implementation of body-worn cameras by the CMR clearance team in Aley district is expected to accelerate land release and improve safety. Currently, this system is in the assessment phase in Aley district, working alongside existing procedures.¹¹⁵

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2023, CMR clearance was conducted by international operators DCA, HI, MAG, and NPA; national operator POD; and the LAF Engineering Regiment.¹¹⁶ But in 2023, the CMR clearance capacity decreased due to a reduction in funding for NPA and the ongoing conflict, which led to operations being suspended and teams redeployed.¹¹⁷

The LAF Engineering Regiment has two BAC teams. A further three Engineering Regiment companies conduct rapid response call-outs. In addition, each deployed combat brigade has its own combat engineering company that can also conduct call-outs. The LAF has seven mine detection dog (MDD) teams for TS and for use as a secondary asset supporting clearance, but none of these is used for CMR.

Through the Engineering Regiment, LMAC provides mechanical assistance to operators lacking this capacity.¹¹⁸ In Lebanon, machines are mostly used as secondary assets to support clearance teams (e.g. for ground preparation, rubble removal, or for fade-out); in areas where manual clearance is difficult; and for TS and low threat hazardous area (LTHA).¹¹⁹ Often, however, the terrain is not suitable for

machines. Unfortunately, the economic crisis in Lebanon has resulted in huge budget cuts in all government institutions and therefore the LAF teams are not able to conduct the same level of activities as before, including with respect to mechanical assets. Clearance operators who are supported by mechanical assets from the LAF are providing fuel, maintenance, and spare parts for the machines.¹²⁰ In addition, new mechanical assets have been introduced by MAG, which will be used as primary assets.¹²¹

NPA worked with LMAC and the LAF to assess the capacities of the LAF MDDs for surveying and clearing CMR. However, as at May 2024, there had been no further progress on the development of a proposal to build the capacity of the LAF MDD teams in order to provide LMAC with IMAS/NMAS compliant MDD capacity for TS.¹²² LMAC said use of MDDs in TS proved successful previously for addressing CMR, and LMAC plans to promote funding for MDDs and work with NPA to train new MDD teams in the Engineering Regiment.¹²³ MDDs are not currently accredited for CMR clearance in Lebanon.¹²⁴

Table 4: NGO operational CMR clearance capacities deployed in 2023¹²⁵

Operator	Manual teams	Total clearance personnel*	Machines**	Comments***
MAG	2.5	10	8	MTT
DCA	4	25	1	MTT
NPA	2-5	15-35	1	MTT (staff worked at 50% during the year due to loss of funding)

113 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form F; and presentation of Lebanon, CCM Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 16 May 2022; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2021", p. 33.

114 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 30 June 2023.

115 Email from Roger Eid, Chief of Operations, HI, 18 June 2024.

116 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

117 Ibid.; and email from Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024.

118 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

119 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 29 March 2022.

120 Ibid.

121 Ibid.

122 Ibid.; and email from Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024; Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form F; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2021", p. 32.

123 Article 7 report (covering 2022), Form F.

124 Email from Southern Craib, NPA, 28 March 2022.

125 Emails from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024; Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024; Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024; and Aurélien Thienpont, HI, 30 May 2024.

Table 4 Continued

Operator	Manual teams	Total clearance personnel*	Machines**	Comments***
HI	1	7	0	MTT
POD	7	N/K	N/K	
Totals	16.5–19.5	57–77	10	

* Clearance personnel may also conduct TS. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters. *** Clearance teams also work on TS tasks. N/K = not known.

DCA's clearance capacity remained broadly constant in 2023. In 2024, DCA has submitted proposals to increase its capacity in the second half of the year.¹²⁶

MAG's operations in South and West Beqaa and Jezzine were heavily impacted by ongoing conflict which resulted in a decrease in CMR survey and clearance capacity in 2023. In 2024, MAG expected capacity to remain the same and it has started gradually redeploying teams on BAC sites with two teams deployed in Jezzine and two teams deployed in West Beqaa.¹²⁷

NPA's funding in Lebanon decreased from the end of March 2023, which resulted in NPA putting all operational staff on part-time contracts (50%) from January 2023 in order to avoid lay-offs.¹²⁸ In 2024, NPA hoped to be able to deploy all six teams at 60% (six days out of every 10) for the duration of the year with funding currently available.¹²⁹

In 2023, HI expanded its operations in the Aley district by deploying a BAC team, an increase from 2022 when it only conducted mine clearance. HI plans to maintain the current number of personnel through to the end of the BAC project in July 2024. However, a reduction in personnel may be necessary thereafter.¹³⁰

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2023

A total of almost 0.85km² of CMR-contaminated area was released in 2023, of which almost 0.66km² was cleared, almost 0.13km² was cancelled through NTS, and 0.06km² was reduced through TS. A total of 1,956 submunitions were destroyed in 2023, of which 508 were destroyed during EOD spot tasks.

SURVEY IN 2023

In 2023, 129,825m² was cancelled through NTS (see Table 5) and a further 62,782m² was reduced through TS (see Table 6).¹³¹ This was a 38% reduction from the 209,593m² cancelled through NTS and a 46% reduction from the 115,836m² reduced through TS in 2022.¹³²

Table 5: Cancellation through NTS in 2023¹³³

Province	Operator	No. of areas cancelled	Area cancelled (m ²)
Beqaa (including North-East Region)	MAG	9	106,686
South Lebanon	DCA	1	12,271
	MAG	0	3,114
	DCA	0	1,731
	LMAC	7	6,023
Totals		17	129,825

126 Email from Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024.

127 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

128 Email from Tomislav Vondracek, NPA, 5 May 2023.

129 Email from Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024.

130 Email from Roger Eid, HI, 18 June 2024.

131 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

132 Article 7 report (covering 2022), Form F; and email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 May 2023.

133 Emails from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May and 28 June 2024; Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024; and Roger Eid, HI, 18 June 2024. No information on area released through survey was provided in Lebanon's Article 7 report covering 2023. MAG reported cancelling eight areas totalling 86,000m² in Beqaa (including North-East region) of which five areas totalling 56,000m² was in the North East region and three areas totalling 30,000m² was in the Beqaa. DCA reported cancelling 2 areas in South Lebanon totalling 24,011m².

Table 6: Reduction through TS in 2023¹³⁴

Province	Operator	No. of areas reduced	Area reduced (m ²)
Beqaa (including North-East Region)	MAG	2	42,066
South Lebanon	DCA (Baabda)	2	11,842
	NPA	3	8,874
Totals		7	62,782

CLEARANCE IN 2023

Lebanon reported clearing almost 0.66km² of CMR-contaminated land in 2023 (see Table 7) and destroying 1,448 submunitions in the process. In addition, a further 95 submunitions were destroyed by POD during EOD spot tasks and LAF cleared 8,299m² and destroyed 413 submunitions during mine clearance and in EOD spot tasks.¹³⁵ This is a 43% reduction from the more than 1.15km² of CMR-contaminated land in cleared in 2022.¹³⁶

Table 7: CMR clearance by province in 2023¹³⁷

Province	Name of Area	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	Submunitions destroyed	UXO destroyed during CMR clearance
Beqaa	MAG	16	207,851	129	7
Mount Lebanon	DCA	9	241,654	755	216
	HI	0	3,299	7	0
South Lebanon	POD	0	151,311	421	12
	NPA	10	43,890	136	1
EOD/mine clearance	POD/LAF	N/K	8,299	508	N/A
Totals		35	656,304	1,956	236

N/K = Not known

The main reason for the decrease in clearance output from 2022 to 2023 was an overall 30% decrease in funding and the cessation of clearance activities in southern Lebanon after 7 October 2023.¹³⁸

DCA's survey and clearance output increased in 2023 because two multi-task teams were moved from Blue Line in South Lebanon to Mount Lebanon to conduct BAC. DCA reported that one task, an SHA in the Kfar Selwan village, released a total of 10,000m² through TS with no items found.¹³⁹

MAG saw a significant decrease in its land release output in 2023 mainly due to the stand down from October to December 2023 because of the security situation. MAG reported that seven tasks totalling 81,410m² were cleared without submunitions being found.¹⁴⁰

NPA's land release output fell significantly in 2023 due to a decrease in funding which led to NPA choosing to operate its six teams at 50% capacity. NPA's operations were also affected by the stand-down from October to December 2023. NPA worked on CMR tasks during 2023 for only 14.25 "team months" producing 43,890m² of clearance or an average of 3,080m² per team month compared to 1,821m² per team month in 2022. NPA reported that 10 CMR tasks were cleared in 2023 with no submunitions found, although seven of the tasks were suspended on 16 October and submunitions may still be found once they are restarted. The three completed tasks that produced no items were cleared under funding from the Republic of Korea (through the ITF) and at the insistence of the donor these tasks were selected due to their proximity to the ROK UNIFIL base rather than any national priority or the likelihood of items being present. Only 69% of these tasks were cleared with the remaining 31% reduced.¹⁴¹

134 Emails from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024; Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024; and Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024.

135 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

136 Article 7 report (covering 2022), Form F.

137 Emails from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024; Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024; Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024; and Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024. In Lebanon's Article 7 report covering 2023 it was reported that 135,777m² was cleared in Beqaa, 304,009m² was cleared in Mount Lebanon, and 215,518m² was cleared in South Lebanon totalling 656,304m², with 1,956 submunitions destroyed.

138 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

139 Email from Mohamed Chour, DCA, 30 April 2024.

140 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

141 Email from Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024.

ARTICLE 4 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 4 of the CCM, Lebanon is required to destroy all CMR in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 May 2026. Lebanon will not meet this deadline.

In September 2011, LMAC adopted a strategic mine action plan for 2011–20.¹⁴² The plan called for clearance of all CMR by 2016 and for completion of mine clearance outside the Blue Line by 2020. Both goals were dependent on capacity, but progress fell well short of planning targets. Progress was also hindered by the historical lack of NTS and TS, which often resulted in inefficient land release and unnecessary clearance of uncontaminated land. LMAC has now rectified this through the application of TS and its incorporation into the NMAS.

Lebanon has cleared approximately 5.34km² of cluster munition-contaminated area in the last five years (see Table 8). According to LMAC, results until the beginning of 2022 showed that Lebanon was on track to meet its Article 4 extension request plan targets.¹⁴³ At the end of 2023, the amount of CMR contamination remaining was 4.66km² whereas if the extension request plan targets had been met it should have been 3.63km². With its current capacity, Lebanon expects that at the end of 2025, a total of 2.55km² of CMR contamination will remain, necessitating an additional extension request.¹⁴⁴ LMAC had previously said it could complete clearance by summer of 2027 but a new assessment indicates it will need until the end of 2030, provided that the necessary funding is secured.¹⁴⁵

In light of improvements to the CMR land release methodology in the last couple of years, funding now represents the most significant challenge to Lebanon's Article 4 implementation. Many international donors have stopped funding clearance operations in Lebanon, and the current shortfall between the amount sought in the 2020 extension request and that secured for cluster munition survey and clearance in 2021, 2022 and 2023 totals US\$14.25 million, half of the amount sought. No new donors were brought on board in 2023.¹⁴⁶ Operators have been trying to engage with new donors and will continue to advocate for mine action

in Lebanon to support LMAC in their quest.¹⁴⁷ The drop in funding directly impacts the number of clearance teams and thus the annual clearance output.

What is more, Lebanon is in the midst of a deep and unprecedented economic, financial, and social crisis and none of the 50 billion Lebanese pounds pledged by its government in 2017 for cluster munition clearance has been disbursed.¹⁴⁸ Operators have reported that the economic and political crises have made their operations more expensive, driving up the cost per square metre due to higher supply prices and limited fuel availability.¹⁴⁹ Lebanon has issued new decrees affecting social security payments and income tax for both employees and employers. MAG has accounted for these significant cost increases in its budgets, but this impacts the number of teams that can be funded and leads to reductions in capacity.¹⁵⁰

Table 8: Five-year summary of CMR clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2023	0.65
2022	1.15
2021	1.00
2020	1.28
2019	1.26
Total	5.34

In addition to the funding challenges, LMAC also says that obstacles to completion come from the persistent discovery of unreported contamination and the impact of working in "difficult terrains" which can slow down clearance at some sites.¹⁵¹ LMAC acknowledges, however, that all cluster munition-contaminated areas even those on difficult terrain need to be released in order to comply with Article 4.¹⁵²

In partnership with the GICHD, a joint study was launched in November 2020 to find a solution on how to address this

142 LMAC, Lebanon Mine Action Strategy 2011–2020, September 2011, p. 4.

143 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 29 March 2022; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form F.

144 Article 7 report (covering 2023), Form F.

145 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

146 Ibid.

147 Emails from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 14 April 2023; and Tomislav Vondracek, NPA, 5 May 2023.

148 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form F.

149 Email from Matthew Benson, DCA, 24 May 2021.

150 Email from Sylvain Lefort, MAG, 13 May 2024.

151 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form F.

152 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, answers to analysis group, 6 February 2020; revised 2020 Article 4 deadline Extension Request, 25 February 2020, pp. 40–42; and LMAC, "Annual Report 2021", pp. 30 and 33.

terrain and satisfy the requirements of the CCM.¹⁵³ The study was expected to be finalised in 2023 but this did not occur. The GICHD now expects to finalise the study by the end of 2024.¹⁵⁴

In 2023, NPA reported that most of the submunitions found (122 out of 136) originated from a single task. This task was suspended by LMAC in March, despite NPA's objections, to reassign clearance teams to smaller and easier tasks in hopes of removing more items from the database. NPA believes this approach is flawed, as the suspended task is the

most densely contaminated area in Lebanon. It accounted for 53% of all submunitions destroyed by all agencies between January 2016 and December 2022. Located in a steep-sided, heavily vegetated, and rocky valley, this task is considered a 'difficult terrain task'. NPA believes it will take at least another four years to clear. They argue that the longer the suspension lasts, the more challenging the task will become due to regrowth of vegetation and the increased risk of submunitions rolling into previously cleared areas.¹⁵⁵

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

According to LMAC, a tolerable level of residual risk will remain even after all major clearance is complete as hazardous areas not previously identified as containing CMR may be found in the future. LMAC understands the need to start building a sustainable national mine action capacity to deal with residual contamination. Between 2021 and 2025, Lebanon plans to determine an end state and elaborate an exit strategy; establish a sustainable structure capable of addressing remaining contamination and any residual challenge; and obtain national funding for the structures and build their capacity, all with support from international actors.¹⁵⁶ LMAC presented a draft exit strategy to all stakeholders including donors at a Mine Action Forum meeting in 2022.¹⁵⁷ LMAC has drafted an exit strategy but has postponed its finalisation until after Lebanon submits a second Article 4 deadline extension request,¹⁵⁸ due in 2025.

153 Emails from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 15 March 2021, and 29 March and 7 July 2022; and GICHD, 14 May 2021; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form F; and presentation of Lebanon, CCM Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 16 May 2022.

154 Email from Lt.-Col. Ali Makki, LMAC, 2 May 2024.

155 Email from Southern Craib, NPA, 22 April 2024.

156 LMAC, "Annual Report 2020", p. 31.

157 Email from Lt.-Col. Fadi Wazen, LMAC, 29 March 2022.

158 Email from Lt. Col. Charbel Njeim, LMAC, 2 July 2024.