

KEY DATA

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2026

Not on track to meet deadline

AP MINE CONTAMINATION: AROUND 1km²

Light
(Mine Action Review estimate)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km ²)	Release in 2023 (km ²)
Clearance	0	0
Technical Survey	0.12	0
Non-Technical Survey	0	0

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	2023
AP Mines destroyed	0	0

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATOR IN 2024:

- Stop Mines and IN Demining

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2024, Serbia reduced one third of its known mined area through technical survey (TS). However, it had planned to complete clearance of all remaining known mined area during the year and conduct non-technical survey (NTS) of previously unrecorded mined areas by January 2025. Serbia did not meet this target, which is partly due to a shift in donor priorities towards clearance of cluster munition remnants (CMR). The NTS was initially scheduled for 2023 and Serbia aimed to develop a work plan for completion of survey and clearance based on the results of the NTS by October 2025, allowing TS and clearance to begin in November. As at October 2025, an NTS team had started conducting desk assessments and was set to undergo training, with planned accreditation in November.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Serbia should consider inviting demining NGOs to help meet its treaty obligations.
- Serbia should, as a matter of priority and without further delay, survey the suspected contamination identified in 2019 and 2021 to determine the size of the mined areas and plan for their release.
- SMAC should undertake NTS and TS rather than full clearance in instances where survey represents the most efficient means to release part or all of mined areas.
- SMAC should seek to develop additional national mine action standards and adopt the new mine action decree.
- Serbia should clarify whether suspected improvised devices around Jamena village, which remain from the 1991-95 conflicts, meet the definition of an anti-personnel (AP) mine.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2024)	Score (2023)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	5	As at April 2025, Serbia had less than 0.27km ² of known mined area remaining. However, NTS is still required to determine the extent of mined areas discovered due to fires in 2019 and 2021. The NTS project was initially scheduled for 2023. As at October 2025, an NTS team was undergoing training and awaiting accreditation.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	7	Serbia demonstrates strong national ownership of its mine action programme, with SMAC entirely nationally funded. In 2024, Serbia maintained its State budget allocation for SMAC and committed €260,000 annually for survey and clearance through 2025.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	4	SMAC does not have a gender policy in place and does not disaggregate relevant mine action data by sex and age, although data disaggregation is planned. SMAC hired two new female staff in 2024 and three of the five of the newly recruited NTS team are women.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION (10% of overall score)	4	4	Serbia does not have an environmental management policy or national standards on the environment in place. Clearance operators must, however, include environmental and fire protection in their task execution plans.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	7	7	Serbia submits accurate and consistent annual Article 7 reports on progress in demining and provides regular updates at treaty meetings. SMAC and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) are in the process of implementing the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core database.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	7	Serbia included annual projections for land release in its latest Article 5 deadline extension request. In 2024, Serbia aimed to clear 268,100m ² of known mine contamination and deploy NTS teams to identify and confirm previously unknown mined areas. In fact, only TS was conducted.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (10% of overall score)	7	7	Serbia is planning to issue a new decree on protection against explosive remnants of war, which will introduce the concept of land release. As at October 2025, this was under review by the Ministry of Interior.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	4	5	From December 2023 to February 2024, Serbia conducted TS but again failed to meet its land release targets, neither releasing area through clearance nor conducting the planned NTS of previously unknown mined areas.
Average Score	5.4	5.6	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior (acts as the national mine action authority)
- Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- PMC Engineering

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- In 2024, 11 companies/organisations were accredited for demining, but only two NGOs engaged in demining:
 - In Demining
 - Stop Mines

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at April 2025, one area in Bujanovac municipality covering 0.27km² was suspected to contain AP mines (see Table 1).¹ This is a reduction from the 0.39km² of AP mined area as at the end of 2023.² Previous surveys found insufficient evidence for mined areas to be classified as confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs), so they officially remain as suspected hazardous areas (SHAs).³

Table 1: AP mined area (at April 2025)⁴

Municipality	Village	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Bujanovac	Ravno Bučje	1	268,100
Totals		1	268,100

Table 1 does not, however, include the contamination identified because of fires in Bujanovac municipality. On 2–3 October 2019, in response to a request from local authorities, the Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) visited the villages of Đorđevac, Končulj, Lučane, Ravno Bučje, and Veliki Trnovac where fires had recently occurred and members of the local community had reported hearing explosions in several places, indicating the presence of mines. The discovered mined areas were marked with signs in both Serbian and Albanian, as the population in this area is multi-ethnic. Fires also occurred in August 2021 in a different area of the municipality of Bujanovac, during which there were similar reports of explosions.⁵

An NTS project in this area was expected to begin in 2023, but has been delayed. In Serbia's latest Article 5 deadline extension request, submitted in March 2024, Serbia said this was due to "security concerns". The project area is within the Ground Safety Zone along the administrative line with Kosovo and Metohija. Serbia reported that NTS of the estimated 4.37–4.47km² of areas prioritised for NTS based on some evidence of explosive ordnance contamination, would be conducted in 2024 and 2025. Of the area expected to be surveyed, SMAC expected that nearly 2.37km² would be cancelled, 1.5km² reduced, and only 0.5km² cleared.⁶ According to SMAC, remaining contamination is from mines of an unknown origin and type placed without a pattern and for which no minefield records exist.⁷ As at October 2025, SMAC had established an NTS team in Bujanovac which had started desk assessments alongside ongoing NTS training. The team was

expected to complete accreditation in November. From their office in Bujanovac, donated by local authorities, they had also started receiving visits from informants providing information on contamination.⁸

Furthermore, in its revised Article 5 deadline extension request, Serbia has noted that: "It is suspected that in the Sava River, in the area of the Jamena village [in the municipality of Šid], there are improvised mines remaining from the 1991–1995 conflicts. SMAC will continue to monitor the situation closely and carry out all necessary actions."⁹ If these devices meet the definition of an AP mine, then they fall within Serbia's obligations under the treaty and must be destroyed. However, some uncertainty remains and, as at October 2025, SMAC had conducted a document review, with a field visit planned towards the end of 2025 or early 2026.¹⁰

Historically, mine contamination in Serbia can be divided into two phases. The first exists as a legacy of the armed conflicts associated with the break-up of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. The second concerned use of mines in 2000–01 in the municipalities of Bujanovac and Preševo by a non-State armed group, the Liberation Army of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medvedja (OVPBM). The contamination remaining in Serbia is a result of this later phase.¹¹ Contamination also exists within Kosovo (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Kosovo for further information). SMAC requests that it be noted that all references to Kosovo should be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).¹²

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

SMAC does not possess data on explosive ordnance contamination of military areas in Serbia as it is only in charge of explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in civilian areas in Serbia.¹³ It is suspected, however, that following the fires and explosions at military depots in Grdelica, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Novi Sad, Paraćin, Požarevac, Raška, Smederevo,

Valjevo, and Vranje, approximately 18km² may be contaminated with ERW.¹⁴ SMAC is also receiving an increasing number of requests from the Ministry of Construction, Transport, and Infrastructure to clear former military compounds of ERW, as these sites are being transitioned from Ministry of Defence (MoD) control to civilian use.¹⁵

1 Email from Slađana Košutić, Senior Advisor for Planning, International Cooperation and European Integrations, SMAC, 8 May 2025 and Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D.

2 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form D.

3 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form D.

4 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 8 May 2025; and Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D.

5 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8; Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form D; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 21 May 2024.

6 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 6, 39 and 40; Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form D; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 21 May 2024.

7 Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 6 and 34; Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form C; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.

8 Email from Helen Gray, Consultant, 2 October 2025.

9 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 17; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 8 May 2025.

10 Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

11 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5; and Article 7 Report (covering 2014), Form C.

12 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 11 May 2021.

13 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 25 April 2023 and 20 August 2024.

14 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 17.

15 Ibid., p. 23.

Serbia is also contaminated with CMR and other ERW from the 1999 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bombing campaign, or which remain from previous conflicts¹⁶ (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2025* report on Serbia for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

According to a 2013 Government Decree on Protection against Unexploded Ordnance, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior, acts as the national mine action authority (NMAA).¹⁷ The NMAA is responsible for developing standard operating procedures (SOPs), accrediting demining operators, and supervising the work of SMAC.¹⁸

SMAC was established in 2002, with a 2004 law making it responsible for coordinating survey and clearance, collecting and managing mine action information (including casualty data), and surveying SHAs. It also has a mandate to plan demining projects, conduct quality control (QC) and monitor operations, ensure implementation of international standards, and undertake risk education.¹⁹ As from 1 January 2014, according to the 2013 Government Decree, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior, was made responsible for accrediting demining operators. Previously, SMAC was responsible for doing so.²⁰

The current director of SMAC was appointed by the Serbian government in July 2019.²¹ As at April 2025, 17 people were

employed at SMAC: the Director, two assistant directors, and 14 other employees.²²

In 2020, SMAC and the MoD signed an agreement on cooperation in demining and removal of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other ERW. The agreement foresees joint training and certification of personnel, joint survey, data collection on ERW-contaminated areas, and ERW removal projects, all to be implemented in conformity with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).²³ The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) is supporting SMAC to set up the latest version of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA)—IMSMA Core—and with quality management.²⁴

No formal in-country national platform for dialogue exists, but SMAC cooperates closely with the Bujanovac national authorities and other relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and MoD, as well as donors to discuss progress, challenges and support for Article 5 implementation in Serbia.²⁵

FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

SMAC is fully funded by Serbia, including salaries and running costs, as well as for survey activities, development of project tasks for demining and clearance of contaminated areas, follow-up on implementation of project tasks, and quality assurance (QA) and QC of demining. In 2024, Serbia reported that around €590,000 per annum was allocated from the State budget for SMAC's work, an increase on the €450,000 provided in 2023.²⁶ The UXO disposal work of the Sector for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Interior is also State-funded.²⁷

National funding for survey and clearance remained at €260,000 in 2024,²⁸ a level that was expected to be maintained in 2025. Support was matched with donor funds for the United States and the Republic of Korea through ITF Enhancing Human Security.²⁹ In 2024, funding was split between one AP mined area TS task and two CMR clearance tasks. Serbia expected the donors to continue funding in 2025.³⁰ Serbia estimated it would need €1.5 million in international funding for survey and clearance of mined area in 2024–26.³¹

SMAC reports having a resource mobilisation strategy for Article 5 implementation.³²

16 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.

17 Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 70/13.

18 Emails from Darvin Lisica, Regional Programme Manager, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 6 May and 12 June 2016.

19 Law of Alterations and Supplementations of the Law of Ministries, Official Gazette, 84/04, August 2004; interview with Petar Mihajlović and Slađana Košutić, SMAC, Belgrade, 26 April 2010; and Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 19.

20 APMBC 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 20.

21 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.

22 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

23 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2021.

24 Ibid.; SMAC, "GICHD Workshop on IMSMA Core for Mine Action Actors in the Republic of Serbia", 27 March 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/42PgTC7>; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

25 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 8 May 2025.

26 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025 and 7 May 2024.

27 SMAC, "Mine situation", 21 April 2023.

28 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

29 Statement of Serbia on Clearance, APMBC Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties (virtual meeting), 15–19 November 2021; and 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8 and 34; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

30 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

31 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 12 and 38.

32 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

SMAC does not have a gender policy in place and does not disaggregate relevant mine action data by sex and age. However, data disaggregation will be introduced through the new Survey123 and IMSMA Core forms.³³ SMAC ensures women and children are consulted during survey and community liaison and that ethnic or minority groups are consulted.³⁴ Serbia claims that qualified women have equal access to survey and clearance positions.³⁵

At SMAC, nine of the 17 employees (53%) are women, who hold two of the three managerial/supervisory level positions (67%) and one of the nine operations positions (11%). SMAC hired two new female staff in 2024.³⁶

The NTS team recruited to conduct survey of the newly identified mined areas consists of three female and two male ethnic Serbian and ethnic Albanian personnel.³⁷

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

SMAC is committed to taking environmental aspects into account in its work and to minimising environmental harm from demining. For each survey or clearance task, the contractor (i.e. the demining operator) is required to include in its execution plan an environmental protection and a fire protection plan, together with a plan for health and safety at work. Illustrative examples on environmental protection during CMR clearance include clearance in Kopaonik National Park, which demanded a special regime to protect certain trees and plants.³⁸ SMAC reported to Mine Action Review in 2024 that it was planning to develop a national mine

action standard (NMAS) on environmental management in mine action, a process that was not complete at the time of writing.³⁹

Serbia's latest Article 5 deadline extension request briefly mentions the environmental implications of the extension but does not elaborate on the increased risk of forest fires, which in 2019 and 2021 led to the discovery of previously unknown AP mined areas. Serbia does note that the presence of mines hinders the construction of solar power plants.⁴⁰

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

SMAC had its own information management system until SMAC decided to solicit GICHD support to implement IMSMA Core.⁴¹ In February 2024, the GICHD and SMAC began working on a first version of the new database.⁴² They worked together to build and test the system, focusing on data migration, data cleaning, and new data entry forms.⁴³ All new NTS information will be collected through Survey123 and uploaded to IMSMA Core, where it will be validated by SMAC.

The associated forms and dashboards have been developed and, as at October 2025, were undergoing testing.⁴⁴

Serbia submits timely and accurate annual Article 7 transparency reports and reports on its progress in Article 5 implementation at the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) intersessional meetings and meetings of States Parties.

PLANNING AND TASKING

The Government of Serbia adopts SMAC's annual work plans.⁴⁵ SMAC had annual work plans in place for 2024 and 2025.⁴⁶

Serbia's latest revised Article 5 deadline extension request included annual projections of mined area to be addressed. In

the course of 2024, Serbia planned to release the remaining known mine contamination in the village of Ravno Bučje in Bujanovac municipality, covering 268,100m², through TS and clearance. In August 2024 to January 2025, SMAC planned to deploy NTS teams to the previously unknown mined areas in Bujanovac.⁴⁷ The results of the NTS analysed in the period

33 Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

34 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020, 26 March 2021, and 11 April 2023.

35 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020 and 11 April 2023.

36 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

37 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 8 May 2025.

38 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 7 May 2024.

39 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 7 May 2024 and 4 April 2025.

40 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 36.

41 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 11 April 2023; and GICHD, 26 May 2023.

42 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 7 May 2024.

43 Emails from Kinda Samra, GICHD, 27 June 2024 and Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

44 Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

45 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 7–8, 18, and 21; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 13 April 2022.

46 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

47 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 23.

through to June 2025, and then between August and October 2025, would enable SMAC to develop a TS and clearance plan for the remaining mined area.⁴⁸ However, this timeline had been delayed, and as at October 2025, the priority was to complete the NTS to enable effective planning of subsequent TS. A flexible, targeted TS project is tentatively planned to follow the ongoing NTS project from mid-2026, aiming to quickly confirm the presence or absence of explosive ordnance and determine whether larger TS or no further action is required.⁴⁹

As a general rule, Serbia prioritises demining of areas that directly affect the local population, such as those close to settlements where local people have abandoned their houses and stopped cultivating land due to fear of landmines. Prioritisation takes place between Serbia, SMAC, and donors. SMAC noted that donors themselves sometimes also influence the choice of the areas which will be demined first, depending on availability and amount of their funds.⁵⁰ Serbia has said that if it cannot secure international support for demining, clearance will be further delayed.⁵¹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

According to SMAC, and despite problems with land release methodology, survey and clearance are conducted in accordance with the IMAS.⁵² SMAC, in cooperation with a consultant from Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), developed three new NMAS in 2023 on the glossary of terms, land release, and quality management. SMAC reported to Mine Action Review in 2024 that subject to funding, further NMAS would be developed, starting with an NMAS on information management, a process ongoing as at April 2025.⁵³ A new NTS SOP was developed in 2025 in line with IMAS and the new NTS competencies. The SOP enables village administrative areas with no evidence of explosive ordnance to officially declare, following NTS, that no contamination has been identified, allowing the area to transition to residual risk management. The NTS will cover the entire municipality of Bujanovac.⁵⁴

Serbia plans to issue a new decree on protection against ERW. The draft decree, which is being developed by SMAC and the Ministry of Interior, will include a definition of land release (not defined in the former decree), and support the development of NMAS.⁵⁵ As at October 2025, the draft remained under review within the Ministry of Interior.⁵⁶

Under new directorship, SMAC reassessed its land release methodology in 2015 in order to prioritise full clearance over TS of hazardous areas.⁵⁷ This does not correspond to international best practice and is an inefficient use of scarce clearance assets. In 2016, SMAC reported to Mine Action Review that while SMAC supports the use of high-quality NTS

to identify mined areas it will fully clear them rather than using TS to identify the boundaries of contamination more accurately.⁵⁸ While SMAC's position on land release remains the same, there is still said to be a willingness to conduct TS in a form "adjusted to the context of Serbia", in response to the stated preference of international donors for TS over clearance as and where appropriate.⁵⁹

SMAC's previous reluctance to apply TS to delineate confirmed mined area was due to its lack of confidence that such survey can effectively identify groups of unrecorded mines, not planted in specific patterns.⁶⁰ According to SMAC, incidents involving people or animals have occurred in most of these suspected areas or else mines have been accidentally detected.⁶¹ In its latest Article 5 deadline extension request, Serbia said that "the size of the area to be cleared is determined on the basis of processed data which have been collected by a non-technical survey",⁶² indicating that TS is not typically deployed to reduce mined areas. However, with support from the ITF, SMAC now plans to integrate targeted TS as a follow-on to the current NTS project to better define requirements for future TS and clearance. NTS teams are being trained to delineate suspected areas as accurately as possible, allowing TS to be deployed more strategically and, where new evidence is found, to expand areas for further investigation or clearance.⁶³

SMAC has reported that the results of the initial survey data are analysed and then further NTS is conducted to assess conditions in the field, and to gather statements by

48 Ibid., p. 44.

49 Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

50 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 12 April 2018 and 25 March 2022; Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form D; and Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 26 and 41.

51 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020 and 26 March 2021; Statements on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019 and Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties (virtual meeting), 16–20 November 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form D.

52 SMAC, "Mine Situation", 21 April 2023; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.

53 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 7 May 2024 and 4 April 2025.

54 Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

55 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

56 Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

57 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.

58 Ibid.

59 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 30; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

60 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 28 June 2018.

61 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form D; and Statement on Clearance, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.

62 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 26.

63 Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

the local population, hunters, foresters, representatives of Civil Protection, and the police, among others. Data on mine incidents constitute another significant indicator.⁶⁴ Also, in the context of Serbia, there is reportedly limited potential to obtain additional information on the location of mined areas from those who laid the mines during the conflict.⁶⁵ TS is employed “to additionally collect information by technical

methods on a suspected area and in case when the data collected by NTS are not sufficient for suspected areas to be declared hazardous or safe”.⁶⁶

Clearance is reported to be conducted in accordance with IMAS, and to a depth of 20 centimetres.⁶⁷

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

SMAC does not itself conduct clearance or employ clearance personnel but does conduct survey of areas suspected to contain mines, CMR, or other ERW. Clearance is conducted by commercial companies and, potentially, NGOs, which are selected through public tender procedures executed by ITF, supported by international funding.⁶⁸ Serbia said clearance productivity per deminer, depending on the mine situation, terrain configuration, land characteristics and vegetation, was up to 150m² per deminer per day.⁶⁹ This is a remarkably high rate – one of the highest in the world.

The Ministry of Interior issues accreditation to mine action operators that is valid for one year. In 2024, 11 companies/organisations were accredited for demining but only two were operational (see Table 2).⁷⁰

Table 2: Operational TS capacities deployed in 2024⁷¹

Operator	No. of TS teams	No. of personnel
IN Demining: contractor	2	20
Stop Mines: subcontractor		

No clearance personnel were deployed in 2024. Serbia expected an increase in survey and clearance personnel in 2025.⁷²

SMAC and the Academy of Technical and Educational Vocational Studies are working together to advance the use of drones in survey. The “Integrated Navigation System for Inspection of Minefield” uses robotics, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and sensors to improve efficiency and reduce personnel risk.⁷³

In 2024, the Serbian Mine Action Centre Innovation and Educational Park was opened at the former “Velika

Moštanica” military complex. With government and donor support, the site was renovated to host mine action training in accordance with IMAS. SMAC and UK-based DRAGON Group also co-organised EOD Level 1, 2, 3, and 3+ courses for 52 trainees from 24 countries.⁷⁴

The Serbian Armed Forces maintain a capability to detect, clear, and destroy landmines. This capability includes many types of detection equipment, mechanical clearance assets, disposal expertise, and specialist search and clearance teams.⁷⁵ An explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) department within the Sector for Emergency Management in the Ministry of Interior responds to call-outs for individual items of ERW and is also responsible for demolition of items found by SMAC survey teams and by contractors/operators during clearance.⁷⁶

TS and clearance in Serbia are primarily conducted manually. Mine detection dogs (MDDs) were used in TS and clearance operations in 2018 to release land,⁷⁷ but according to the authorities most of the mines are in mountainous areas with challenging terrain and thick vegetation and are not appropriate for the use of MDDs or machines.⁷⁸ Owing to the suspected presence of mines, these areas have not been accessed since the end of the conflict (2001) means that the land is unmanaged, making it even less accessible.⁷⁹ Serbian armed forces use their machines and vehicles (e.g. excavators, trucks, etc.) to improve the quality of access roads, ahead of clearance by contracted companies.⁸⁰

SMAC uses data from UAVs to monitor clearance and TS.⁸¹ It is also cooperating with academic partners to enhance the NTS project through the use of UAV/UAS technology where this can add value to decision-making. Imagery has already been collected from two suspected areas and is currently being processed. SMAC is fully licensed and authorised to operate UAVs.⁸²

64 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; and Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form C.

65 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017.

66 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 26.

67 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form C.

68 APMBBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (2018), p. 18.

69 Serbia, “Replies to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Questions Concerning the Requisition Submitted by Serbia”, 3 August 2022.

70 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

71 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 8 May 2025.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form J.

76 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 18; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 3 June 2022.

77 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.

78 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, Belgrade, 16 May 2017; Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 23; and Serbia, “Replies to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Questions Concerning the Requisition Submitted by Serbia”, 3 August 2022.

79 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.

80 Serbia, “Replies to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Questions Concerning the Requisition Submitted by Serbia”, 3 August 2022; and Revised 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 37.

81 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.

82 Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2024

Only TS was conducted in 2024, releasing 0.12km² of mined area (see Table 3).

Table 3: Summary of land release outputs in 2024 (national authority data)

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km ²)
Clearance	0
Technical survey	0.12
Non-technical survey	0
AP mines destroyed during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024
AP mines destroyed	0

SURVEY IN 2024

A total of 122,200m² of mined area was reduced through TS from December 2023 to February 2024 with one item of UXO found and destroyed. No mined area was cancelled through NTS in 2024 or 2023.⁸³

CLEARANCE IN 2024

In 2024 as in the previous year, no mined area was released through clearance.⁸⁴ SMAC did not have available data on the number of mines destroyed by the EOD department within the Sector for Emergency Management during clearance or spot tasks in 2024.⁸⁵

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



83 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 8 May 2025 and 21 May 2024; and Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D.

84 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 21 May 2024 and 8 May 2025.

85 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 37.

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Serbia is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2026.

Serbia's overall land release output increased from 2023 to 2024, due to reduction through TS, but no clearance took place. Serbia had planned to release all known mined area (covering 561,800m²) in 2022 and conduct NTS of the previously unknown mined area in the Bujanovac municipality in 2023. This did not happen, and Serbia instead planned to clear the remaining 268,100m² of previously known SHA in 2024 and conduct the requisite NTS by January 2025. This again did not happen even though funding had been secured. The persistent delays are partially explained by a shift in donor preferences, with more funding allocated to CMR clearance, and by security concerns in Bujanovac.⁸⁶ As at October 2025, the NTS team were conducting desk assessments with accreditation expected in November. From mid-2026, once the NTS has been completed, targeted TS is planned before further TS or clearance.⁸⁷

The 2024 extension request indicates that a work plan for completion of survey and clearance of the previously unknown mined area in the Bujanovac municipality will be completed by October 2025. This would allow TS and clearance to begin in November 2025 and continue until 31 December 2026 although Serbia has not explicitly stated that it will do this in its extension request.⁸⁸ Serbia suggests it might complete clearance ahead of the deadline if certain conditions are met and it states that TS and land release projects will be developed for the assessed areas.⁸⁹

In the last five years Serbia has cleared a total of 0.73km² of mined area (see Table 4).

Table 4: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2024	0
2023	0
2022	0.17
2021	0.29
2020	0.27
Total	0.73

In addition, Serbia's claim to continued jurisdiction over Kosovo entails legal responsibility for remaining mined areas under Article 5 of the APMBC.⁹⁰ However, Serbia did not include such areas in either its first or second extension request, estimates of remaining contamination or plans for the extension periods. In its 2022 and 2024 Article 5 deadline extension requests, however, Serbia stated that: "In the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, there are mined areas, as well as areas contaminated with cluster bombs remaining after the armed conflicts. Pursuant to Resolution 1244 of the United Nations Security Council (Annex II, item 6), it is envisaged that after the withdrawal, an agreed number of the Republic of Serbia personnel will be allowed to return to perform certain functions, including marking and clearing minefields. As this provision of Annex II has not been implemented, this issue is still within the competence of UNMIK in accordance with Resolution 1244."⁹¹

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

SMAC expects to need both national and international capacity to deal with any residual contamination that may be discovered following completion of planned mine clearance.⁹² SMAC has been cooperating with the Ministry of Interior and the MoD to plan for sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas post fulfilment of its Article 5 clearance obligations.⁹³ There is no mention of a plan for the management of residual contamination in Serbia's latest Article 5 deadline extension request.

⁸⁶ Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.

⁸⁷ Email from Helen Gray, 2 October 2025.

⁸⁸ Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 10 and 42–43.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 37 and 39.

⁹⁰ See also in this regard UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

⁹¹ Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 12.

⁹² Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.

⁹³ Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2021.