

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 APRIL 2020
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION:

MEDIUM, 5KM²
(ESTIMATED)

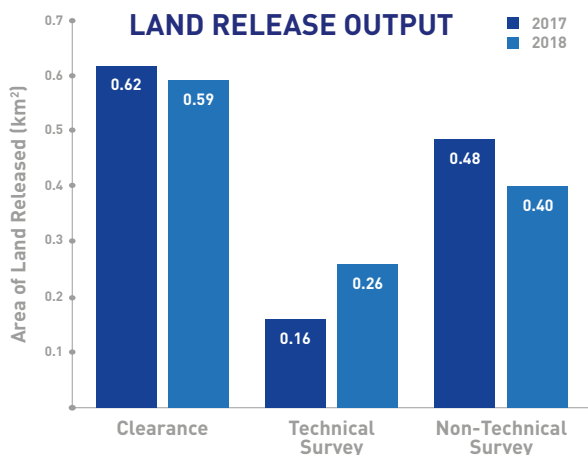
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2018

0.59 KM²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2018

5,013

(including 15 destroyed
during spot tasks)



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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2018, the Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) began elaborating what may be Tajikistan's final Article 5 extension request, with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Tajikistan is requesting a final extension of its deadline to 31 December 2025, but the forecast that this will be enough time to complete clearance is based on a significant expansion in capacity, which has not yet been secured.

Tajikistan also approved a national gender strategy in mine action for 2018–22 in October 2018, elaborated with support

from the Geneva Mine Action Programme (GMAP, now a programme of the Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)).

The first ever state visit of the President of Uzbekistan to Tajikistan took place in March 2018, and several agreements were signed between the two countries, including one on demarcation of the separate regions of the Tajik-Uzbek border where mines remain. Any survey of the border will require agreement and cooperation between both nations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Tajikistan should seek to expand its demining capacity in order to survey its 41 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) as soon as possible, in order to more accurately determine the extent of mine contamination.
- Tajikistan should commit to provide regular updates to Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) states parties on progress in implementing Article 5 during the extension period.
- Tajikistan should consider expanding the humanitarian demining capacity of the Tajik Armed Forces, as well as further exploring the potential to train and deploy Tajik Border Guard forces, to help it meet its Article 5 obligations.
- Tajikistan should report more accurately and consistently on land release data, in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	Tajikistan's baseline of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination is not yet an accurate assessment. Forty-one SHAs have yet to be surveyed, and many confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) require further survey to more accurately locate and delineate the actual minefield. The extent of mined area on the Uzbek border also has still to be accurately determined.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	Tajikistan has strong national ownership of mine action, including the contribution of Ministry of Defence (MoD) clearance teams. There is political will and an enabling environment for Article 5 implementation.
GENDER (10% of overall score)	7	A national gender strategy in mine action for 2018–22, elaborated with support from GMAP, was approved in October 2018. Mine Action data is disaggregated by sex and age, and women and children consulted during community liaison.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	TNMAC is in the process of installing Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core, with support from the GICHD.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	Tajikistan has a National Strategy on Humanitarian Mine Action 2017–2020, and is developing a strategic workplan for implementation of Article 5, in line with the deadline extension it is requesting to the end of 2025. The GICHD has worked with TNMAC and UNDP to develop PriSMA (the Priority Setting Tool for Mine Action).
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	Tajikistan has appropriate national mine action standards in place, and deploys evidence-based land release methodology. It currently lacks sufficient survey capacity, but is slowly developing this.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	Tajikistan cleared nearly 0.6km ² of mined area in 2018. This is less than it had planned to clear, and is substantially less than the average 1.3km ² of clearance per annum foreseen in its deadline extension request. In order to meet planned targets and have any chance of meeting its Article 5 obligations by 2025, Tajikistan must secure funding for additional capacity.
Average Score	6.3	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law (CIIHL)
- Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- TNMAC
- Ministry of Defence (MoD), Humanitarian Demining Company (HDC)
- Union of Sappers Tajikistan (UST)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- Tajik Border Guard Forces
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Tajikistan is affected by mines and, to a much lesser extent, explosive remnants of war (ERW), including cluster munition remnants, as a result of past conflicts (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2019* report on Tajikistan for further information).

At the end of 2018, Tajikistan had 12.1km² of mined area: just over 7.9km² of mine contamination across 154 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and almost 4.2km² across 95 SHAs, as set out in Table 1.¹ The mined areas are located in four provinces.

The overall baseline contamination at the end of 2018 is an increase compared to the end of 2017, which it stood at 7.46km² of CHA and almost 1.35km² of SHA.² This is largely due to 3.25km² of legacy SHA on the Tajik-Uzbek border being added to the baseline of mined area. However, even taking this into account, the difference in figures between mined area as at the end of 2017 and 2018, cannot be satisfactorily explained or reconciled.

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by province (at end 2018)³

Province	District	CHA		SHA	
		Nos.	Area (m ²)	Nos.	Area (m ²)
Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region	Darvoz	8	1,169,600	2	20,000
	Vanj	6	908,119	0	0
	Shugnan	3	56,000	0	0
	Ishkoshi	0	0	1	5,000
Subtotals		17	2,133,719	3	25,000
Khatlon	Farkhor	6	96,800	1	8,000
	Hamadoni	3	80,772	6	177,000
	Panj	24	1,600,585	13	204,000
	Jayhun	8	135,636	11	307,000
	Shamsiddin Shohin	91	3,659,698	4	140,000
	Kabodiyon	1	0	0	0
	Shahri	1	30,000	0	0
	Khovaling	2	120,000	1	30,000
Subtotals		136	5,723,491	36	866,000
Sughd Region (Uzbek border)	Asht	0	0	11	610,000
	Ayni	0	0	5	535,000
	Isfara	0	0	20	1,105,000
	Konibodom	0	0	3	165,000
	Panjakent	0	0	13	715,000
	Shahriston	0	0	2	120,000
Subtotals		0	0	54	3,250,000
Central Region	Sangvor	1	50,000	2	50,000
Subtotals		1	50,000	2	50,000
Totals		154	7,907,210	95	4,191,000

Mine contamination in Tajikistan is the consequence of different conflicts. Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan was mined by Russian forces in 1992–98; the border with Uzbekistan was mined by Uzbek forces in 1999–2001; and the Central Region of Tajikistan was contaminated as a result of the 1992–97 civil war.⁴

A national survey in 2003–05 by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) estimated that mine and ERW contamination extended over 50km².⁵ Tajikistan subsequently alleged that lack of experience among the initial survey teams, the absence of minefield records and other important information, and inadequate equipment led to that first impact survey generating unreliable results. As a result, the sizes of SHAs were miscalculated and their descriptions not clearly recorded.⁶ While most minefield maps/records are of good quality, some do not reflect the reality on the ground and as such the records have to be verified and validated through survey and data analysis.⁷

Mine contamination remains in the provinces of Khatlon and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) along the Afghan border (reported to contain 60,357 anti-personnel mines), in the Central Region, and along the Uzbek border.⁸ Shamsiddin Shohin district (formerly known as Shuroobod district) in Khatlon province is the most heavily mined district. Mines were laid in and around military positions on hilltops overlooking the Panj river valley, mostly delivered remotely by helicopter or laid by troops who were moved in and out by helicopter as there are no established roads or tracks to access the minefields for survey or clearance.⁹

Depending on the weather, land release operations in the Khatlon region of the border usually start in February/March; the GBAO part of the border only becomes accessible from May until October; and the Central Region from June until September.¹⁰

Information about mined areas on the Tajik-Uzbek border is limited and based on non-technical survey conducted in 2011–15 by FSD and a needs assessment survey by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 2013–15. However, the FSD non-technical survey did not cover the whole of the Tajik-Uzbek border, only Sughd province, and it was not comprehensive, being mainly based on incident forms as the boundary line was not accessible to survey teams. Records lack detail on the exact location where mine incidents occurred.¹¹

While Tajikistan and Uzbekistan settled most of their 1,283km-long border dispute following the collapse of the Soviet Union, certain areas have not yet been delineated and therefore the exact location of mined areas is not known. Most of the mined areas are thought to be in disputed sections of the Tajik-Uzbek border which have not been accessible, and for which evaluation and analysis of information is not yet complete.¹² Most of the mines are believed to be on Uzbek territory,¹³ but there is a possibility that some mines may have been displaced downhill into Tajikistan due to landslides or flooding.¹⁴ The 3.25km² of SHA on the border with Uzbekistan, included in Tajikistan's 2019 extension request,¹⁵ is a rough estimate and the actual extent of any anti-personnel mined area on Tajik territory along this border will only be more accurately established once both countries permit survey and have delimited the border.

The first ever state visit of the President of Uzbekistan to Tajikistan took place in March 2018, and several agreements were signed between the two countries, including one on demarcation of the separate regions of the Tajik-Uzbek border.¹⁶ Any demining operations will require agreement and cooperation between the two nations; as at July 2019, the Tajik Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) was in negotiation with the Uzbek MoFA regarding survey of the Tajik-Uzbek border.¹⁷

In September 2013, records of 110 (subsequently corrected to 107) previously unrecorded and unsurveyed minefields were made public for the first time, with security constraints said to have prevented survey activities in the past.¹⁸ All are located in the provinces of Khatlon and the GBAO along the border with Afghanistan.¹⁹ Non-technical survey of the minefields began in 2014.²⁰ As at May 2019, 41 unsurveyed SHAs (corresponding to 30 minefield records) were said to remain.²¹ TNMAC plans to complete survey of the remaining unsurveyed minefields by 2023.²² While none of the unsurveyed areas is considered completely inaccessible for the survey (or for subsequent clearance),²³ serious challenges have been reported during survey in accessing the mined areas in mountainous terrain and with one mined area blocking access to a number of others.²⁴

Furthermore, many surveyed minefield records/CHAs do not accurately reflect the reality in the field, as significant time has passed since the minefield records were made and the landscape may have changed in the meantime. Further technical survey/re-survey is therefore required to more accurately locate and delineate the actual mine contamination.

According to Tajikistan, the total size of un-surveyed area is estimated to be 941,000m² (with approximately 11,685 mines) and the total area planned for re-survey is 2,770,557m². Survey and re-survey of these areas will be conducted by Union of Sapers of Tajikistan (UST) and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). Tajikistan acknowledges the urgency and importance of establishing a clear baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination as soon as possible and in August 2019 TNMAC announced that a survey working group will be established with expert representatives from all key stakeholders and implementing partners, under the guidance and direction of TNMAC. The group will help plan and prioritise survey tasks.²⁵

With the introduction of an arrangement for medical evacuation by helicopter, in collaboration with the Armed Forces, there are no longer any mined areas deemed to be "inaccessible".²⁶ There are, however, mined areas on two islands in the Panj river on the Tajik-Afghan border, one of which is 538,500m² in size and the other 30,000m², which are said to be "non-executable" at the present time. The islands were created by a change in the flow of the river, and it is possible that the river may again change its path and re-connect the islands with the Tajik river bank in the future.²⁷

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law (CIHL), chaired by the first deputy of the Prime Minister, and containing key representatives from relevant line ministries, acts as Tajikistan's national mine action authority, responsible for mainstreaming mine action in the government's socio-economic development policies.²⁸

In June 2003, the Government of Tajikistan and UNDP established the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (TMAC) with a view to it becoming a nationally owned programme in the short term,²⁹ though this did not happen until more than ten years later. TMAC was made responsible for coordinating and monitoring all mine action activities.³⁰ Since then, TMAC has acted as the secretariat for the CIHL to which it reports.³¹

On 3 January 2014, TNMAC was established by government decree to replace TMAC.³² While transition to national ownership is considered to have been successful, UNDP's Support to Tajikistan Mine Action Programme (STMAP) project has continued to support the building of sustainable national structures and TNMAC's technical capacity.³³ In 2018, UNDP helped TNMAC to elaborate Tajikistan's plan for Article 5 completion. UNDP plans to transfer assets, knowledge, and expertise directly to TNMAC³⁴ with UNDP support due to decrease in 2019.³⁵ In 2016, Tajikistan's Parliament adopted a Law on Humanitarian Mine Action, which covers all aspects of mine action.³⁶

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) plays a significant role in Tajikistan's mine action sector, in particular by conducting demining directly.³⁷ The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Programme Office in Dushanbe (OSCE POiD) has supported the MoD to update its multi-year plan, entitled "Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Tajikistan Co-operation Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2023".³⁸

An agreement on cooperation between the Governments of Tajikistan and Afghanistan was signed in 2014, since when TNMAC has coordinated with the UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACCA) and Afghanistan's Department of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) on land release approaches, NMAS, exchange visits, cross-border projects, victim assistance, and risk education.³⁹ Since 2017, this also includes collaboration on quality management (QM).⁴⁰

In 2018, the Government of Tajikistan supported TNMAC coordination activities with funding of US\$53,933.⁴¹ In addition, the Tajik government contributes five MoD demining teams (500,000 Tajik Somoni), and provides support for the joint projects of TNMAC and UNDP, and OSCE POiD.⁴² In total, \$480,000 is allocated annually from Tajikistan's state budget as in-kind contributions.⁴³

GENDER

In September 2017, experts from the Geneva Mine Action Programme (GMAP, now a programme of the GICHD) prepared and submitted to TNMAC a draft of a national gender strategy in mine action for 2018–22. The strategy was approved by TNMAC in October 2018.⁴⁴ Gender in Tajikistan is also addressed by a number of laws and documents, including the national development strategy through to 2030, approved by the parliament on 1 December 2016.⁴⁵

TNMAC reported that women and children are consulted during survey and community liaison activities. As at July 2019, community liaison/non-technical survey teams were not yet gender balanced, but TNMAC plans to diversify survey teams to help reach a wider audience and more sources of information. Relevant mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age.⁴⁶

Women account for around 20% of survey and clearance teams in Tajikistan, and around 25% of managerial/supervisory level positions.⁴⁷ According to its 2019 Article 5 extension request, Tajikistan aims to double its demining capacity, subject to funding.⁴⁸ Such an increase to operational capacity will present an opportunity to build on the lessons learned from fielding female and mixed teams, and to improve the gender balance for deminers in line with Tajikistan's Gender and Diversity Mine Action Strategy.

The MoD's Humanitarian Demining Company (HDC) does not currently have a gender policy or implementation plan. However, the HDC does consult with all groups, including women and children, during survey and community liaison activities. While there is equal access to employment for qualified women and men in the HDC survey and clearance teams, including for managerial level/supervisory positions, in practice women do not apply for these positions and as at August 2019, no women were employed by the HDC.⁴⁹

The HDC deploys conscript soldiers as deminers, with regular MoD personnel overseeing operations. In Tajikistan, military service is compulsory for men and voluntary for women. However, while there are no formal obstacles for women undertaking military service, very few currently choose to do so, which also helps explain the absence of women serving in the HDC. The OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe regularly emphasises the importance of including women in all aspects of the work and especially as officers and in managerial positions.⁵⁰ TNMAC has acknowledged that it will be a challenge to achieve gender balance as those who currently serve in the military are predominantly male. However it will discuss and prioritise identifying key positions that can be filled by female candidates, such as paramedics and/or QA/QC officers, in addition to seeking to increase female civilian capacity in coordination with other implementing partners.⁵¹

NPA has a gender and diversity policy which is integrated into NPA's Tajikistan project proposals and operations, and gender mainstreaming is a mandatory part of its training activities in Tajikistan. NPA ensures that all groups are included during community consultation activities, and has a gender balanced community liaison team to help ensure this. NPA disaggregates mine action data by sex and age.⁵²

NPA makes an effort to try to employ a gender balanced workforces to the extent that is possible in Tajikistan context, and has men and women employed in key positions. Of NPA's operational staff, 22% are women; and 36% of management/supervisory staff.⁵³

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

In 2016, Tajikistan updated its national mine action database to Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) version 6.0.⁵⁴ TNMAC is now installing IMSMA Core, with support from the GICHD,⁵⁵ and expected it to become fully operational in the course of 2019.⁵⁶

Data in the national information management system are accessible to clearance operators, and data collection forms enable collation of necessary data.⁵⁷ Tajikistan submits

annual Article 7 transparency reports and delivers updates on its progress in Article 5 implementation at the APMBBC intersessional meetings and meetings of states parties. However, TNMAC should aim to improve its land release terminology and methodology, to make it more consistent with the IMAS, and refer to the amount of mined area cancelled through non-technical survey or reduced through technical survey.

PLANNING AND TASKING

The previous national mine action strategic plan for 2010–15 expired at the end of 2015.⁵⁸ A new National Strategy on Humanitarian Mine Action 2017–2020 was approved by government decree No. 91 on 25 February 2017.⁵⁹

The national strategy is, however, very general, and while it includes a “plan”, which lists the various overarching activities to implement the strategy, it lacks detail on prioritisation of clearance tasks, timelines, or capacities for survey and clearance operations.⁶⁰

In September 2018, a group was created to prepare Tajikistan’s Article 5 deadline extension request, which included representatives from the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan, multiple ministries, and the Committee for Emergency Situations and Civil Defense.⁶¹ UNDP also supported the preparation of the extension request.

The annual projections in Tajikistan’s 2019 Article 5 extension request are, however, simplistic, based on average clearance rates, without more detailed analysis of the remaining mined areas. Tajikistan’s extension request projections also assume an increased clearance capacity that Tajikistan has not yet secured.

TNMAC plans to reach an average annual clearance target of more than 1.3km² in order to release nearly 8.85km² of remaining mined area (excluding the Uzbek border) by 2025.⁶² In its operational workplan for 2019, planned clearance output was 1,369,429m²,⁶³ significantly greater than the 0.59km² cleared in 2018.

The GICHD is working with TNMAC and UNDP to develop a prioritisation system and tool for Tajikistan, which will identify distinct criteria and indicators for the separate regions.⁶⁴ A pilot of PriSMA (the Priority Setting Tool for Mine Action) was conducted from July to September 2017,⁶⁵ and a second version was subsequently developed and piloted.⁶⁶ TNMAC prepared its latest operations plan based on PriSMA and Tajik Border Forces recommendations, using a district-by-district approach based on the following criteria:

- mined areas with economic and infrastructure impact;
- the number of unsurveyed minefield records in each district (those with a larger number of minefields records will be considered a priority for the deployment of non-technical survey teams and those with a smaller number can be surveyed by clearance teams during demining operations); and
- the number of mined areas in each district (a smaller number of minefields will be considered a priority to deploy clearance teams to release the whole district).⁶⁷

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Tajikistan’s revised National Mine Action Standards (TNMAS) were approved by decree on 1 April 2017.⁶⁸

In 2017, TNMAC further developed its new approach to survey, known as “non-technical survey with technical intervention”. In addition to standard non-technical survey, survey teams are also using technical assets to confirm and locate actual evidence of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). This methodology helps improve the efficiency of survey operations, by confirming areas as mined and more accurately determining the location of mined areas.⁶⁹ It is especially useful, as minefield records are sometimes incomplete or inconsistent due to incorrect coordinates and grid numbering or lack of landmarks/reference points, and there are often few local people to ask about evidence of mines or accidents as people have moved away because of the contamination. This can result in inflated polygons. In addition, mines are sometimes displaced due to landslides, rock falls, or flooding.⁷⁰

Since early October 2017, the UST has been conducting non-technical survey with technical survey intervention, in line with the new land release methodology in Tajikistan.⁷¹ Prior to this, UST was only conducting non-technical survey. The use of technical interventions is expected to improve operational efficiency, but it will also slow down the rate of survey by UST of the remaining unsurveyed minefields.⁷²

While in many instances the suspected mined area is cancelled or reduced through survey, there are also instances when survey reveals the size of the mined area as being larger than indicated on the minefield records. This can be due to a number of factors, such as windy conditions at the time when helicopter-dropped mines were deployed which leads to greater dispersal of the mines; the height of the helicopter above the ground at the time of deployment (in time of hostilities, the distance of the helicopter from the ground is significantly increased, resulting in wider dispersal of the mines); and mountainous terrain.⁷³

OPERATORS

In 2018, operational capacity included five military multi-purpose manual teams (four from the MoD HDC and one from the Committee of Emergency and Civil Defence) totalling 64 personnel; four multi-purpose manual Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) teams (for clearance and technical survey), totalling 33 demining personnel;⁷⁴ and two UST non-technical survey teams (totalling 11 personnel).⁷⁵

Following the signature of an MoU with the OSCE POiD in 2009, the MoD established the HDC.⁷⁶ Since TNMAC's nationalisation, the HDC has acted as a contractor for TNMAC, and OSCE POiD funds the HDC through TNMAC.⁷⁷ The MoD provides five teams to the HDC as part of its commitment to assist TNMAC meet Tajikistan's Article 5 obligations. The HDC's de-mining activities are conducted using conscript soldiers as deminers, with regularly employed MoD officers managing operations and the clearance sites. In 2018, three of the five MoD teams were supported by OSCE POiD unified budget (from participating states) and two by the United States Department of State via the OSCE POiD. In 2019, OSCE continued to three teams from the unified budget as before and the two teams that were funded by United States through OSCE in 2018 are now funded directly by United States Department of State to TNMAC after successful capacity building and as part of a transition to national ownership and sustainability.⁷⁸

According to the MoD, more deminers could be trained and deployed if additional funding were available. Military deminers are reportedly less expensive than deminers of international NGOs, and have the additional advantage of having security access to survey and clear mined areas in the vicinity of military bases and other areas which may be inaccessible to other implementing partners due to security restrictions.⁷⁹

In its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request, Tajikistan set out its hope to double the clearance capacity currently provided by the MoD and NPA. The government of Tajikistan would pay the salaries of the five additional MoD teams, but Tajikistan still needs to secure international funding for equipment and running costs for these teams.⁸⁰

The OSCE POiD has been supporting mine action since 2003. The OSCE POiD's strategy in Tajikistan is twofold: to support the development of national demining capacity; and to foster regional cooperation in border management and security.⁸¹ The OSCE POiD supported the HDC via the UST, which it contracted to provide project management and administrative support to the Ministry of Defence's HDC in 2010–13.⁸²

OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Neither mine detection dogs (MDDs) nor machines were used operationally in 2018. The MDD programme ended in early 2015 due to the very limited number of tasks suitable for dogs. Consequently, 18 MDDs were handed over to the Ministry of Interior and to the Border Forces.⁸³

The MoD has one demining machine, which is not currently deployed.⁸⁴ Tajikistan recognises that there are still potentially mined areas where mechanical assets can usefully be deployed (15–20% from total remaining areas in

UST, a national not-for-profit organisation, is accredited to conduct non-technical survey, risk education, and victim assistance. In 2017, UST received additional accreditation to conduct non-technical survey with technical survey intervention, but it is not accredited to conduct clearance.⁸⁵ While some staff positions at UST are permanent, such as the Operations Manager, deminers are recruited annually for the operations period from Spring until October, based on UST's annual survey plan.⁸⁶ In 2018, two UST teams (four surveyors per team) conducted non-technical survey in the Shamsiddin Shohin district of the Khatlon region.⁸⁵ The capacity of the two UST survey teams was due to increase slightly, to six surveyors per team in 2019.⁸⁶

In late 2018, NPA established a technical advisor position, focused more on supporting national capacities (including TNMAC and the survey capacity of UST). NPA has proposed establishing a survey working group to meet at least monthly and be active during the 2019 demining season, bringing relevant stakeholders together. In August 2019, Tajikistan reported that it planned to establish the survey working group.⁸⁷

Technical survey is conducted as standard during NPA clearance tasks. NPA did not have a dedicated survey team in 2018, and non-technical survey conducted in 2018, at the request of TNMAC, was conducted by NPA's technical advisor, task supervisor, and supported with medical staff. NPA hopes to be able to transition into conducting more survey activities in coordination with TNMAC in order to be able to better define the remaining levels of contamination. As such, NPA trained and deployed its first survey team in April 2019 and planned to add a second survey team in February 2020, to conduct non-technical survey and targeted technical survey to support TNMAC with resurvey of CHAs and potentially with the survey of unsurveyed mined areas.⁸⁸ The survey team is a multi-task team and so can also be deployed to support NPA's clearance teams, when it is not deployed for survey.⁸⁹

Tajikistan's 2019 extension request references the role of the Tajik Border Guard Forces in providing security for demining operations on the Tajik-Afghan border and says TNMAC planned to involve Tajik Border Guard Forces in demining on the Tajik-Afghan border.⁹⁰ There is currently a small pilot project in which NPA has trained two border guard officers who have been seconded to work with NPA's civilian capacity during the 2019 demining season.⁹¹ This could be further expanded, if the political will is there and funding is available. Since the Border Guard Forces are also responsible for granting permission to access the contaminated areas along the Tajik/Afghan border, increased cooperation on demining may help to overcome previous security restrictions on access to these areas.⁹²

the lowlands), though this would require additional financial support.⁹³ Many of the western districts of the Tajik-Afghan border, which are currently not accessible because of security restrictions, contain mined areas on flat terrain, which could be suitable for mechanical demining.⁹⁴ In August 2018, TNMAC announced that it had recently established a Technical Working Group focused on operational efficiency and quality assurance, and that one of the first tasks of the working group will be to conduct a feasibility study on the reactivation of mechanical assets in Tajikistan.⁹⁵

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2018

A total of 1.12km² of mined area was released in 2018, of which 0.6km² was cleared, over 0.2km² was reduced through technical survey, and nearly 0.4km² was cancelled through non-technical survey.⁹⁸

SURVEY IN 2018

In 2018, a total of 0.4km² was cancelled through non-technical survey by NPA and UST in Khatlon province (see Table 2), and a further 0.23km² was reduced through technical survey by the MoD and NPA in Khatlon and GBAO provinces (see Table 3).⁹⁹ This was a slight decrease on the 0.48km² cancelled in 2017, but an increase compared to the 0.16km² reduced in 2017.¹⁰⁰

Also in 2018, two minefields of 865,000m² were confirmed by TNMAC, and three minefields that make up 146,000m² were confirmed by NPA.¹⁰¹

Table 2: Cancellation of mined area through non-technical survey in 2018¹⁰²

Operator	Province	District	Area cancelled (m ²)
UST	Khatlon	Sh. Shohin	366,000
NPA	Khatlon	Sh. Shohin	34,634
Total			400,634

Table 3: Reduction of mined area through technical survey in 2018¹⁰³

Operator	Province	District	Area reduced (m ²)
MOD	Khatlon	Sh. Shoin	83,100
NPA	Khatlon	Sh. Shoin	92,777
		Khovaling	54,469
	GBAO	Darvos	25,625
Total			255,971

CLEARANCE IN 2018

In 2018, the MoD/HDC and NPA cleared nearly 0.6km² across 9 mined areas (including suspended areas not yet completed as at the end of 2018), destroying 4,998 anti-personnel mines and 136 items of UXO (see Table 4).¹⁰⁴ This is a very slight decrease on the 0.62km² cleared in 2017.

An additional 15 anti-personnel mines were destroyed during spot explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks in 2018.¹⁰⁵

Anti-personnel mines were found in all clearance tasks in 2018, with the exception of a minefield in Khatlon province tasked to NPA for clearance. However, while no mines were found, there was strong evidence of the past presence of mines, with discoveries of mine fragments and demolition craters.¹⁰⁶

Table 4: Mine clearance by operator in 2018*¹⁰⁷

Operator	Province	District	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
NPA	GBAO	Darvos	1	22,622	11	2
		Khatlon	1	12,522	214	29
		Khatlon	1	8,210	488	0
		Khatlon	1	20,143	2	5
		Khatlon	1	12,699	0	0
		Khatlon	1	54,658	7	0
MoD	GBAO	Darvos	1	16,270	64	0
		Khatlon	1	423,439	4,210	100
		Khatlon	1	22,650	2	0
Totals			9	593,213	4,998	136

AP = Anti-personnel

* Clearance includes suspended area not yet completed as at end 2018.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the ten-year extension granted by states parties in 2009), Tajikistan 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 April 2020. Tajikistan will not meet this deadline and has requested a second extension of its Article 5 deadline to 31 December 2025. However, Tajikistan's extension request is very optimistic and calculated on the assumption of substantially increased capacity (five additional MoD teams and two additional NPA teams), for which Tajikistan has yet to secure funding, but which are planned to be operational from 2020. Based on current capacity and land release output, Tajikistan is not on track to complete Article 5 clearance obligations by the end of 2025, and may even be hard pushed to complete by 2030.

Tajikistan has faced a number of challenges in Article 5 implementation, including a reduction in demining capacity; insecurity along its border with Afghanistan and lack of permission to conduct demining in some of the Western districts; inaccessibility and/or operational difficulty of some mined areas; and the very poor quality of some minefield records, mostly from the civil war in the Central Region.¹⁰⁸ In addition, since its first extension request in 2009, Tajikistan identified 107 previously unrecorded and unsurveyed SHAs, which also set it behind target.

Tajikistan's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request includes plans to address the SHAs and CHAs in the provinces of Khatlon and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) along the Afghan border and in the Central Region, but not the 3.25km² of SHA on the Uzbek border which Tajikistan says will be addressed only once a political agreement has been made.¹⁰⁹ As at July 2019, the Tajik MoFA was in negotiation with the Uzbek MoFA regarding survey of the Tajik-Uzbek border.¹¹⁰

The annual land release milestones in Tajikistan's Article 5 extension request are 1,388,819m² (2020), 1,218,722m² (2021), 1,284,655m² (2022), 1,277,666m² (2023), 1,138,919m² (2024) and 1,170,000m² (2025). However, Tajikistan needs an additional US\$12.4 million in total, to enable it to double capacity in order to reach these targets and complete by the end of 2025.¹¹¹

TNMAC plans to hold strategy workshops in 2019, convening relevant mine action stakeholders together to develop a workplan for implementation of the 2020–25 extension request period, including resource mobilisation.¹¹²

In total during the last five years, Tajikistan has cleared just over 2.6km² of mined area (see Table 3). Progress was hampered in 2015 and 2016 due to restricted access for clearance in the Afghanistan border region because of heightened security.¹¹³ In a very positive development, clearance was permitted in parts of the Tajik-Afghan border in 2017 and continued in 2018, including Shamsiddin Shohin district, which is one of the most mined districts in Tajikistan.¹¹⁴

Table 3: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance (2014–18)¹¹⁵

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2018	0.59
2017	0.62
2016	0.50
2015	0.25
2014	0.65
Total	2.61

Tajikistan had expected to release 30 minefields in 2018 (26 in Khatlon district, 3 in GBAO, and 1 in the Central Region, totalling over 1.9km²,¹¹⁶ an estimate which it subsequently reduced to 1.5km² across 20 minefields,¹¹⁷ but Tajikistan's actual clearance output in 2018 was less than half this estimated output.

Tajikistan's baseline of remaining anti-personnel mine contamination is not yet an accurate assessment, which makes elaboration of accurate clearance projections and timelines for Article 5 completion difficult. TNMAC estimates that it will complete survey of the 41 unsurveyed minefield records by 2023.¹¹⁸ Many of these unsurveyed minefields are extremely hard to access, with UST's survey teams sometimes having to walk for more than three hours each way in mountainous terrain, to access the survey area, leaving only a few hours each day for survey activities.¹¹⁹ Some mountainous areas only permit 40 operational days per year.¹²⁰

In addition to challenges posed by the remoteness and challenging terrain of the mined areas and the short demining window in some regions, the volatility of the security situation on the Afghan Border is also a potential challenge.¹²¹ Tajikistan's 2019 extension request tacitly assumes that all districts along the Tajik-Afghan border will be accessible, from the perspective of security, for clearance. To date, this has not been the case for many of the heavily mined western districts of the Tajik-Afghan border. Access to these mined areas is a prerequisite for Tajikistan's Article 5 completion.

In May 2019, during the APMBC intersessional meetings, Tajikistan convened an "Individualised Approach Platform" meeting, with support from the Implementation Support Unity (ISU). The meetings allowed TNMAC to outline its current work and to present the challenges and opportunities faced in meeting its Article 5 obligations.¹²²

Tajikistan has reported that it requires continued international assistance to increase demining capacity and fulfil its Article 5 obligations, including the need to modernise the capacity of its mine clearance teams.¹²³ Tajikistan requires a total of US\$36 million to fulfil its Article 5 obligations up to 2025.¹²⁴ Without this funding, Tajikistan will not meet the 2025 Maputo aspiration for completion of mine clearance.

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| <p>1 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D and Annex II.</p> <p>2 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, Director, Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC), 25 April 2018; and Article 7 Report (for 2016), Form D.</p> <p>3 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D and Annex II; and email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.</p> <p>4 Tajikistan Mine Action Centre (TMAC), "Scope of the Problem", accessed 29 July 2019 at: bit.ly/2ZhlFpN.</p> <p>5 R. Roberts, "Evaluation of United Nations Development Programme Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", January 2012, p. 11, at: bit.ly/20qRe0B.</p> <p>6 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 31 March 2009, p. 1.</p> <p>7 Statement of Tajikistan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 8 June 2017.</p> <p>8 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D and Annex II; 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 9-10; and email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.</p> <p>9 Interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda and Murtazo Gurezov, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018; and Statement of Tajikistan, APMBC 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.</p> <p>10 Interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda and Murtazo Gurezov, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018.</p> <p>11 Ibid.</p> <p>12 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018.</p> <p>13 Statement of Tajikistan, APMBC 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.</p> <p>14 "National Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan on Humanitarian Mine Action for 2017-2020", 25 February 2017.</p> <p>15 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), 31 March 2019.</p> <p>16 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D.</p> <p>17 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018 and 25 July 2019.</p> <p>18 Statement of Tajikistan, 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015; and interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, and Sebastian Kasack, UNDP, in Geneva, 23 June 2015.</p> <p>19 TNMAC, "Draft Article 5 Completion Plan 2016-20", 4 October 2016.</p> <p>20 Statement of Tajikistan, 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015; and TNMAC, "Draft Article 5 Completion Plan 2016-20", 4 October 2016.</p> <p>21 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), 31 March 2019, p. 8; Presentation on Article 5 Extension Request, Geneva, 23 May 2019; and email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.</p> <p>22 Presentation by Tajikistan on Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Geneva, 23 May 2019; and email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.</p> | <p>23 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018, and interview, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018.</p> <p>24 TNMAC, "Draft Article 5 Completion Plan 2016-20", 4 October 2016; and Statement of Tajikistan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 8 June 2017.</p> <p>25 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 3 August 2019.</p> <p>26 Interviews with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, and Kurbonmamad Kurbonmamadov, MoD, Dushanbe, 29 May 2018.</p> <p>27 Interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda and Murtazo Gurezov, TNMAC, Dushanbe, 25 May 2018.</p> <p>28 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 4; and 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), 31 March 2019, p. 20.</p> <p>29 Rebecca Roberts, "Evaluation of UNDP Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", p. 12, at: bit.ly/2VrxVY8.</p> <p>30 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 31 March 2009, p. 1; and TNMAC, "About TMAC", 2012, accessed 10 March 2014 at: bit.ly/2LvPub1.</p> <p>31 Roberts, "Evaluation of UNDP Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", p. 12.</p> <p>32 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 3 April 2015.</p> <p>33 TNMAC, "Draft Article 5 Completion Plan 2016-20", 4 October 2016.</p> <p>34 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), 31 March 2019, p. 27.</p> <p>35 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.</p> <p>36 Email from Aubrey Sutherland-Pillai, NPA, 18 October 2016.</p> <p>37 MoD, "Strategic Plan on Humanitarian Demining 2013-2016", Dushanbe, 17 July 2013; and Response to Landmine Monitor questionnaire by Luka Buhin, Mine Action Office, OSCE Office in Tajikistan, 8 April 2014.</p> <p>38 Email from Luka Buhin, OSCE Office in Tajikistan, 9 October 2017.</p> <p>39 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 August 2016 and 22 May 2017.</p> <p>40 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018; and Statement of Tajikistan, APMBC 16th Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 20 December 2017.</p> <p>41 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D.</p> <p>42 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018.</p> <p>43 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.</p> <p>44 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 14 June 2019.</p> <p>45 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 14 June 2019; and 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), 31 March 2019, p. 28.</p> <p>46 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.</p> <p>47 Ibid.</p> |
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- 52 Email from Melissa Andersson, Country Director, NPA, 11 April 2019.
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- 54 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 May 2017.
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- 98 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.
- 99 Ibid.
- 100 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form D and Annex II.
- 101 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D and Annex II.
- 102 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019. There was a discrepancy in the area of land cancelled by NPA in 2018 reported by TNMAC for NPA (34,634m²), and by NPA directly (112,000m²). Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 11 April 2019. Tajikistan's Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D, only includes the 16 minefields cancelled through non-technical and technical survey teams, with an area of 366,000km².
- 103 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019; and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 11 April 2019. There was a discrepancy in the 2018 technical survey output data reported by TNMAC for NPA in Sh. Shohin and Darvos districts, and that reported by NPA directly. This is due to NPA only reporting clearance output upon final completion and not upon suspension.
- 104 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018; Melissa Andersson, NPA, 5 April 2018; and Chris Rennick, FSD, 13 March 2018; and Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form A.
- 105 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.
- 106 Ibid.
- 107 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D; and emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019; and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 11 April 2019. According to Tajikistan's Article 7 report (for 2018), 134 anti-personnel mines were destroyed in 2018.
- 108 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018; and interview, Dushanbe, 30 May 2018.
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- 114 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018; and Melissa Andersson, NPA, 5 April 2018.
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- 116 Article 7 Report (for 2017), Form D and Annex II.
- 117 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 27 April 2018.
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- 122 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 3 August 2019.
- 123 Article 7 Report (for 2018), Form D.
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