SERBIA

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2026

KEY DATA

APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2026

Not on track to meet deadline
Extension requested to 31 December 2029

AP MINE CONTAMINATION: AROUND 1KM^2

Light
(Mine Action Review estimate)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (km^2)	Release in 2024 (km^2)
Clearance	0	0
Technical Survey	0	0.12
Non-Technical Survey	0	0

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	0	0

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATOR IN 2025:

- Serbia Mine Action Centre (SMAC)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Serbia will not meet its Article 5 deadline of 31 December 2026, and in March 2026, it submitted an extension request seeking three further years until 31 December 2029. Serbia did not release any anti-personnel (AP) mined area in 2025. The non-technical survey (NTS) in Bujanovac municipality, which was initially scheduled to begin in 2023, started in 2025 and progressed into 2026. State funding for mine action increased in 2025, and the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core database became operational.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Serbia should consider inviting demining NGOs to help meet its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) obligations.**
- **Serbia should complete the Bujanovac municipality-wide surveys to identify all remaining contamination and confirm the parameters of mined areas.**
- **Once surveys are completed, Serbia should define annual land release targets for its requested extension period, and develop a detailed corresponding financial plan.**
- **Serbia should continue investigating and confirm whether suspected improvised devices around Jamena village remaining from the 1991–95 conflicts meet the definition of AP mines, and if so, address them under Article 5.**

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2025)	Score (2024)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	5	The NTS project to assess AP mine contamination in Bujanovac municipality started in 2025 and progressed into 2026. As at July 2026, Serbia had three suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) of unknown size, and was investigating a further 13 locations, all in Bujanovac municipality. Serbia was also assessing whether improvised AP mines are present in the Jamena area of the River Sava.
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 2025, Serbia increased its SMAC budget allocation to €949,000, and committed €220,000 annually for demining operations, through to 2028. SMAC organises annual coordination meetings, bringing together all relevant stakeholders.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	5	SMAC does not have a gender policy in place. SMAC deployed a gender and ethnically balanced NTS team, and began disaggregating risk education and NTS data by sex. Only 3 of the 83 risk education beneficiaries in Bujanovac municipality, however, were female.
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	Migration to IMSMA Core is almost complete and the database is largely operational, but development continued under the renewed support agreement with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). Serbia submits accurate and consistent annual Article 7 reports on progress in demining and provides regular updates at APMBC meetings.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	6	Serbia does not have a national mine action strategy in place, but the Serbian government adopts annual mine action plans. Serbia did not set annual land release targets for the requested extension period 2027–29 as the areas of remaining contamination were not yet known.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (10% of overall score)	7	7	Serbia developed NTS standard operating procedures (SOPs) along with three additional chapters of national mine action standards (NMAS) – on land release, glossary, and quality management in 2025. Serbia's recent and ongoing projects show improved application of technical survey (TS). A new decree on protection against explosive remnants of war (ERW), which will introduce the concept of land release, was under government review.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	4	4	Serbia did not release any AP mined area in 2025. It will not meet its Article 5 deadline of 31 December 2026, and has requested an extension of three years to 31 December 2029. The definition of the remaining contamination and annual land release targets is subject to the results of the ongoing survey.
Average Score	**5.4**	**5.4**	**Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE**

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior
- Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at July 2026, Serbia reported five suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) thought to contain AP mines but of unknown size in Bujanovac municipality, and was planning to technically survey them. SMAC was also conducting NTS in another 13 locations in the same municipality. SMAC's NTS dataset covered 30 community councils and 59 villages in the municipality of Bujanovac.[1]

Serbia's Article 7 report covering 2025 had reported that, as at April 2026, Serbia had 17 SHAs containing AP mines. Of these, one SHA covered 0.27km^2 in Ravno Bučje village while the extent of the other 16 was being delimited.[2] Since then, Serbia had completed technical survey (TS) in Ravno Bučje village and released the SHA of 0.27km^2.[3]

The NTS project, accompanied by risk education, continues to assess other areas suspected of containing mines in Bujanovac municipality. The project comes in response to reports of explosions heard by local communities following a fire that occurred in Bujanovac in October 2019, which indicated the presence of mines (or other munitions). The suspected mined areas were marked with signs in both Serbian and Albanian. Fires also occurred in August 2021 in a different area of the municipality of Bujanovac, during which there were similar reports of explosions.[4]

By the time of its previous Article 5 deadline extension request in March 2024, Serbia had one SHA of 268,100m^2 containing AP mines and 4,367,643m^2 across five SHAs, all in Bujanovac municipality. These five SHAs were designated as starting points for survey. By 2025, a dedicated NTS team, comprising three Albanian and two Serbian members, was established, trained, accredited, and equipped to implement the NTS project. The team initially assessed and entered the five locations as SHAs in the IMSMA database.

The Serbian Mine Action Centre (SMAC) subsequently changed the project approach to a community-council by-community-council survey of the entire Bujanovac municipality. Under the revised approach, suspected contamination—including the five SHAs already assessed—is being recorded as preliminary location points (pins) subject to further investigation before being identified as SHAs or confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). This approach will identify areas for TS and clearance and aims to remove doubt from communities where no evidence of contamination exists following the application of 'all reasonable effort'. In these cases, communities will pass to residual risk management and community council presidents will sign a declaration of the absence of evidence of contamination.[5]

According to SMAC, the remaining contamination in Serbia is from mines of an unknown origin and type emplaced without a pattern and for which no minefield records exist.[6] The TS in Đorđevac in 2026 identified AP mines of type PMA-2 and PMR-2A, in addition to a TMA-3 anti-vehicle (AV) mine.[7]

In its 2026 Article 5 deadline extension request, Serbia has reiterated 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."[8] If these devices meet the definition of an AP mine, then they fall within Serbia's obligations under the APMBC and must be destroyed. As at September 2026, SMAC was conducting NTS and verifications near Jamena village and had not found evidence of AP mines. SMAC said it will continue to collect and analyse evidence and will take a final decision on whether the area should be classified as suspected of contamination once 'All Reasonable Effort' has been applied.[9]

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.[10] Contamination also exists within Kosovo (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines 2026* report on Kosovo for further information). SMAC requests that it be noted that all references to Kosovo should be understood in the context of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).[11]

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.[12] 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 18km^2 may be contaminated with ERW.[13] SMAC is also receiving

1 Email from Ivana Stanišić, Advisor, SMAC, 4 September 2026.
2 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form D; and email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
3 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 4 September 2026.
4 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8; Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form D; and email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 21 May 2024.
5 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 8 and 18; and email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
6 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form F.
7 SMAC, "ERW Found on Project Đorđevac 2", (in Serbian), 1 March 2026, https://shorturl.at/hfcs9; and "ERW found on the Project Đorđevac 3", (in Serbian), 23 March 2026, https://shorturl.at/JJp9k.
8 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 18.
9 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 4 September 2026.
10 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5; and Article 7 Report (covering 2014), Form C.
11 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 11 May 2021.
12 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 25 April 2023 and 20 August 2024.
13 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 17.

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 control to civilian use.[14]

Serbia is also contaminated with cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other ERW from the 1999 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bombing campaign, or which remain from previous conflicts.[15] See Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2026* report on Serbia for further information.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

According to a government decree, the Sector for Emergency Management, under the Ministry of Interior, acts as the national mine action authority (NMAA).[16] The NMAA is responsible for developing SOPs, accrediting demining operators, and supervising the work of the SMAC.[17]

SMAC was established on 7 March 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 provide risk education.[18] Since 2014, the Sector for Emergency Management has been responsible for accrediting demining operators. Previously, SMAC was responsible for doing so.[19]

The current director of SMAC was appointed by the Serbian government in July 2019.[20] As at April 2026, 17 people were employed at SMAC: the director, two assistant directors, and 14 other employees.[21]

In addition to the above set-up, with support from an international NTS expert, SMAC established, trained, certified, and equipped the team of three ethnic Albanian and two ethnic Serbian members responsible for the NTS project. SMAC trained the survey team after its own staff received NTS training of trainers (ToT).[22]

SMAC expanded its training portfolio to include an International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)-compliant Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD) course in cooperation with the United Kingdom (UK)-based Drakon Group.[23] It also introduced a specialised course on the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for NTS, and began deploying UAVs equipped with Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology to support the assessment of SHAs.[24]

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) supported SMAC to set up the latest version of the IMSMA Core. GICHD also supported SMAC personnel participation in regional mine action managers and land release courses, among others.[25]

ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF) supported Serbia's mine action programme by providing technical support and channelling funds for the procurement of equipment including four 4X4 vehicles, Geographic Positioning System (GPS) devices, rangefinders, compasses, and information technology (IT) equipment.[26]

There is no formal in-country national platform for dialogue in place, but SMAC organises an annual coordination meeting that brings together all relevant stakeholders, including ministries and other State authorities, donors, partners, and demining operators in Serbia. Coordination meetings are used to present results, discuss challenges, and review plans.[27]

FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

SMAC is fully funded by Serbia, including salaries and running costs, as well as for survey, development of project tasks for the demining of contaminated areas, follow-up on implementation of project tasks, and quality assurance (QA) and QC of demining. In 2025, Serbia allocated around €949,000 of the State budget for SMAC, a significant increase on the €590,000 provided in 2024.[28] The unexploded ordnance (UXO) disposal work of the Sector for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Interior is also State-funded.[29]

14 Ibid., p. 23; and 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 18.
15 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.
16 Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 70/13.
17 Emails from Darvin Lisica, Regional Programme Manager, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 6 May and 12 June 2016.
18 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 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 19.
19 2022 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 20.
20 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 23 April 2020.
21 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025.
22 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
23 Ibid.; and SMAC, "Completion of International EOD Level 3 Training", 3 October 2025.
24 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
25 Ibid.
26 Emails from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April and 3 July 2026.
27 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
28 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 4 April 2025 and 7 May 2024; and Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
29 SMAC, "Mine situation", 21 April 2023.

National funding for demining operations was €220,000 in 2025, an amount that was matched by donors through the ITF. Comparable allocations are committed in Serbia's National Strategy for 2027 and 2028. These cover the clearance of mines, CMR, and other explosive ordnance. The two donors that supported mine survey and clearance in Serbia in 2024, the United States (US) and the Republic of Korea, continued their funding in 2025.[30]

In addition to €660,000 of national funding secured for 2026–28, Serbia estimates it would need €2 million in international funding for survey and clearance of mined area until 2028.[31] Its latest Article 5 deadline extension request, however, did not include a breakdown of the estimated costs nor did it explain the underlying rationale of this estimate. For more information on funding, please see the country profile on Serbia on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[32]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

SMAC said it does not directly influence the gender composition of recruitment in its main office, which depends on candidate interest and performance in the selection process. Gender and ethnic balance, however, were considered in the establishment of the new NTS team in Bujanovac, which comprises three women and two men – three ethnic Albanians and two ethnic Serbs. Serbia has also begun disaggregating some mine action data by sex, including in NTS and risk education reporting.[33]

While SMAC does not currently have plans to develop a gender and diversity policy it said it applies a Gender Equality Risk Management Plan as part of its policies to protect gender equality principles in all mine action activities, and contributes to annual national reporting on gender equality within Serbia's public institutions.[34] SMAC reported that women, men, and children are systematically consulted during survey and community liaison and that qualified women and men have equal access to survey and clearance employment.[35] Serbia's gender-disaggregated risk education data, however, show that of the total 83 members of communities who received risk education in Bujanovac municipality, only 3 were female.[36]

The NTS is conducted among a multilingual population in which historical and socio-economic factors have affected levels of trust and willingness to share information. Serbia said that sustained engagement in local languages and with due regard for cultural context had increased trust in the survey process. The recruitment of NTS personnel from affected communities had also strengthened local acceptance and cooperation.[37]

At SMAC, 13 of the 25 employees (52%) are women. Women hold two of the four managerial/supervisory level positions (50%), and three of the eight operational positions (38%).[38]

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. Environmental measures were also integrated in the SOPs for the NTS project in Bujanovac. 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, which had occurred as at the time of writing.[39] SMAC does not have a dedicated environmental focal point.[40]

The Bujanovac NTS SOP requires the survey team to avoid littering, dispose of waste responsibly, recycle where possible, and apply fire-prevention measures. Survey and clearance are scheduled according to weather and environmental conditions.[41] In its latest extension request, Serbia states that remaining mine contamination blocks road connections, affects the environment, and increases the risk of fires.[42]

30 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 56; and email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
31 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 56.
32 https://the-monitor.org.
33 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
34 Ibid.
35 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form D.
36 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Table 7, p. 39.
37 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form D.
38 Ibid.
39 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 7 May 2024 and 4 April 2025.
40 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
41 Ibid.
42 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

SMAC had its own IM system until it decided to seek GICHD support for the installation of Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core.[43] A partnership agreement between SMAC and the GICHD for its development was renewed in 2025. IMSMA Core is being operationally used across various SMAC projects. A centralised database, dashboards, and sketch maps have been developed. The system supports data collection, reporting, digitisation of historical records, particularly within the NTS project in Bujanovac, as well as various reporting functions. The migration of data from previous projects and historical data into IMSMA Core has largely been completed, with most data now validated. Data collection forms are in use, and further development continues under the renewed cooperation with the GICHD.[44]

SMAC is running a recruitment process for a new IM Support Officer to support IMSMA Core operations.[45] SMAC also provides IMSMA Core training to newly established survey team in Bujanovac.[46]

Serbia submits timely and accurate annual Article 7 transparency reports and reports on its progress in Article 5 implementation at the APMBC intersessional meetings and Meetings of States Parties. Serbia's Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2026 was timely and detailed.

PLANNING AND TASKING

There is no national mine action strategy in place in Serbia. The Government adopts annual work plans to guide the implementation of Article 5 obligations. SMAC had an annual work plan in place for 2026. The plan provides for the continuation of NTS in Bujanovac, UAV recording, continuation of TS projects in Ravno Bučje, and the development of new TS and clearance projects based on the NTS results.[47] Serbia could not set annual land release targets for 2027–29 as the areas requiring release are subject to the ongoing survey.[48]

As per the plan, SMAC completed the two remaining TS projects Ravno Bučje village with the size of 122,600m^2 and 145,500m^2, which resulted in the reduction of 268,100km^2 by April 2026. The first TS project in the same village was completed in 2024 and resulted in the reduction of 122,200m^2. By September 2026, and based on the evidence collected during NTS, SMAC had developed three new TS projects: Mali Trnovac of 131,539m^2; Djordjevac of 151,900m^2; and Bali Kamen Area in Veliki Trnovac of 104,647m^2. The projects are intended to define the actual extent of the contamination and, when evidence is found, delimit the boundaries of hazardous areas.[49] SMAC expected to start new TS and clearance projects of the newly identified SHAs in October 2026, although this date was contingent on tender procedures and climate and environmental conditions.[50] For 2026, Serbia is prioritising the comprehensive NTS of Bujanovac Municipality so that boundaries of suspected areas can be precisely delineated. Upon the results of survey, SMAC will develop TS and clearance projects.[51]

Prioritisation of survey and clearance is guided by a combination of humanitarian impact, community-reported needs, and verified survey data. The immediate priority is to release areas with higher population density, and areas that directly affect the local population, including zones critical for access to forests, agricultural land, and strategic infrastructure. More complex areas, such as rugged forest terrain, will be addressed in subsequent phases.[52]

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.[53] 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.[54] Three additional chapters on land release, glossary, and quality management were developed in 2025. Subject to the availability of funds, SMAC plans further development of NMAS chapters, particularly on IM.[55] SMAC has also developed a set of SOPs that provide an operational reference for the NTS, including planning, data collection, community interaction, reporting, and field safety. The SOPs are said to be aligned with the IMAS.[56]

43 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 11 April 2023; and GICHD, 26 May 2023.
44 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
45 Ibid.
46 SMAC, "Training of Survey Team in Bujanovac as part of IMSMA Core System Enhancement", 28 August 2025.
47 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
48 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Table 12, p. 63.
49 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 4 September 2026.
50 Ibid.; and Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form D.
51 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
52 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 56; and email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
53 SMAC, "Mine Situation", 21 April 2023; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.
54 Emails from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 7 May 2024 and 4 April 2025.
55 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
56 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 30.

Serbia plans to issue a new decree on protection against ERW. The draft decree, which was developed by SMAC and the Ministry of Interior, includes a definition of land release (not defined in the existing decree), and supports the development of NMAS. As at September 2026, the decree was in the final stages of review by the government.[57]

Under new directorship in late 2015, SMAC reassessed its land release methodology in order to prioritise full clearance over TS of hazardous areas.[58] This did not correspond to international best practice and was an inefficient use of scarce clearance assets. In July 2026, SMAC clarified that the previous methodologies prioritising full clearance were applicable to specific projects, such as in Užice (Bioska), which contained CHAs and therefore required full clearance. SMAC added that more recent projects, such as those in 2024 in Tutin and Bujanovac, applied the 50-metre land release methodology, which identifies precise boundaries of contamination and reserves clearance to where there is evidence of the presence of contamination.[59] The recent release of the 268,100m^2 SHA in Ravno Bučje through TS, and the plans to develop TS and clearance projects based on the NTS results, indicate a shift towards a land release more in line with IMAS.

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]

SMAC applies UAVs, including LiDAR-equipped systems to support NTS activities in difficult or unsafe terrain. UAV data enables high-resolution terrain analysis, identification of anomalies, and improved planning of TS and clearance.[62] Clearance is reported to be conducted in accordance with IMAS, and to a depth of 20 centimetres.[63]

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

SMAC does not itself conduct clearance or employ clearance personnel but does survey areas suspected to contain mines, CMR, or other ERW, and performs QA and QC on clearance tasks. Clearance is conducted by commercial companies and organisations selected through public tenders executed by the ITF and supported by international funding.[64] As at 2025, 15 organisations held valid accreditation, eight from Serbia and seven from Bosnia and Herzegovina, but did not conduct mine clearance.[65] Serbia said clearance productivity per deminer, depending on the mine situation, terrain configuration, land characteristics and vegetation, was up to 150m^2 per deminer per day.[66] This is a remarkably high rate.

Only NTS capacity was deployed in Serbia in 2025. SMAC deployed an NTS team of five persons to conduct the NTS project in Bujanovac municipality (see Table 1). SMAC expected a further increase in survey and clearance capacity in 2026 based on the results of the ongoing survey projects.[67]

Table 1: Operational NTS capacities deployed in 2025[68]

Operator	No. of NTS teams	No. of personnel
SMAC	1	5

The Serbian Armed Forces maintain a capacity to detect, clear, and destroy landmines. This capacity includes many types of detection equipment, mechanical clearance assets, disposal expertise, and specialist search and clearance teams.[69] 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.[70]

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,[71] 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.[72] Owing to the suspected presence of mines, these areas have not been accessed since the end of the conflict (2001) meaning that the land is unmanaged and making it even less accessible.[73] 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.[74] SMAC lists mechanical demining as a possible land release approach in Serbia "where appropriate".[75]

57 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 4 September 2026.
58 Interview with Jovica Simonović, SMAC, in Geneva, 18 February 2016.
59 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 3 July 2026.
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 APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.
62 Article 7 Report (covering 2025), Form D.
63 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Form C.
64 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 18; and email from Kinda Samra, GICHD, 27 June 2024.
65 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 55.
66 Serbia, "Replies to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Questions Concerning the Requisition Submitted by Serbia", 3 August 2022.
67 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
68 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.
69 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form J.
70 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.
71 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019.
72 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.
73 Email from Slađana Košutić, SMAC, 26 March 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Section 4.
74 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.
75 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 14.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2025

Serbia did not release any AP mined area in 2025.[76] In 2024, Serbia reduced 122,200m^2 through TS with one item of UXO found and destroyed.[77]

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR SERBIA: 1 MARCH 2004

↓

ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2014

↓

FIRST EXTENDED DEADLINE (5 YEARS): 1 MARCH 2019

↓

SECOND EXTENDED DEADLINE (4 YEARS): 1 MARCH 2023

↓

THIRD EXTENDED DEADLINE (22 MONTHS, INTERIM): 31 DECEMBER 2024

↓

FOURTH EXTENDED DEADLINE (2 YEARS): 31 DECEMBER 2026

NOT ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE (EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 31 DECEMBER 2029)

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Serbia was 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. In March 2026, Serbia submitted a new extension request for a further three years until 31 December 2029. The Request was due to be considered by the Twenty-Third Meeting of the States Parties (23MSP).

Serbia had planned to release all known mined area (covering 561,800m^2) 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 268,100m^2 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.[78] No AP mined area was released in 2025. By July 2026, the NTS in Bujanovac municipality was progressing in 13 locations, the two TS projects in Ravno Bučje village were completed, and three new TS projects in Mali Trnovac, Djordjevic, and Bali Karmen had been initiated.

In its 2026 extension request, Serbia says that a work plan for completion of survey and clearance of the remaining contamination in Bujanovac municipality will be developed once the results of the NTS are produced and the exact numbers and areas of CHAs and SHAs are defined.[79] Serbia projects that it will complete clearance of all mined areas "well before the deadline" if the requisite national and international funds are available and no additional contamination is discovered. Otherwise, Serbia will submit a further Article 5 deadline extension request by March 2029.[80]

In the last five years Serbia has cleared a total of 0.46km^2 of mined area, but no clearance has taken place over the last three years (see Table 2).

Table 2: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km^2)
2025	0
2024	0
2023	0
2022	0.17
2021	0.29
Total	**0.46**

Serbia's claim to continued jurisdiction over Kosovo entails legal responsibility for remaining mined areas under Article 5 of the APMBC.[81] 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 all three of its 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 UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (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."[82]

76 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 9 April 2026.

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

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

79 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

80 Ibid., p. 53.

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

82 Revised 2024 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 12; and 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 15.

Furthermore, while SMAC is mandated to respond to explosive ordnance contamination only in civilian areas,[83] Serbia did report contamination of about 18km^2 of various types of ERW following fires and explosions in military depots.[84] SMAC later declared that, according to official reports from the Ministry of Defence, no known or suspected AP mined areas remained in areas under its responsibility.[85] Serbia was still assessing whether there were any improvised AP mines in the Jamena area of the River Sava, and by September 2026, had not found evidence of devices that meet the definition of AP mines.[86]

Whether Serbia will meet its requested extended Article 5 deadline can only be assessed once the extent and nature of the remaining AP mine contamination has been determined. This is dependent on the results of the ongoing surveys, and on Serbia clarifying possible unknown contamination in the remaining areas under its jurisdiction or control.

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.[87] There is no mention of a plan for the management of residual contamination in Serbia's latest Article 5 deadline extension request. A GICHD assessment visit to SMAC in February 2026 focused on analysis of existing mechanisms and identifying future needs for managing residual contamination.[88]

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

84 2026 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 15.

85 Email from Ivana Stanišić, SMAC, 5 September 2026.

86 Ibid.

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

88 SMAC, "GICHD Delegation Visits the Mine Action Centre", 16 February 2026, https://shorturl.at/ABfit.