

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2026 UNCLEAR WHETHER ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

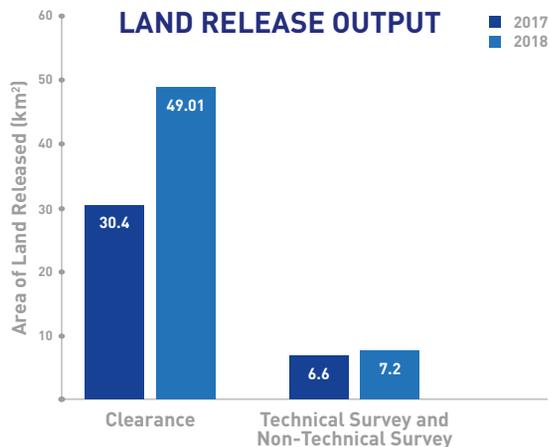
HEAVY, **100**km²
(ESTIMATED)

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2018

49.01km²

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2018

1,095 (including 111 destroyed as
part of the "less arms, fewer
tragedies" programme)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Maputo +15 Political Declaration aspiration): **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2018, Croatia released almost 49km² through clearance and 7.2km² through survey – a significant increase on the 30.4km² released through clearance and 6.6km² released through survey the previous year. However, many of the mined areas cleared in 2018 did not contain mines. This calls into question the efficiency of the demining and indicates the need for better use of pre-clearance survey to confirm

contamination before time- and cost-intensive full clearance is undertaken on mined areas recorded by the Croatian Mine Action Centre (CROMAC) as "confirmed". The failure of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to release mined area, in line with Croatia's Article 5 extension request plans for annual output, is also cause for concern.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- CROMAC should ensure that it has sufficient survey capacity in place to meet the targets outlined in its 2018 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline extension request.
- In addition to survey of suspected hazardous areas (SHAs), CROMAC should also review the basis on which confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) are established.
- The MoD should ensure sufficient capacity is in place and should significantly increase clearance to release mined areas on military land, in line with Croatia's 2018 Article 5 deadline extension request.
- CROMAC should fulfil the pledge in Croatia's 2018 extension request to explore the potential for mine detection dogs (MDDs) to enhance the efficiency of technical survey. The 2015 demining law, which only allows use of MDDs in clearance, should be amended if necessary.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	Large areas of CHA were cleared in 2018 (and previous years) without finding anti-personnel mines. This raises doubt regarding the evidence underpinning CHAs and indicates the need for better survey prior to any clearance.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	There is strong national ownership of mine action in Croatia, with political will to implement Article 5. In January 2019, CROMAC and the Office for Mine Action (OMA) were integrated within the Ministry of Interior (MoI), but this is not expected to impact Article 5 implementation.
GENDER (10% of overall score)	5	Gender policies and implementation regarding mine action in Croatia are addressed under the national Gender Equality Act, which includes guidelines of gender equality and regulates against gender-based discrimination. However, it is hard to determine the extent to which this is mainstreamed and implemented in the mine action sector.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & REPORTING (10% of overall score)	8	Croatia has an information management system that is compliant with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and which allows disaggregation of contamination by type and land release by method. Croatia provides regular updates on its progress in Article 5 implementation at APMBC meetings.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	Croatia has a national mine action strategy which expires in 2019, in addition to annual operational workplans for mine survey and clearance. Elaboration of a new national mine action strategy now falls is the responsibility of MoI.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	6	The 2015 law on mine action encompasses national mine action standards. Clearance of a significant number of CHAs in 2018 where no contamination was found, highlights the need for robust evidence-based survey prior to any clearance.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	8	Land release output in 2018 was significantly greater than the previous year, although Croatia is still not reaching the planned survey output. Furthermore, the MoD cleared less than 5% of the 2018 output planned in Croatia's 2018 extension request.
Average Score	6.8	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Ministry of Interior, in which CROMAC and OMA were integrated at the beginning of January 2019.

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Forty demining companies are accredited for mine and battle area clearance, of which 26 conducted clearance in 2018.

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Croatia is affected by mines and, to a much lesser extent, explosive remnants of war (ERW), including cluster munition remnants (CMR), a legacy of four years of armed conflict associated with the break-up of the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Croatia for further information).

At the end of 2018, Croatia had a total of more than 355km² of mined area, excluding military areas.¹ Of this total, 220km² was CHA, while mines were suspected to cover a further 135km² of SHA (see Table 1), collectively containing an estimated 31,862 anti-personnel mines and 6,430 anti-vehicle mines.²

A further 32.5km² of confirmed mined area exists in areas under military control, said to contain 25,276 anti-personnel mines and 1,040 anti-vehicle mines. More than 90% of this mined area is across three military training sites, but a barracks and three storage sites are also believed to be contaminated.³ The Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment is responsible for the clearance of all military facilities.⁴

This represents a decrease compared to the 269km² across 57 CHAs and 142km² across 47 SHAs, as at the end of the previous year.⁵ A total of 49km² was released through clearance and 7.2km² through survey in 2018. In addition, survey in 2018 added 1.4km² of previously unrecorded mined areas to Croatia's information management database.⁶

Eight of Croatia's twenty-one counties are still mine-affected. Sisak-Moslavina and Lika-Senj are the most heavily contaminated with anti-personnel mines, containing an estimated 12,479 and 11,129 mines, respectively, and accounting for 74% of the total number emplaced.⁷

At the end of 2018, 95.7% of mine contamination was on forested land; 4% on agricultural land; and 0.3% on other areas (e.g. water, marshland, and coastal areas).⁸ Of the total 355.5km² combined SHA and CHA, 60.12% is defined as Nature 2000 protected area.⁹ Much of the remaining mined area is in mountainous areas and has not been accessed for twenty years, so the terrain and conditions will pose challenges to demining.¹⁰

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by county (at end 2018)*¹¹

County	CHAs	Area (km ²)	SHAs	Area (km ²)
Karlovac	7	14.99	5	31.07
Lika-Senj	9	86.81	8	31.75
Osijek-Baranja	10	35.19	9	17.63
Požega-Slavonia	2	9.97	2	5.92
Split-Dalmatia	3	16.4	2	3.35
Sisak-Moslavina	10	30.97	9	27.43
Šibenik-Knin	4	13.54	2	4.6
Zadar	7	12.44	8	13.46
Totals	52	220.31	45	135.21

* A further 32.47km² of mined area exists in areas under military control.¹²

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In August 2018, the Croatian government formally concluded that some 54 government agencies, including CROMAC and the OMA, were to be integrated within existing state administration bodies. This was formally concluded through two pieces of legislation enacted in December 2018 and which entered into force on 1 January 2019.¹³ As a consequence of these laws, CROMAC and OMA ceased to exist as separate government entities and have been integrated into the Ministry of Interior (Mol).¹⁴

Prior to 2019, both CROMAC (established in 1998 as the umbrella organisation for mine action coordination),¹⁵ and the OMA (created in 2012 as a government focal point for mine action),¹⁶ had operated as independent entities.

A new law on mine action was adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 21 October 2015.¹⁷ While the 2015 Law, which was initiated by the OMA with the text drafted by the Ministry of Interior, marked an improvement in certain respects (for instance, by permitting land release through technical survey), there were concerns that the new law would impede efficient and effective mine action.¹⁸

Regarding accreditation, the Ministry of Interior now provides three separate permits: approval for manual mine detection, approval for mechanical mine detection, and approval for operations by mine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) detection dogs. This replaces the former unified accreditation licence.¹⁹

GENDER

As an integral part of the Mol, the Civil Protection Directorate implements the Gender Equality Act (Official Gazette 82/08 and 69/17), which establishes national guidelines for gender equality, regulates against gender-based discrimination, and creates equal opportunities for men and women, including with regards to employment.²⁰

According to the national authorities, women, men, boys and girls are all effectively consulted during survey and community liaison.²¹

No information was available from the national authorities on the proportion of women employed in operational roles in survey and clearance teams, or on the proportion of women in managerial/supervisory level positions.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

For the purpose of information management, CROMAC established a mine information system (MIS), which is said to be compliant with the IMAS and customised to meet CROMAC's needs. The MIS uses databases and a geographic information system (GIS) to deliver a fully integrated information management system.²² There are ongoing efforts to improve the quality of mine-related data, as a part of the regular activities of CROMAC's survey personnel.²³

Croatia submits annual Article 7 transparency reports and reports on its progress in Article 5 implementation at the APMBC intersessional meetings and meetings of states parties.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Croatia has a national mine action strategy for 2009–19, which was drafted by CROMAC with the agreement of concerned ministries, the OMA, the National Protection and Rescue Directorate, and local administration and self-administration bodies whose responsibility covers regions with hazardous areas.²⁴ The strategy, which was adopted by the Croatian Parliament, includes among its main goals the completion of mine clearance by 2019.²⁵ Elaboration of a new national mine action strategy falls under the jurisdiction of the Mol, which implies it could be a part of a nationwide strategy or the national programme of the Civil Protection Directorate for 2019–26.²⁶

In 2018, Croatia submitted and was granted a seven-year request to extend its APMBC Article 5 deadline from 1 March 2019 to 1 March 2026. In its 2018 Article 5 deadline extension request, Croatia stated it has prioritised the remaining mined areas according to those which affect safety; pose barriers to socio-economic development; and impact the environment in other ways. Priorities at the operative level are elaborated in annual demining action plans.²⁷

Based on approved funding, CROMAC drafts annual workplans, which are submitted to the responsible ministries and other state bodies for comment and approval.²⁸ According to its 2019 annual mine action plan, CROMAC planned to release a total of 54.8km² in 2019.²⁹

The Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment is responsible for clearance of all military facilities. The MoD submits its demining plan for military facilities to CROMAC annually.³⁰

In 2018, Croatia discussed the issue of national survey and clearance capacity to address mine and ERW contamination discovered after the release of contaminated areas or post completion (i.e. residual contamination), with the Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). CROMAC is working with the GICHD on a case study entitled "national capacities and residual contamination in Croatia", which will document progress that is being made on this issue. The integration of CROMAC within the Mol, which took effect from January 2019, is reported to be one of the first steps to deal with residual risk and liability and will elevate the issue within the Mol.³¹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

A new law on mine action was adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 21 October 2015, incorporating developments from the IMAS agreed upon at that time, and specifically those relating to the use of technical survey to confirm the presence or absence of contamination.³² The 2015 law introduces a new procedure for "supplementary general survey" (a form of non-technical survey) and enables "exclusion" (i.e. reduction) of SHAs through technical survey, which was not possible under the previous law.³³ The 2015 law has eliminated the need for standing operating procedures (SoPs), as all aspects of mine action are now clearly defined.³⁴ National mine action standards are also encompassed within it.³⁵

As clear from Table 3 on page 92, a significant number of CHAs were cleared in 2018 which were found to have no contamination. Furthermore, other large, overly-inflated CHAs were cleared with very few anti-personnel mines discovered. This strongly suggests the need for further evidence-based non-technical and technical survey prior to full clearance, in order to confirm direct evidence of mines and task areas for clearance or else cancel or reduce mined areas where no evidence of contamination exists.

OPERATORS

As a result of conditions for earlier World Bank funding, Croatia has an unusually commercialised mine action sector, with almost all civil clearance conducted by local companies competing for tenders. Much foreign donor funding is tendered by ITF Enhancing Human Security, while CROMAC manages tendering for the Croatian Government and European Union (EU) money in accordance with the Law on Public Procurement. The trust fund, "Croatia without Mines", raises money from private sources.³⁶

In 2018, 40 commercial companies were accredited to conduct mine and CMR clearance.³⁷ Of this, 26 companies were engaged in mine clearance operations in 2018 (see Table 3).³⁸ NGOs are barred from competing for commercial tenders as CROMAC views their subsidy by other funds as unfair.³⁹ The Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment is responsible for clearing all military facilities.⁴⁰

The state-owned enterprise, MUNGOS, was dissolved and its assets auctioned during the first half of 2018.⁴¹ The Croatian government decided to transfer MUNGOS employees to CROMAC, to help enhance QC activities and increase survey capacity.⁴²

CROMAC undertook all non-technical survey in 2018, deploying nine survey personnel. In 2018, CROMAC had approximately 40 deminers for technical survey, of whom 21 were previously employed by MUNGOS.⁴³

As barriers to entry into the mine clearance market are relatively low, there is considerable fragmentation. Of the 26 companies demining in 2018, 12 cleared less than one square kilometre (see Table 3).⁴⁴

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2014 needs assessment observed that in the preceding years the number of demining companies in Croatia had grown, but capacity overall had decreased.⁴⁵ A representative of the Croatian Employers' Association (CEA) – Humanitarian Demining Association – reported that the 2015 Mine Action Law had resulted in an increase in the number of demining organisations in Croatia.⁴⁶ This rise is in part due to deminers leaving employment and starting new firms, with the 2015 Law requiring a minimum of only five deminers per company.⁴⁷ The current number of demining companies is disproportionate to the number of deminers, and according to a representative from CROMAC, it would be better to have half the number of companies, but with each one being properly managed.⁴⁸

Lower demining costs are said to make it more difficult for firms to make a profit on clearance. Larger firms claimed they were hampered by earlier over-investment in mechanical assets and equipment based on assumptions that funding would match the levels outlined in the 2009–19 mine action strategy.⁴⁹ A non-governmental organisation (NGO) representative claimed that the quality of demining suffers when the price of demining is low.⁵⁰ A director of a commercial demining firm echoed this concern, saying that lower prices put greater pressure on deminers to clear

more square metres a day.⁵¹ The Humanitarian Demining Association indicated that the 2015 Law on Mine Action has resulted in more pressure on deminers to work longer periods each year, as the new law does not set a minimum wage.⁵² In 2018, CROMAC reported that the average price of demining operations had increased compared to the previous year, which it believed is due to market stabilisation in the mine action sector.⁵³

In 2014, CROMAC reported it had started issuing larger value tenders, to allow companies to reduce the cost of their operations, saying that this had provided an incentive for companies to do better planning and to cooperate with each other.⁵⁴ A CROMAC representative claimed that although prices were lower, the larger tenders allowed continual work, resulted in fewer stoppages, and enabled companies to negotiate on better terms with hotels and services in their project areas.⁵⁵

However, bigger contracts, some of which covered areas as large as 5km², resulted in companies needing to form large consortia to compete for the new tenders. It was envisaged that four or five companies would form each consortium, but CROMAC has seen instances of 25 companies per consortium, and even of 30 companies bidding together.⁵⁶ In some instances, this has resulted in disputes over the allocation of funds and areas assigned for clearance within the consortia, often to the disadvantage of smaller organisations.⁵⁷ Very large project tenders are also more complicated to draft and demand more time and resources to administer and monitor.⁵⁸

The 2014 UNDP needs assessment recommended that CROMAC consider longer-term contracting to maximise use of operational assets in Croatia for both technical survey and mine clearance.⁵⁹ However, CROMAC plans operations on a yearly basis, in accordance with the annual and three-year demining plans, which are set by the Government. CROMAC is unable to award multi-year contracts because it has to budget year-by-year, and in accordance with its own by-laws it is not possible to contract and reserve funds for the next year until the corresponding annual budget had been set.⁶⁰

UNDP also noted that the current contracting of defined polygons is suitable for mine clearance but would not be conducive to effective technical survey, and called for a new procedure to be drafted once the law is changed.⁶¹ The Humanitarian Demining Association said it would be preferable if, where possible, technical survey was already undertaken on project tasks prior to tendering them, so that commercial companies have as much information as possible to accurately plan for the tender.⁶²

With the adoption of the new law, which enables use of technical survey, CROMAC planned to target demining on confirmed mined areas and to conduct technical survey on the remaining SHA.⁶³ As noted previously, CROMAC took on employees from the dissolved national clearance operator MUNGOS at the end of 2017, to help increase survey and QC capacity.⁶⁴

OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Clearance operations in Croatia are conducted manually, with mechanical assets, and using MDDs. In accordance with the 2015 Act on Mine Action and its prescribed demining methodologies, MDDs were used only for clearance and not technical survey.⁶⁵

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2018

A total of 56km² of mined area was released in 2018, of which over 48.8km² was cleared by commercial demining companies and 7.2km² was released by CROMAC through survey (4.9km² reduced through technical survey and 2.3km² cancelled through non-technical survey).⁶⁶ In addition, a further 0.2km² was cleared by the Croatian army on military sites.

During land release operations a total of 1,095 anti-personnel mines were destroyed (968 by CROMAC and 127 by the MoD and Mol); 53 anti-vehicle mines (11 by CROMAC and 42 by the MoD and Mol); 460,406 other items of UXO (1,409 by CROMAC and 458,997 by the MoD and Mol).⁶⁷

SURVEY IN 2018

CROMAC released a total of 7.2km² through survey in 2018,⁶⁸ of which 2.3km² was cancelled through non-technical survey and almost 4.9km² was reduced through technical survey (see Table 2). This is a small increase on the 6.6km² released through survey in 2017.⁶⁹

No data was available on survey activities of the MoD.

In addition, survey in 2018 resulted in the addition of 1.4km² of previously unrecorded mined areas to Croatia's contamination in information management database.⁷⁰

Table 2: Reduction of mined area through technical survey in 2018⁷¹

County	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Karlovac	CROMAC	484,228
Požega-Slavonia	CROMAC	1,199,034
Split-Dalmatia	CROMAC	448
Sisak-Moslavina	CROMAC	1,347,716
Zadar	CROMAC	1,865,646
Total		4,897,072

CLEARANCE IN 2018

In 2018, 49km² of mined area was released through clearance (48.8km² by operators working under the direction of CROMAC (see Table 3) and a further 0.2km² by the Croatian army). During land release operations a total of 1,095 anti-personnel mines were destroyed (968 by CROMAC and 127 by the MoD and Mol); 53 anti-vehicle mines (11 by CROMAC and 42 by the MoD and Mol); 460,406 other items of UXO (1,409 by CROMAC and 458,997 by the MoD and Mol).⁷²

The 49km² of total mined area cleared in 2018 is a huge increase on 2017, when 30.4km² of mined area was released through clearance (29.9km² by operators working under the direction of CROMAC and a further 0.2km² by the Croatian army).

The increase in clearance output for 2018, compared to the previous year, is in part because of a change in when Croatia records clearance output, which is now only upon official certification. Consequently, several clearance projects completed in 2017, only received certification in 2018, thereby increasing the 2018 clearance output. In addition, realisation of €5.3 million in forest-related demining funds contracted in 2017 was delayed to 2018 (in addition to realisation of funds already allocated to 2018), thereby increasing funding and resulting clearance output in 2018.⁷³

Table 3: Mine clearance in 2018²⁴

Operator	County	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Alfa	Karlovac	1	70,903	0	0	0
Capsula Interna	BP/Lika-Senj/Sisak-Moslavina	4	3,377,363	21	0	203
Cor	BP/Lika-Senj/Šibenik-Knin	5	1,531,484	46	0	5
Detektor	Lika-Senj	1	1,167,209	35	0	40
Diz-Eko	Šibenik-Knin	1	108,950	0	0	0
Dok-Ing	Karlovac/Lika-Senj/ Sisak-Moslavina/Šibenik-Knin	7	4,815,397	58	0	202
Eksplorator	Lika-Senj	1	1,541,424	40	0	0
Fas	Karlovac/Osijek-Baranja/ Sisak-Moslavina/Split-Dalmatia	4	484,522	19	0	2
Fossio	Lika-Senj	1	266,802	0	0	0
Harpija	Karlovac/Lika-Senj/ Požega-Slavonia	6	1,795,312	201	0	245
Heksogen	Osijek-Baranja/ Požega-Slavonia/Šibenik-Knin/ Sisak-Moslavina	5	4,612,619	116	8	3
Istraživač	Lika-Senj/Osijek-Baranja/ Požega-Slavonia/ Sisak-Moslavina/Osijek-Baranja	6	3,306,913	40	0	323
Istraživač-Benz	Zadar	1	71,610	0	0	0
Kripton	Sisak-Moslavina	1	1,068	0	0	0
Mapper	Lika-Senj/Sisak-Moslavina	2	663,538	0	0	0
MKA demining	Požega-Slavonia	1	199,558	0	0	0
Orkan	Sisak-Moslavina	1	147,605	7	0	0
Piper	Karlovac/Lika-Senj	8	4,131,492	1	0	0
Piper	Sisak-Moslavina	1	10,241	0	0	0
Piton	Lika-Senj/Požega-Slavonia/ Sisak-Moslavina	3	1,263,840	24	3	4
Rumital	Lika-Senj/Sisak-Moslavina/ Zadar	4	3,924,642	78	0	113
Tetrazen	Lika-Senj/Požega-Slavonia	3	1,078,242	86	0	0
Titan	Karlovac/Lika-Senj/ Požega-Slavonia/Sisak Moslavina/ Šibenik-Knin	10	5,089,204	9	0	6
TNT7	Lika-Senj/Split-Dalmatia	3	982,852	0	0	0
Tornado	Lika-Senj/Šibenik-Knin	2	717,842	38	0	3
Zeleni kvadrat	Karlovac/Lika-Senj/ Sisak-Moslavina/ Šibenik-Knin Zadar	10	7,465,555	149	0	260
Totals		92	48,826,187	968	11	1,409

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

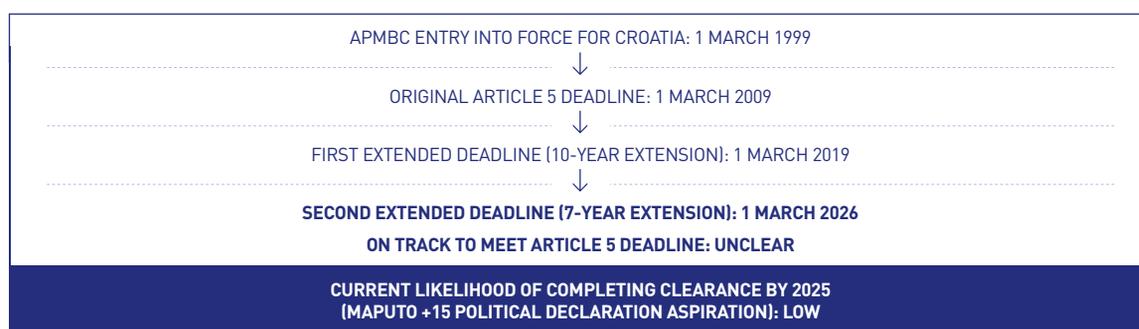
In addition, the Croatian army searched and cleared 185,416m² of military facilities in 2018, during which 16 anti-personnel mines and 12 items of UXO were found and destroyed.⁷⁵ This is a decrease on the 0.48km² of military facilities cleared in 2017.⁷⁶ As part of the continued “less arms, fewer tragedies” programme, the Croatian Police (under the MoI), and in partnership with the UNDP, also collected 111 anti-personnel mines and 42 anti-vehicle mines, which were subsequently transported to Croatian military facilities and destroyed.⁷⁷

According to its 2018 Annual Plan of Mines Action, CROMAC had planned to release a total of 56.5km² in 2018: 39.8km² through clearance and 16.7km² through technical survey and supplementary general survey (during which control samples are taken to determine the absence of mines and UXO).⁷⁸ Actual 2018 output was 56.03km², although was achieved

through conducting more clearance (48.83km²) than planned and less survey (7.2km²). In 2018, the largest proportion of clearance was in areas planned for economic activities, especially agricultural land, which the local and regional governments have stated as their priority.⁷⁹

The first part of the Swiss-funded project “Demining and Socio-Economic Integration”, focused on demining of heavily-mined Kotar forest, started on 6 August 2018 and finished on 17 September. In total, 1.74km² of forest was demined, with more than 3,500 mines and UXO discovered. According to Croatia, this is the highest number of mines/UXO found on a single mined area in the 20 years of Croatia’s mine action programme. At the height of clearance, around 260 deminers from 26 companies were deployed on a daily basis.⁸⁰

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMB (and in accordance with the second extension (of seven years) granted by states parties in 2018), Croatia is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2026. It is unclear if Croatia is on track to meet this deadline, as clearance of military facilities appears to be falling behind schedule.

Croatia’s 2018 request for a further seven-year extension to its Article 5 deadline, was submitted on “the basis that this is a realistic but not unambitious amount of time given the extent of the remaining problem and the human, material and financial resources available or expected, and the demining and survey capacities currently available.”⁸¹ All relevant stakeholders in the Croatian mine action system are reported to have been involved in the analysis conducted as part of extension request process, and the request has also been “verified by the Croatian Government, which adopted the text of the 2nd Request thus giving it much needed political weight.”⁸²

While Croatia has requested an extended deadline of 1 March 2026, it foresees that survey and clearance operations will be completed by the end of 2025, leaving only administrative/paperwork issues to be settled in the beginning of 2026.⁸³

The remaining mined area to be addressed during the period of Croatia’s second extension (1 March 2019 to 1 March 2026) covers 387.3km². Implementing the extension request will require clearance of CHA (with minefield records), totalling 173.9 km² (including 32km² of mined area on MoD land); clearance of CHA (with no minefield records, but for which there is evidence of contamination), totalling 79.5km²; and survey and release of SHA totalling 133.9km² (see Table 4).⁸⁴ Survey will take place between 2019 and 2025, but any resulting clearance required, expected to be completed by the end of 2025.⁸⁵

Table 4: Planned demining output in km² (2019–26)⁸⁶

Area		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	1 March 2026	Totals
Mined area (with minefield records)	Authorised demining organisations	29.4	28.7	28.3	24.7	20.8	10	0	0	141.9
	Croatian Army (MoD area)	5	5	5	6	6	5	0	0	32
	Totals	34.4	33.7	33.3	30.7	26.8	15.0	0	0	173.9
Mined area (no records)		6	6	8.2	12.5	16.3	19.5	11	0	79.5
Survey		14	14	14	14	15.5	23.7	38.7	0	133.9
Sum totals		54.4	53.7	55.5	57.2	58.6	58.2	49.7	0	387.3

Given current capacity and the type of terrain and structure of remaining mined area, Croatia expects to be able to release roughly 56km² per year over the next seven years.⁸⁷ For comparison, in the seven-year period 2011–17, a total of 440km² was released: 238km² through clearance and 202km² through survey, which included significant amounts of cancellation between 2011 and 2015.⁸⁸ Considering that most of the remaining mined area is in more challenging terrain, which will significantly reduce the use of demining machinery, the 253.4km² of clearance (and 133.9km² of survey) forecast over the next seven years is very ambitious, without increased capacity or improved efficiency.

Demining of military facilities/MoD area is conducted by Demining Battalion of the Engineering Regiment, according to plan made by the MoD.⁸⁹ The 5km² to 6km² per year planned for in the 2018 extension request, is substantially more than what the armed forces have cleared in recent years, and in 2018, the MoD cleared less than 0.2km², which is even less than the previous year.

Croatia reportedly has sufficient mine action capacity for release of remaining mined area on its territory by 2026 but asserts that completion of Article 5 by 2026 is contingent on securing the necessary budget.⁹⁰ However, Croatia did not reach its planned survey output in 2018, calling into question whether it yet has sufficient (and sufficiently capable) survey capacity.

Funds from the EU have steadily increased over the last few years, surpassing funds from the state budget in recent years. CROMAC was in the final stage of securing funding from ESI funds (e.g. structural and cohesion funds, cross-border cooperation fund), which gives it confidence in financing the implementation of the land release goals set out in the 2018 extension request. Croatia expected to also secure funding from the public company “Croatian Forests” (state budget of forest management positions).⁹¹

Since the APMBBC entered into force for Croatia, more than €727 million has been invested in humanitarian demining, of which Croatia’s national budget had accounted for the majority (€417 million) for the Article 5 implementation.⁹² Croatia estimates that the fulfilment of its Article 5 obligations will cost a total of a further €459 million.⁹³ Funding for the remainder of demining under the extension request is expected to come from the national budget (52.3%); EU/ESI funds (21.8%); EU/cross border cooperation with BiH (15.3%); state budget of forest management positions (10.2%); and from donations (0.4%).⁹⁴

Croatia’s 2018 extension request stresses that as the remaining areas to be cleared are mainly forested (89.7%), there will be a significant reduction in the use of demining machinery, especially medium and heavy machines.⁹⁵ Croatia foresees that more use will be made of small, mobile machines that can be efficiently transported and used in affected areas, and that the resulting increase in manual demining will reduce productivity and increase the cost of clearance and technical survey. Use of mechanical assets is also further restricted in the Nature 2000 protected area.⁹⁶ Croatia plans to research and develop methods and techniques for the use of MDDs, especially for technical survey operations, as a potentially more effective tool to address mined areas in mountainous terrain.⁹⁷ However, this would require amendment to the 2015 demining law, which does not currently permit use of MDDs for technical survey.

More than 196km² of mined area in Croatia has been cleared over the last five years (see Table 5). However, while annual clearance output exceeds the targets in Croatia’s 2009–19 mine action strategy,⁹⁸ the amount of land released through survey each year has fallen well behind the yearly targets outlined in the strategy. In order to ensure Croatia meets its Article 5 obligation by 1 March 2026, CROMAC will need to increase its capacity and implementation of survey operations to more accurately determine the size and location of contamination, and to cancel and reduce areas in which no evidence of contamination is found.

Table 5: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance (2014–18)

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2018	49.0
2017	30.4
2016	38.8
2015	40.6
2014	37.7
Total	196.5

1 APMBBC Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form C.

2 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form C. The contamination table in Croatia’s Article 7 report contains a very small discrepancy in that the correct sum of the total number of anti-personnel mines is 31,864.

3 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C, Table 2 lists the number of anti-personnel mines in military facilities as 25,276, but the sum of the table values totals 25,283. The total number of anti-vehicle mines is listed as 0 on the Article 7 report, but the sum of the table values totals 1,040.

4 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25.

5 Email from Nataša Mateković, Assistant Director and Head of Planning and Analysis Department, CROMAC, 2 May 2017.

6 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.

7 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 33; and Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form C.

8 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form C.

9 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.

10 Interview with Nataša Mateković, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.

11 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form C; and email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.

12 Ibid.

13 Act on Amendments to the Act on Mine Action (OG No. 118/2018) and Act on Amendment to the Act on the Government (OG No. 116/2018).

14 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019; and CCM Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form J.

15 CROMAC, “National Mine Action Strategy of Croatia 2009–2019”, Zagreb, June 2009, p. 2.

16 Interviews with Dijana Pleština, (then) Director, OMA, in Geneva, 23 May 2012 and 10 April 2014; and email from Miļenko Vaharić, CROMAC, 4 July 2013.

- 17 OG No. 110/15; and CCM Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A.
- 18 Interviews with Neven Karas, CROMAC; and Tomislav Ban, Assistant Director and Head of Sector for Operational Planning and Programming, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 19 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 24 August 2016.
- 20 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C; Statement of Croatia, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 7 June 2018; and email from Davor Laura, CROMAC, 6 April 2018.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 CROMAC website, "CROMAC's Mine Information System", accessed 26 June 2018.
- 23 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 24 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25.
- 25 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2015), Form B.
- 26 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 27 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8 and 11.
- 28 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25.
- 31 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 32 National Gazette No. 110/15; and CCM Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A.
- 33 CCM Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A; and emails from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 13 and 18 May 2016.
- 34 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 13 May 2016; and CCM Article 7 Report (for 2015), Form A.
- 35 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 13 May 2016.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form C; 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 43; and email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 38 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 39 Interview with Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, Sisak, 14 April 2014.
- 40 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 25.
- 41 Email from Dejan Rendulić, CROMAC, 11 September 2018.
- 42 Email from Davor Laura, CROMAC, 6 April 2018.
- 43 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 UNDP, "Mine Action Recovery Needs Assessment for Flooded Areas in Eastern Croatia", 2014, p. 16.
- 46 Interview with a representative of the CEA, Humanitarian Demining Association, Zagreb, 17 May 2017.
- 47 Interviews with Hrvoje Debač, OMA, 17 May 2017, Zagreb; and Tomislav Ban, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 48 Interview with Tomislav Ban, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 49 Interview with Zeljko Romic, Piper Demining, Zagreb, 17 March 2015.
- 50 Email from Marija Breber, Social Worker, Mine Aid, 25 March 2015.
- 51 Interview with Zeljko Romic, Piper Demining, Zagreb, 17 March 2015.
- 52 Interview with a representative of the CEA, Humanitarian Demining Association, Zagreb, 17 May 2017.
- 53 Email from Davor Laura, CROMAC, 6 April 2018.
- 54 Interview with Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, in Zagreb, 16 March 2015.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Interview with Tomislav Ban, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 57 Interviews with Hrvoje Debač, OMA, 17 May 2017, Zagreb; a representative of the CEA, Humanitarian Demining Association, Zagreb, 17 May 2017; and Tomislav Ban, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 58 Interview with Kristina Dorosulić, Head of Public Procurement, CROMAC, Sisak, 18 May 2017.
- 59 UNDP, "Mine Action Recovery Needs Assessment for Flooded Areas in Eastern Croatia", 2014, p. 4.
- 60 Interview with Hrvoje Debač, OMA, 17 May 2017, Zagreb.
- 61 UNDP, "Mine Action Recovery Needs Assessment for Flooded Areas in Eastern Croatia", 2014, p. 4.
- 62 Interview with a representative of the CEA, Humanitarian Demining Association, Zagreb, 17 May 2017.
- 63 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, CROMAC, 21 October 2016.
- 64 Email from Davor Laura, CROMAC, 6 April 2018.
- 65 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 66 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C; and Statement of Croatia, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 31 May 2019.
- 67 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Email from Davor Laura, CROMAC, 6 April 2018.; and Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C.
- 70 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 71 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019; and Statement of Croatia, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 31 May 2019.
- 72 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C.
- 73 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 7 August 2019.
- 74 Email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 75 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C; and email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 76 Article 7 Report (for 2016), Form C; and CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (for 2016), Form A.
- 77 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C.
- 78 Statement of Croatia, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 7 June 2018.
- 79 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form C.
- 80 Statement of Croatia, APMBC 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 27 November 2018.
- 81 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.
- 82 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional information submitted 21 June 2018, p. 1.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 39.
- 85 Ibid, pp. 41 and 42.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Ibid, pp. 36, 39, and 44.
- 88 See Mine Action Review and Landmine Monitor reports on clearance in Croatia covering 2011–16.
- 89 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 43.
- 90 Ibid., p. 39.
- 91 Ibid., pp. 36 and 39.
- 92 Ibid., p. 8.
- 93 Ibid., p. 44.
- 94 Ibid., p. 45.
- 95 Ibid., p. 43.
- 96 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 45; and email from Slavenka Ivšić, Civil Protection Directorate, 23 May 2019.
- 97 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 43, 44, and 45; and Additional information submitted 21 June 2018, p. 1.
- 98 National Mine Action Strategy of the Republic of Croatia, 2008, p. 10.