

## KEY DATA

**APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:**  
**1 JUNE 2028**

Not on track to meet deadline

**AP MINE CONTAMINATION:**  
**22.2km<sup>2</sup>**

Heavy  
(National authority estimate)

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km <sup>2</sup> )	Release in 2023* (km <sup>2</sup> )
Clearance	5.98	5.34
Technical Survey	1.00	0.89
Non-Technical Survey	0.20	0.22

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	2023*
AP Mines destroyed	16,510 (incl. 45 destroyed in spot tasks)	22,141 (incl. 113 destroyed in spot tasks)

\*In October 2025, Sri Lanka reported revised land release data for 2023. Previously in last year's Clearing the Mines report, Sri Lanka had reported that 4.83km<sup>2</sup> was cleared in 2023, 0.78km<sup>2</sup> was reduced through technical survey, 0.02km<sup>2</sup> was cancelled through non-technical survey, and a total of 19,288 AP mines had been destroyed in 2023, including 76 destroyed in spot tasks).

## MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2024:

- Sri Lanka Army Humanitarian Demining Unit (SLA HDU)
- DASH
- SHARP
- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2024, Sri Lanka's survey and clearance output remained broadly the same as the previous year (based on revised 2023 data provided by Sri Lanka in October 2025), but the contamination baseline rose as the National Completion Survey uncovered previously unknown mined areas. A mid-term review of the Completion Strategy in 2025 confirmed that meeting Sri Lanka's original Article 5 deadline of June 2028 is no longer feasible, citing newly identified contamination, larger-than-expected minefields, reduced capacity, funding shortfalls, and high staff turnover. Sri Lanka is therefore expected to request an extension to its Article 5 deadline, with any realistic new deadline dependent on securing sustained funding and resources.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Sri Lanka should set a realistic Article 5 deadline by reassessing remaining contamination levels and operational capacity and engaging international partners for sustained funding and other support.
- Sri Lanka should ensure all of its national mine action standards (NMAS) are brought up to date and review all operator Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in line with the updated NMAS without further delay, as was supposed to have occurred in 2023 according to its Completion Strategy 2023–2027.
- Greater efforts should be made to ensure that the national database is up to date and accurate.
- Sri Lanka should finalise and publish its long-awaited resource mobilisation strategy, with clear funding targets to at least the end of 2027.

## ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2024)	Score (2023)	Performance Commentary
<b>UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION</b> (20% of overall score)	7	7	Sri Lanka's baseline of AP mined area increased in 2024, with the discovery of over 6km <sup>2</sup> of contamination during survey conducted as part of the National Completion Survey Process. As at June 2025, 59% of the surveyed areas were declared mine free with the rest undergoing follow-up.
<b>NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT</b> (10% of overall score)	7	7	Sri Lanka's national mine action programme is nationally owned, with committed funding from the government to the mine action programme. Sri Lanka had planned to adopt a resource mobilisation strategy in 2023 to increase both national and international funding, but as at June 2025 the strategy was still under development.
<b>GENDER AND DIVERSITY</b> (10% of overall score)	7	7	Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Completion Strategy for 2023–2027 includes gender and diversity as a cross-cutting issue for all mine action. There was no significant change in the proportion of women employed by operators from 2023 to 2024.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION</b> (10% of overall score)	5	5	Sri Lanka does not have a dedicated national mine action standard (NMAS) or policy on environmental management. While seasonal and climate-related risks are factored into operational planning, increasingly severe rainfall has already disrupted clearance, highlighting the need to integrate mine action more explicitly into national climate and disaster frameworks.
<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING</b> (10% of overall score)	5	5	Sri Lanka uses the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core and IMSMA New Generation in parallel as it was decided a full migration to IMSMA Core was not an efficient use of resources. Sri Lanka submitted a detailed Article 7 report covering 2024. However, some of the data were found to be incorrect and the NMAC confirmed to Mine Action Review in October 2025, that it would amend its Article 7 report with corrected survey and clearance data.
<b>PLANNING AND TASKING</b> (10% of overall score)	7	7	In 2025, Sri Lanka conducted a mid-term review of its Completion Strategy. The findings, presented at a high-level donor event, reaffirmed Sri Lanka's commitment to partnership.
<b>LAND RELEASE SYSTEM</b> (10% of overall score)	7	7	As at August 2025, Sri Lanka had still not adopted its revised NMAS nor updated the standards for technical survey, mechanical clearance, and quality management. This had been planned to be done by the end of 2023. Sri Lanka's demining capacity reduced from 2023 to 2024 due to a drop in funding.
<b>LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE</b> (20% of overall score)	7	7	Sri Lanka increased its survey and clearance output from 2023 to 2024 but was not able to meet its land release target for the year. It is now understood that meeting the 1 June 2028 Article 5 deadline is no longer feasible.
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE</b>

## AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

### MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Ministry of Urban Development and Housing
- National Mine Action Centre (NMAC)

### NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH)
- Skavita Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Project (SHARP)
- Sri Lankan Army (SLA) Humanitarian Demining Units (HDUs)

### INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

### OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

## UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at the end of 2024, the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) reported total mined area in Sri Lanka at almost 23.2km<sup>2</sup> across 840 mined areas: 17.6km<sup>2</sup> across 634 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and 5.5km<sup>2</sup> across 206 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) (see Table 1).<sup>1</sup> This is an increase from the almost 21.6km<sup>2</sup> across 825 mined areas reported at the end of 2023.<sup>2</sup> Contamination levels continue to vary due to the discovery of previously unknown mined areas, and as at October 2025 the amount of mined area stood at 22.2km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1: Mined area (at end 2024)<sup>4</sup>**

Province	District	CHAs	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	SHAs	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Total SHAs and CHAs	Total area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Northern	Jaffna	16	570,451	3	127,505	19	697,956
	Kilinochchi	76	1,602,024	9	361,724	85	1,963,748
	Mannar	166	2,078,014	48	794,420	214	2,872,434
	Mullaitivu	298	12,296,966	48	1,897,434	346	14,194,400
	Vavuniya	41	553,350	33	1,314,788	74	1,868,138
North Central	Anuradhapura	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Polonnaruwa	1	3,103	4	40,926	5	44,029
North Western	Puttalam	0	0	1	25,265	1	25,265
Eastern	Ampara	2	11,135	15	296,992	17	308,127
	Batticaloa	19	242,360	24	531,990	43	774,350
	Trincomalee	15	289,201	21	157,440	36	446,641
<b>Totals</b>		<b>634</b>	<b>17,646,604</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>5,548,484</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>23,195,088</b>

The increase in the contamination baseline is largely due to the government-mandated National Completion Survey Process, which involves operators conducting survey at each Grama Niladhari Division (GND) – the smallest administrative unit at the village level in Sri Lanka.<sup>5</sup> The National Completion Survey process was launched in the second half of 2023, with first visits to all GNDs completed by December 2024. The survey covered both the Northern and Eastern provinces, with a total of 1,405 GNDs visited.<sup>6</sup> As at June 2025, 59% of the GNDs were declared mine free, with the remainder undergoing follow-up visits and technical verification.<sup>7</sup>

In 2024, Mines Advisory Group (MAG) conducted completion surveys across 703 GNDs, of which 433 were recommended for declaration as mine-impact-free and 270 required follow-up.<sup>8</sup> SHARP implemented completion surveys in 19 GNDs within the Mullaitivu district.<sup>9</sup> HALO completed field visits to its remaining 462 GNDs during 2024, with 344 recommended for declaration and 118 requiring follow-up. Across all verified data, HALO had surveyed all 611 GNDs allocated by NMAC by the end of the year, with 457 GNs (75%) recommended for declaration and 154 (25%) for follow-up.<sup>10</sup>

1 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D. Based on reported figures, end-2024 contamination would be expected to total 22.25km<sup>2</sup> (21.6km<sup>2</sup> at end 2023 minus 6.05km<sup>2</sup> released plus 6.7km<sup>2</sup> newly identified). The official baseline reported by NMAC, however, is 23.2km<sup>2</sup>.

2 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 6.

3 Email from Sri Mallikarachchi, IM Specialist, GICHD/NMAC, 21 October 2025.

4 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D.

5 Email from Philippa Coates, Donor Relations Manager, HALO, 13 June 2024.

6 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D. Of this, SHARP identified 0.18km<sup>2</sup>, The HALO Trust 1.46km<sup>2</sup>, and MAG 1.77km<sup>2</sup> (of which 0.58km<sup>2</sup> was in CHAs and 1.19km<sup>2</sup> in SHAs).

7 Statement of Sri Lanka on Article 5 implementation, APMBC Intersessional Meeting, 17 June 2025.

8 Email from Ziggy Garewal, Country Director, MAG, 23 June 2025.

9 Email from Sarath Jayawardhana, Director, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

10 Email from Hugh Baker, Programme Manager, HALO, 21 June 2025.

Sri Lanka has long been extensively contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). After a major clearance operation, most remaining contamination is located in Sri Lanka's five northern districts, the focus of almost three decades of armed conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which ended in May 2009. Both sides made extensive use of mines, including belts of P4 Mk I and Mk II AP blast mines laid by the Sri Lankan Army (SLA), and long defensive lines with a mixture of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including AP mines of an improvised nature, laid by the LTTE.<sup>11</sup> Indian peacekeeping forces also used mines during their presence from July 1987 to January 1990.<sup>12</sup>

The SLA used both AP and anti-vehicle (AV) mines. Previously it was thought that all its minelaying had been recorded<sup>13</sup> and made available to the national mine action programme.<sup>14</sup> However, operators are continuing to find previously unrecorded minefields laid by the SLA, as both memories and records have diminished.<sup>15</sup> In Jaffna, where minefields were laid by the SLA, the extent of contamination is well understood.<sup>16</sup> HALO, in coordination with NMAC and its Regional Mine Action Office (the RMAO), has now cleared most of the accessible SLA-laid minefields in Jaffna district. The bulk of the remaining contamination is in the Jaffna High Security Zone, which is currently only accessible to the SLA. In February 2023, the Sri Lankan government announced they would make 0.65km<sup>2</sup> of the contamination accessible for clearance, with HALO tasked for the work.<sup>17</sup>

Minefield maps and information on mine-laying strategy are not readily available for the LTTE-laid minefields, which therefore pose more of a challenge to clear.<sup>18</sup> Typically, LTTE minelaying was less predictable and more sporadic, and many of the minefields are in jungle areas with limited human activity.<sup>19</sup> Operators have encountered a wide range of LTTE devices, including AP mines with anti-tilt and anti-lift

mechanisms. Tripwire-activated Claymore-type mines and, to a lesser extent, AV mines have been found, along with a number of forms of improvised devices to act as fragmentation mines, bar mines, electrical and magnetically initiated explosive devices, and mines connected to detonating cord to mortar and artillery shells.<sup>20</sup> The LTTE manufactured almost all the mines their forces used.<sup>21</sup>

While estimates of total contamination have been rising since 2021, they have fallen sharply from a high of 506km<sup>2</sup> at the end of 2010. A district-by-district re-survey in 2015–17 of all registered SHAs in the national database resulted in cancellation of more than 42km<sup>2</sup> of mined area and helped provide greater clarity on the extent of remaining contamination.<sup>22</sup> In September 2021, NMAC initiated comprehensive non-technical survey (NTS) across all conflict-affected districts to identify previously unknown mined and ERW-contaminated areas.<sup>23</sup> This survey has led to the discovery of significant mined area that had not previously been detected. Past NTS had gaps in coverage, and recent efforts tended to be only reactive, particularly in areas with limited human interaction such as the Mullaitivu jungle.<sup>24</sup> The newly found mined areas are often in forests, in areas to which communities have only recently returned. Additionally, some previously registered CHAs were found to be larger than expected.<sup>25</sup> The survey's findings have contributed to the development of Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027.<sup>26</sup>

NMAC said the current baseline of AP mine contamination has been established through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men, including, where relevant, from minority groups.<sup>27</sup> According to Sri Lanka, all areas known or suspected to contain AP mines have been marked and warning signs in Sinhala, Tamil, and English prominently displayed.<sup>28</sup>

## OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Aside from mines, Sri Lanka remains contaminated with a wide range of ERW, including unexploded air-dropped bombs (although these are very rarely discovered), artillery shells and missiles, mortar bombs, hand-held anti-tank projectiles, and rifle and hand grenades. Large caches of abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) also exist, particularly in the north.<sup>29</sup> These are being tackled at the same time as mined areas.<sup>30</sup>

11 Interviews with demining operators, Colombo, 29 March–2 April 2010; and with Maj. Pradeep Gamage, Officer-in-Charge, North Jaffna Humanitarian Demining Unit (HDU), Jaffna, 3 April 2007.

12 Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs, Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020, May 2016, p. 6; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 1.

13 Ibid.; and interview with Rob Syfret, Operations Manager, HALO, in Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.

14 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 1.

15 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

16 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO, 3 April 2020.

17 Email from Nadine Lainer, Deputy Programme Manager, HALO, 13 April 2023.

18 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO, 3 April 2020; and Statement of Sri Lanka, Fourth APMB Review Conference, Oslo, 29 November 2020.

19 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO, 3 April 2020.

20 Email from Valon Kumnova, HALO, 11 April 2014; and Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020, May 2016, p. 6.

21 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 1.

22 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO, 3 April 2020; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020; and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), 13 May 2020.

23 Statement of Sri Lanka on clearance, Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties (19MSP) (virtual meeting), 15–19 November 2021; emails from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 2 August 2022; and the GICHD, 13 April 2022; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form C.

24 Email from Stephen Hall, Programme Manager, HALO, 5 September 2022.

25 Email from Asa Massteberg, GICHD, 30 August 2022.

26 Statement of Sri Lanka on clearance, 19MSP (virtual meeting), 15–19 November 2021; emails from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 2 August 2022; and the GICHD, 13 April 2022; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form C.

27 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

28 Statement of Sri Lanka on clearance, 19MSP (virtual meeting), 15–19 November 2021.

29 Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020, p. 6; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 1.

30 Email from Matthew Hovell, Regional Director, HALO, 30 September 2018.

## NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

NMAC has responsibility for priority setting, information management, quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC), coordination with demining organisations and cooperation partners, and the establishment of policy and standards.<sup>31</sup> NMAC suffers from frequent leadership and institutional changes, including under which ministry within the Sri Lankan government the centre sits, while the Director of NMAC is a political appointee and the secretary of the ministry in question. Lack of consistent leadership can impede good management and reduce effectiveness. NMAC currently sits within the Ministry of Urban Development, Construction and Housing, after a re-shuffle in August 2022.<sup>32</sup> Prior to this, NMAC had undergone near-yearly changes to its ministry affiliation.

Clearance operations are coordinated, tasked, and quality managed by an RMAO in Kilinochchi, working in consultation with District Steering Committees for Mine Action. The Committees are chaired by government agents heading district authorities.<sup>33</sup> The RMAO also suffers from high turnover of staff with many military personnel, who are seconded, rotating at regular intervals.<sup>34</sup>

The Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines Act (No. 3 of 2022), which focuses on the prohibitions in Article 1 of the APMBC rather than on regulation of the mine action programme, was certified in 2022.<sup>35</sup>

Operators reported a generally supportive and enabling environment for mine action in Sri Lanka.<sup>36</sup> HALO noted that the relationship between the Sri Lankan government and the mine action sector has been strengthened following the launch of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy in March 2023.<sup>37</sup> The appointment of a dynamic new NMAC director by the incoming government in November 2024 has reinvigorated high-level political engagement and interest in

mine action.<sup>38</sup> Both MAG and HALO reported improvements in the process of importing demining equipment, including heavy machinery.<sup>39</sup>

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has worked very closely with NMAC since early 2015. The GICHD supported the development of Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2037 and continues to support implementation of the strategy through facilitation of meetings and workshops.<sup>40</sup>

In 2024, HALO delivered coordinate-conversion training to NMAC staff, which aimed to strengthen the Centre's technical capacity in geospatial data management and improve the accuracy of mapping and reporting across the mine action sector.<sup>41</sup> MAG planned to conduct training in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) for NMAC staff in 2026.<sup>42</sup>

In its National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027, NMAC commits to ensuring regular and structured coordination and information sharing with Sri Lanka government representatives, international donors, operators, and other partners, and says it will, in close collaboration with partners, organise bi-annual donor coordination meetings and quarterly operations meetings.<sup>43</sup> In 2024, several coordination and operations meetings were held with the RMAO and operators, led by NMAC and often in collaboration with the GICHD. These covered topics such as the completion survey, task allocation, operational progress, review of the national mine action strategy, review of land release SOPs, and resource mobilisation.<sup>44</sup> The NMAC also established a National Steering Committee bringing together representatives from key ministries to strengthen coordination on setting priorities, resettlement, and development of released land.<sup>45</sup>

## FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

In 2024, the total budget for land release operations in Sri Lanka was US\$18,515,130. The Government of Sri Lanka contributed approx. US\$200,000 (LKR 60.9 million), of which 65% was used by the Sri Lanka Army Humanitarian Demining

Unit (SLA HDU) for demining.<sup>46</sup> As at April 2025, the mine action programme was operating with only 45% of its 2024 funding level.<sup>47</sup>

31 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 12.

32 Emails from Asa Massleberg, GICHD, 30 August 2022; and Stephen Hall, HALO, 5 September 2022.

33 Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020, p. 9.

34 Email from the GICHD, 13 May 2020.

35 Statement of Sri Lanka on cooperative compliance, 19MSP (virtual meeting), 15–19 November 2021; Associated Press, "Sri Lanka approves law implementing anti-land mine treaty", *AP News*, 10 February 2022; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form A.

36 Emails from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 6 June 2024; Anil Udaya Kumara Kuruwita Arachchige, DASH, 5 October 2025; Cristy McLennan, MAG, 11 June 2024; and Philippa Coates, HALO, 13 June 2024.

37 Email from Philippa Coates, HALO, 13 June 2024.

38 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 10 October 2025.

39 Emails from Philippa Coates, HALO, 13 June 2024; and Cristy McLennan, MAG, 11 June 2024.

40 Email from the GICHD, 2 May 2023; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 16.

41 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025.

42 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

43 Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027, p. 25.

44 Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025; Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

45 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

46 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form I.

47 Statement of Sri Lanka on Article 5 implementation, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, 17 June 2025.

Sri Lanka seeks to increase national funding for its mine action programme, expand its international donor base, and explore other sources of funding. NMAC will develop a resource mobilisation strategy in line with Oslo Action Plan Action Point 43, providing clear funding targets until the end of 2027. The strategy was expected to be approved by the middle of 2023, but as at June 2025, it was said to be still under development.<sup>48</sup>

In 2024, MAG was funded by the US Department of State (PM/WRA), the US Department of Defense Humanitarian Demining R&D, the United Kingdom's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), the Government of Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA), Global Affairs Canada's Peace and Stabilization Operations Programme (PSOP). MAG

also received funding from the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) to support national coordination and staff capacity development, but not for survey or clearance.<sup>49</sup> In 2025, MAG continued to receive support from those donors, with the exception of CSSF and PSOP, both of which ceased funding.<sup>50</sup> SHARP received funding in 2024 and 2025 from GGP and PM/WRA.<sup>51</sup> HALO was supported in 2024 by PM/WRA, the United Kingdom's Integrated Security Fund (ISF), the NMFA, the GFFO, GGP, the Government of Switzerland, Global Affairs Canada, and US Department of Defense Humanitarian Demining R&D. In 2025, HALO remained funded by those donors though the ISF funding ended in March. While US funding underwent a 90-day review in 2025, it has since resumed with a 15-month cost extension, although overall funding levels were expected to decrease in the second half of 2025.<sup>52</sup>

## GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The National Mine Action Completion Strategy for 2023–2027 contains a specific section on gender and diversity. The Strategy recognises that mine action need to reflect the distinct needs of age and gender as people are affected differently by explosive ordnance contamination due to their varying roles and responsibilities. Sri Lanka commits to ensuring that all mine action activities are sensitive to gender and diversity and to continue efforts to mainstream these issues across mine action. It recognises that mine action should be tied to the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on Gender Equality. Noting the benefits and

importance of offering employment opportunities in mine action to women, it includes the findings from a 2020 GICHD study which revealed that half of all female deminers were the sole income earners in their households, and that more than one third of women employed as deminers had no prior income. This contrasts starkly with the one in twenty men in such a situation.

When recruiting for survey and community liaison teams, NMAC recruits personnel to represent ethnic or minority groups in each area.<sup>53</sup>

**Table 2: Gender composition of operators in 2024<sup>54</sup>**

Operator	Total staff	Women staff	Total managerial or supervisory staff	Women managerial or supervisory staff	Total operational staff	Women operational staff
SHARP	199	38 (19%)	16	6 (38%)	164	31 (19%)
DASH	429	84 (20%)	87	16 (18%)	342	68 (20%)
HALO	1042	396 (38%)	101	14 (14%)	829	362 (35%)
MAG	771	185 (24%)	138	13 (9%)	704	153 (22%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,441</b>	<b>703 (29%)</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>49 (14%)</b>	<b>2,039</b>	<b>614 (30%)</b>

48 Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027, p. 25; and Statement of Sri Lanka on Article 5 implementation, APMBIC Intersessional Meeting, 17 June 2025.

49 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

50 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

51 Email from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

52 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025.

53 Statement of Sri Lanka on Victim Assistance, 19MSP (virtual meeting), 15–19 November 2021.

54 Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 10 October 2025; Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025; Anil Udaya Kumara Kuruwita Arachchige, DASH, 5 October 2025; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

NMAC has not provided figures for 2024 but in 2022 only 5% of its total employees were female, with no women in managerial or operational positions. The SLA HDU trained and deployed two female demining teams for the first time in 2022.<sup>55</sup>

International operators HALO and MAG have gender policies in place, but it is not known if this is also the case with national operators SHARP and DASH.<sup>56</sup> In 2024, MAG provided maternal aprons for expectant mothers and overcoats for all female community liaison personnel, providing lighter duties for expectant mothers, equipping washrooms with menstrual products, and preparing the roll-out of menstruation leave in 2025. Awareness sessions and training on gender and menstrual health were delivered, alongside the establishment of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity working group, and a storytelling campaign on

inclusivity and diversity.<sup>57</sup> MAG also has a safeguarding framework with policies that set standards of behaviour, supported by a dedicated Safeguarding Unit responsible for handling concerns and complaints.<sup>58</sup> SHARP focused on increasing female representation during regular recruitment drives.<sup>59</sup> As HALO implements its staff livelihood transition strategy it has supported female staff participation in leadership and empowerment training. To support working mothers HALO provides a monthly childcare stipend baby boxes containing essential supplies for newborns, hygiene kits, and nutritional packs for pregnant and breastfeeding women. HALO has also strengthened its safeguarding protocols and partnered with Days for Girls to distribute reusable menstrual health kits to over 200 female staff.<sup>60</sup>

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## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Sri Lanka does not have a dedicated national standard or policy on environmental management. Operators reported that when working in contaminated forest, permissions must be obtained from the National Forestry and Wildlife Commissions and the Archaeology Department, which conduct routine visits to help ensure no harm is done to wildlife, forests, and land of archaeological value.<sup>61</sup> In 2022, HALO, on behalf of NMAC and other operators, organised a Wildlife & Forestry Commission Technical Working Group to establish a collaborative, efficient, and environmentally sensitive approach to jungle/forest clearance, including the use of small mechanised assets. HALO and MAG have since received ad-hoc authorisation to use mechanised assets for certain forested tasks.<sup>62</sup>

Sri Lanka is vulnerable to climate change-induced hazards, including tropical cyclones and flooding, which will impact the mine action programme and operational planning. Despite facing moderate disaster risk levels, climate change projections predict long-term alterations to the monsoon pattern and ecological regions. In response, Sri Lanka has a detailed normative framework, including national policies, strategies, and action plans on climate change and sustainable development, aligned with its obligations as a State Party to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and signatory to the Paris Agreement.<sup>63</sup>

However, it is unclear whether mine action is explicitly mentioned in any of these documents.

Operators and NMAC consider seasonal weather changes and associated climate-related risks when planning and prioritising survey and clearance.<sup>64</sup> For instance, HALO prioritises areas prone to flooding or waterlogging to minimise disruption, reduce the risk of landmine movement, and ensure the safety of staff and affected communities.<sup>65</sup> Such areas are scheduled for clearance outside the rainy season wherever possible, guided by historical weather patterns and local knowledge. Clearance of flood-prone sites is generally advanced into the drier months when ground conditions allow safer and more efficient operations. If ground saturation occurs unexpectedly, work may be paused until conditions improve. In some cases, specialist assets such as HALO's US HD R&D amphibious excavator—adapted for soft or saturated ground—are deployed, though certain tasks may still need to be suspended during the wet season. This planning approach ensures timely clearance of high-risk areas while reducing the risk of wasted effort or re-contamination caused by soil or mine movement during heavy rains.<sup>66</sup> MAG reported that the impact of climate change on seasonal rains has become increasingly evident; in both January 2024 and January 2025, heavy rainfall caused near-total suspension of operations.<sup>67</sup>

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55 Email from Jayalath Rohana, NMAC, 6 July 2023.

56 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO, 9 August 2019 and 3 April 2020; Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

57 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

58 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

59 Email from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

60 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025.

61 Emails from Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 11 April 2023; Cristy McLennan, MAG, 12 April 2023; Nadine Lainer, HALO, 13 April 2023; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 30 April 2023.

62 Emails from Nadine Lainer, HALO, 13 April 2023; and Cristy McLennan, MAG, 16 August 2023.

63 Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027, p. 16.

64 Emails from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 6 June 2024; Anil Udaya Kumara Kuruwita Arachchige, DASH, 10 June 2024; Cristy McLennan, MAG, 11 June 2024; and Philippa Coates, HALO, 13 June 2024.

65 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025.

66 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 12 September 2025.

67 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

Table 3: Environmental policies and action<sup>68</sup>

Operator	Environmental policy in place	Environmental assessments conducted to support planning and delivery of survey and clearance	Environmental focal point at country-programme level
MAG	No – SOP in place	Yes	No – Head of Support Services leads environment activities
SHARP	No	Yes	No
HALO	No – environmental action plan in place	Yes – environmental screening checklist; environmental impact assessment	No – planned recruitment in 2025
DASH	No – SOP in place	Yes	N/R

N/R = Not reported

In 2024, HALO developed and implemented an Environmental Action Plan outlining steps to minimise environmental impact during clearance, restore land after clearance, and integrate environmental awareness into its vocational training. In 2025, HALO commissioned the Lanka Environment Fund to deliver an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and workshops. The EIA surveyed sites in Muhamalai, Kakkuthoduwai, and the Jaffna Bay islands – the three most environmentally diverse areas within HALO's area of operations, where both manual and mechanical clearance is underway. While tailored to these sites, many of the lessons identified have broader relevance across clearance tasks.<sup>69</sup> The EIA surveyed potential risks and opportunities related to clearance activities, with a series of recommendations that will inform operational practices going forward. HALO

plans to recruit two environmental focal points to support the implementation of the Environmental Action Plan and strengthen environmental oversight.<sup>70</sup>

MAG has explored recycling and upcycling opportunities, and although there is a lack of capacity in the country it has engaged with a local recycling provider. It has secured funding for solar panels for its Colombo office and has begun sourcing more energy-efficient rental vehicles.<sup>71</sup> MAG has committed to reducing its global emissions in line with the Paris Agreement and, in 2025, calculated its carbon footprint across all country programmes to establish a baseline. The results were expected in early 2026.<sup>72</sup> SHARP emphasises environmental protection during clearance, with staff regularly briefed on minimising environmental harm during operations.<sup>73</sup>

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

With support from the GICHD, a full migration of Sri Lanka's IMSMA database to IMSMA Core had been scheduled to take place in 2023. But it was decided that, rather than a full migration, IMSMA NG and IMSMA Core will be used in parallel, with Survey123 being used for Sri Lanka's completion survey. This is in recognition of Sri Lanka's limited resources and the time and effort a full migration would require.<sup>74</sup>

Sri Lanka has long suffered from poor-quality data, with significant differences in reported land release between operators and NMAC. Challenges to information management and the establishment of a sustainable national IM capacity stem in part from a lack of resources but also from the high level of staff turnover at NMAC and the RMAO.<sup>75</sup>

A significant database clean-up took place in 2022 and 2023. In 2023, the GICHD, with funding from the US Department of State, was recruiting an information management (IM) advisor who will be based in Sri Lanka and provide IM support to NMAC and RMAO.<sup>76</sup> It is expected that the data clean-up and IM advisor will improve data quality and reduce the disparities between operator and national authority data. As at October 2025, the IM specialist had been assigned, data clean-up was ongoing, all identified polygon errors had been spatially corrected to ensure data accuracy and consistency, and the focus was on the migration process to IMSMA Core, with the Survey123 forms in testing. These efforts aim to strengthen data quality and operational reliability within the national mine action information management system.<sup>77</sup>

68 Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025; Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

69 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 12 September 2025.

70 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025.

71 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

72 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

73 Email from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

74 Email from the GICHD, 2 May 2023.

75 Email from the GICHD, 13 May 2020.

76 Email from the GICHD, 2 May 2023.

77 Email from Sri Mallikarachchi, GICHD/NMAC, 21 October 2025.

Sri Lanka submitted an Article 7 report covering 2024 which included AP mine contamination disaggregated by CHAs and SHAs, and the survey and clearance output for the year. However, some of the figures were later found to be incorrect, and as at October 2025, the NMAC was in the process of submitting an amended Article 7 report with the corrected survey and clearance data.<sup>78</sup>

## PLANNING AND TASKING

In March 2023, Sri Lanka launched its National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027, developed with the support of the GICHD. It outlines the mine action programme's strategic orientation to 2027, building on past achievements and incorporating lessons from previous strategies. The strategy reinforces Sri Lanka's commitment to fulfil its APMBC obligations in alignment with the SDGs.<sup>79</sup> The strategy sets four main goals:

1. Land release and EORE (explosive ordnance risk education)
2. Coordination and national ownership
3. Management of residual contamination
4. Staff transition.<sup>80</sup>

As part of the land release and risk education strategic objective, NMAC, with the support of the GICHD and in collaboration with the operators, has developed a "completion process" – the framework for the Sri Lankan government to document and demonstrate compliance with Article 5. This involves NTS to identify previously unknown contamination, ongoing survey and clearance of recorded hazardous areas, and the completion survey. The completion survey allows the government to declare GNDs as "complete", confirming its confidence that, at the time of signing the completion documents, there is no further evidence of mines in the GND. Each village officer in a district has to confirm they are not aware of any explosive ordnance contamination. When all GNDs within a district are complete, the district authority signs it off as "mine free".<sup>81</sup>

Sri Lanka planned to release 17km<sup>2</sup> of mined area across 11 districts from 2023 to 2027, with a land release target for 2023 of 4.5km<sup>2</sup> and four districts declared completed.<sup>82</sup> However, as the amount of contaminated area has gone up, Sri Lanka has formulated new land release targets for 2024 to 2027 for 23.44km<sup>2</sup> (see Table 4).<sup>83</sup>

**Table 4: Planned land release 2023–27<sup>84</sup>**

Year	Land release target (km <sup>2</sup> )
2024	7.02
2025	5.89
2026	5.85
2027	4.68

In 2025, Sri Lanka conducted a mid-term review of its Completion Strategy, supported by the GICHD and accompanied by a national completion survey stock-taking workshop. The review assessed progress and analysed how different funding scenarios would affect the clearance timeline. It concluded that completion by 2028 was technically feasible if sufficient resources were mobilised promptly, but that current funding levels constrained implementation. Findings were presented at a donor coordination event held in May 2025, attended by the Prime Minister and senior donor representatives, which reaffirmed Sri Lanka's national ownership and commitment to partnership with the international community. In light of the review and funding outlook, the Government will consider whether an Article 5 extension request is required.<sup>85</sup>

Sri Lanka's mine action programme has a well-developed prioritisation system, outlined in NMAC's National Mine Action Strategy 2016–20. The primary priority is clearance of land for resettlement, particularly the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Contaminated areas planned for livelihood activities (mostly agricultural land), access to public services, or large-scale infrastructure are also prioritised.<sup>86</sup> According to NMAC, despite marking of contaminated areas and sustained risk education, returnees are likely to enter contaminated areas, especially agricultural areas, to meet their basic livelihood needs. As such, socio-economic pressures and livelihood activities are vital considerations in the prioritisation process in relation to resettlement plans.<sup>87</sup> With Sri Lanka approaching completion, all known remaining tasks have now been allocated to operators.<sup>88</sup>

78 Email from Sri Mallikarachchi, GICHD/NMAC, 21 October 2025.

79 Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027, pp. 1 and 5.

80 Ibid., p. 18.

81 Ibid., p. 20.

82 Ibid., pp. 20 and 23.

83 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 8.

84 Ibid.

85 Statement of Sri Lanka on Article 5 implementation, APMBC Intersessional Meeting, 17 June 2025.

86 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO, 3 April 2020.

87 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 3.

88 Email from Asa Massleberg, GICHD, 29 August 2023.

## LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

### STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

A review of Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), taking into account the local context, was carried out in 2017 with the input of all operators and support from the GICHD. But the NMAS were never approved. An NMAC Board of Inquiry (BoI) investigation, following a fatal incident in Trincomalee at the end of 2021 on land that had been released, made recommendations that included the updating of SLNMAS 04.10: Non-Technical Survey; SLNMAS 04: Land Release; and SLNMAS 08: Quality Management.<sup>89</sup> Updating and approving these standards by the end of 2023 was one of the targets of the Completion Strategy 2023–2027. The GICHD was planning to support this effort from 2023. Alongside this, all operator SOPs were to be reviewed in line with the updated NMAS by the end of 2023.<sup>90</sup> As at October 2025, this had not yet happened.<sup>91</sup>

In 2024, the land release SOP was reviewed and finalised with support from GICHD, including review of the land release criteria. The NMAC agreed to expand the use of TS and reduce the requirements for full clearance, enabling operators to focus clearance on confirmed contamination. In 2025, MAG expected NMAC to give the go-ahead to a re-survey of the SHAs mapped in 2022 and 2023, with the aim of cancelling uncontaminated land in coordination with the RMAO. The Rake Excavation Detection Drills (REDDs) SOP was also revised following a demining accident involving MAG staff. Findings from the accident investigation and the resulting SOP changes were fully debriefed with all operators.<sup>92</sup>

### OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2024, demining operations were again conducted by the SLA HDU; national NGOs, DASH and SHARP; and international NGOs, HALO and MAG. The local and international NGOs are entirely funded by international donors.

**Table 5: Operational NTS capacities deployed in 2024<sup>93</sup>**

Operator	NTS teams	NTS personnel
MAG	6	18
SHARP	0	0
HALO	4	8
DASH	1	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>31</b>

**Table 6: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2024<sup>94</sup>**

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers	Dogs and handlers	Machines	Comments
DASH	12	282	0	0	Clearance teams also conduct TS.
HALO*	60	480	0	28	Plus 40 mechanical teams (total 240 deminers). Clearance teams also conduct TS.
MAG*	48	633	0	24	Clearance teams also conduct TS.
SHARP	7	120	0	0	Clearance teams also conduct TS. Also 2 QA/Survey Teams totalling 5 personnel
SLA HDU	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>1,515</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	

\*Average numbers for the year.

<sup>89</sup> Email from Stephen Hall, HALO, 16 May 2022.

<sup>90</sup> Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027, p. 22.

<sup>91</sup> Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

<sup>92</sup> Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

<sup>93</sup> Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025; Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025; Anil Udaya Kumara Kuruwita Arachchige, DASH, 5 October 2025; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

<sup>94</sup> Emails from Anil Udaya Kumara Kuruwita Arachchige, DASH, 5 October 2025; Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June and 10 October 2025; Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

From 2023 to 2024, MAG, SHARP, and HALO experienced reductions in survey and clearance capacity. MAG reported a decrease in personnel due to reduced funding combined with high turnover, with 10 to 12 staff leaving each month to seek opportunities overseas or alternative employment in response to difficult economic conditions.<sup>95</sup> SHARP similarly reduced personnel as a result of funding cuts.<sup>96</sup> HALO also faced a decline in clearance capacity, driven by funding constraints and natural attrition, including staff moving overseas, changing employment, or retiring.<sup>97</sup>

In 2025, MAG was set to reduce its clearance capacity by 250 staff and HALO also expected that its staff numbers would reduce due to the loss of UK funding and reduction

from other donors.<sup>98</sup> SHARP did not anticipate a change in capacity in 2025.<sup>99</sup>

In October 2024, HALO received a first-of-its-kind amphibious excavator from the US Department of Defense HD R&D programme to support clearance in flooded terrain, including a semi-submerged minefield in a lagoon. The excavator is fitted with a wet-soil bucket and specifically designed to operate in submerged and lagoon environments.<sup>100</sup> MAG also received equipment from the US Department of Defense HD R&D programme, including the Stingray remotely operated demining platform, Trimble GPS mapping and survey system, and modified John Deere machinery for mechanical clearance.<sup>101</sup>

## DEMINER SAFETY

In September 2024, five MAG deminers were injured when conducting clearance using the REDDS methodology. The deminers were working one metre apart on ground previously prepared by mechanical assets when a deminer struck an unseen item of explosive ordnance with a rake head, resulting in an uncontrolled explosion. Three deminers sustained penetrating fragmentation injuries to the left side of their bodies, one deminer went into shock, and one was suspected of having a broken arm. All five were hospitalised,

and the three fragmentation casualties required surgery. The item of unexploded ordnance was identified as an S 411 40mm launched grenade. The accident was investigated by the Standards and Training Manager with significant input from the Technical Operations Manager and MAG's Programmes Quality Team. The full report and lessons learned were shared with all donors, the NMAC, RMAO, and other clearance operators in Sri Lanka, and a copy of the report is available on request.<sup>102</sup>

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2024

Table 7: Summary of land release outputs in 2024

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (m <sup>2</sup> )	Comments
<b>Clearance</b>	5,977,566	National authority data
<b>Technical survey</b>	999,384	National authority data
<b>Non-technical survey</b>	204,809	National authority data
<b>Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks</b>	<b>2024</b>	
<b>AP mines destroyed</b>	16,510	(Including 45 during spot tasks) National authority data

### SURVEY IN 2024

According to NMAC data, a total of 1.2km<sup>2</sup> was released through survey in 2024, of which 0.22km<sup>2</sup> was cancelled through NTS (see Table 8) and 1km<sup>2</sup> was reduced through TS (see Table 9).<sup>103</sup> This is a slight increase on the nearly 1.1km<sup>2</sup> reported as released through survey in 2023 (based on revised data provided in October 2025), of which 0.22km<sup>2</sup> was cancelled through NTS and 0.89km<sup>2</sup> was reduced through TS.<sup>104</sup>

In addition, NMAC reported adding 6.7km<sup>2</sup> of previously unrecorded mined area to the database in 2024 across 230 tasks.<sup>105</sup>

95 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

96 Email from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

97 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025.

98 Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025; and Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

99 Email from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

100 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025.

101 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

102 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

103 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D.

104 Email from Sri Mallikarachi, GICHD/NMAC, 21 October 2025.

105 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form D. Of this, SHARP identified 0.18km<sup>2</sup>, HALO 1.46km<sup>2</sup>, and MAG 1.77km<sup>2</sup> (of which 0.58km<sup>2</sup> was CHAs and 1.19km<sup>2</sup> SHAs).

Table 8: Area cancelled through NTS in 2024 (national authority data)<sup>106</sup>

District	Operator	Area cancelled (m <sup>2</sup> )
Jaffna	SLA	161,185
Mannar	MAG	5,400
Mullaitivu	HALO	9,872
	MAG	27,245
Trincomalee	MAG	1,107
<b>Total</b>		<b>204,809</b>

Table 9: Area reduced through TS in 2024 (national authority data)<sup>107</sup>

District	Operator	Area reduced (m <sup>2</sup> )
Batticaloa	MAG	49,149
Jaffna	HALO	24,954
	SLA HDU	44,245
Kilinochchi	HALO	11,263
	MAG	2,080
	SHARP	30,588
Mannar	MAG	19,111
Mullaitivu	DASH	148,288
	HALO	20,870
	MAG	437,929
	SHARP	46,972
Polonnaruwa	MAG	2,790
Trincomalee	MAG	3,180
	SLA HDU	965
Vavuniya	MAG	157,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>999,384</b>

## CLEARANCE IN 2024

According to NMAC, a total of almost 5.98km<sup>2</sup> of mined area was cleared in 2024, with the destruction of 16,510 AP mines, 24 AV mines, and 2,955 items of UXO (see Table 10).<sup>108</sup> This is a 12% increase from the almost 5.34km<sup>2</sup> of clearance in 2023, based on revised data reported by NMAC in October 2025.<sup>109</sup> In 2024, MAG, SHARP, and HALO reported clearing over 3.82km<sup>2</sup> and destroying 12,846 AP mines (see Table 11).<sup>110</sup> This is a decrease from the 4.66km<sup>2</sup> they reported clearing in 2023 with 14,130 AP mines destroyed.<sup>111</sup>

The most common AP mine types (P4, Rangan and Type-72) can be lifted by operators and destroyed at central disposal sites through burning. All other AP mines are destroyed by the SLA HDU. As per national standards, humanitarian demining operators are not authorised to conduct EOD in Sri Lanka.<sup>112</sup>

106 Email from Sri Mallikarachchi, GICHD/NMAC, 21 October 2025.

107 Email from Sri Mallikarachchi, GICHD/NMAC, 21 October 2025.

108 Ibid.

109 Email from Sri Mallikarachchi, GICHD/NMAC, 21 October 2025.

110 Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025; Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

111 Emails from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 6 June 2024; Cristy McLennan, MAG, 11 June 2024; and Philippa Coates, HALO, 13 June 2024.

112 Emails from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020; and Hugh Baker, HALO, 10 October 2025.

**Table 10: Mine clearance in 2024 (national authority data)<sup>113</sup>**

District	Operator	Clearance (m <sup>2</sup> )	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Ampara	MAG	0	0	0	3
Batticaloa	MAG	490,991	333	0	39
Jaffna	DASH	17,629	23	0	1
	HALO	22,475	13	1	11
	MAG	11,016	0	0	2
	SLA HDU	107,295	234	0	31
Kilinochchi	DASH	87,608	168	0	140
	HALO	768,072	7,074	11	1,113
	MAG	579,532	61	0	275
	SHARP	58,737	343	0	144
	SLA HDU	24,879	0	0	24
Mannar	MAG	265,208	509	9	41
Mullaitivu	DASH	559,418	2,692	1	263
	HALO	994,504	3,627	0	226
	MAG	814,189	322	2	97
	SHARP	336,936	636	0	221
	SLA HDU	57,230	280	0	26
Polonnaruwa	MAG	45,594	1	0	0
Trincomalee	MAG	102,283	39	0	3
	SLA HDU	38,554	60	0	8
Vavuniya	DASH	98,491	0	0	177
	HALO	854	0	0	1
	MAG	350,277	95	0	40
	SLA HDU	145,794	0	0	69
<b>Totals</b>		<b>5,977,566</b>	<b>16,510</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2,955</b>

**Table 11: Mine clearance in 2024 (MAG, SHARP, and HALO data)<sup>114</sup>**

District	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Jaffna	MAG	1	4,791	0	0	0
Kilinochchi	MAG	6	331,997	65	0	268
Polanaruwa	MAG	3	25,324	0	0	0
Trincomalee	MAG	11	53,931	35	0	1
Mannar	MAG	8	216,053	523	9	15
Vavuniya	MAG	12	207,965	78	0	25
Mullaitivu	MAG	31	557,168	349	2	88
Batticaloa	MAG	30	331,901	334	0	30
Kilinochchi	SHARP	5	46,491	343	0	55

113 Email from Sri Mallikarachchi, GICHD/NMAC, 3 November 2025.

114 Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025; Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

Table 11 Continued

District	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Kilinochchi	SHARP	5	46,491	343	0	55
Mullaitivu	SHARP	13	203,393	625	0	72
Jaffna	HALO	5	24,189	4	1	4
Kilinochchi	HALO	47	822,023	6,881	5	946
Mullaitivu	HALO	69	997,257	3,609	0	218
<b>Totals</b>		<b>241</b>	<b>3,822,483</b>	<b>12,846</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1,722</b>

A total of 45 AP mines and 3 AV mines were destroyed in EOD spot tasks. These figures are included in Table 10.<sup>115</sup>

In 2024, of the AP mines destroyed by MAG, 728 were of an improvised nature, while HALO destroyed 56 improvised mines.<sup>116</sup>

Table 12: Area cleared in 2024 in which no AP mines were found<sup>117</sup>

Operator	Tasks cleared	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )
MAG	10	44,862
SHARP	1	4,947
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>49,809</b>

MAG and HALO both reported a decrease in land release output from 2023 to 2024. For MAG, this was due to two periods of heavy rain that disrupted operations and a reduction in capacity.<sup>118</sup> HALO attributed the decrease to a 17% reduction in capacity caused by funding cuts and natural attrition.<sup>119</sup> In contrast, SHARP reported an increase in output, linked to tasks being located in sandy, more open areas.<sup>120</sup>

## ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Sri Lanka is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 June 2028. Sri Lanka is not on track to meet this deadline.

Sri Lanka's original target to complete mine clearance by the end of 2020 was overly ambitious and contingent on significantly increasing funding and capacity. The hoped-for increase in capacity of the SLA HDU did not materialise,<sup>121</sup> with expansion hindered by the army's focus on responding to the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks in April 2019 and by the subsequent COVID-19 pandemic. Progress towards the 2020 target was also hampered by the continued discovery of previously unknown mined area, adding substantially to the contamination baseline.

Table 13: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km <sup>2</sup> )
2024	5.98
2023	*5.34
2022	5.27
2021	4.37
2020	4.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>25.55</b>

\*Revised 2023 data reported to Mine Action Review in October 2025. Previously reported as 4.83km<sup>2</sup>.

115 Email from Sri Mallikarachchi, GICHD/NMAC, 21 October 2025.

116 Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025; and Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

117 Emails from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025; Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025; and Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

118 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 23 June 2025.

119 Email from Hugh Baker, HALO, 21 June 2025.

120 Email from Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 23 June 2025.

121 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO, 9 August 2019.

Sri Lanka did not meet its land release target for 2024 due to a reduction in capacity for operators leading to decreased output. Despite releasing over 7km<sup>2</sup> of land in 2024 the AP mine contamination baseline increased due to the continued discovery of large areas of previously unknown AP mine contamination during the completion surveys.

Sri Lanka had been confident in its ability to identify and clear all AP mined areas by the end of 2027, in line with its national completion strategy.<sup>122</sup> However, a mid-term review of the strategy concluded that meeting the June 2028 original Article 5 deadline is no longer feasible, citing several factors: the discovery of new contamination identified through the Completion Survey and efforts by operators to further define the actual contamination, and larger-than-expected minefields, with operators finding that for every two square metres cleared an additional square metre of mined land was identified; the financial crisis and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including operational stand-downs and higher

fuel costs; exchange rate fluctuations affecting NGOs reliant on foreign currency; a progressive decline in donor funding over the past five years, which fell by 9% in 2024 compared to 2023; reduced funding to the SLA HDU, limiting the deployment of teams and the purchase of essential equipment; and persistent staff retention challenges as many workers migrate or leave due to financial pressures and job uncertainty.<sup>123</sup> Sri Lanka plans to submit an Article 5 extension request in March 2027, closer to its deadline, to ensure the most accurate information is available on remaining contamination, including areas reduced or newly identified, as well as on operator capacity and budgets.<sup>124</sup> Operators project that completion of clearance is not realistically possible before 2030, with the end of 2031 considered a more realistic timeframe, though this will depend heavily on the level of sustained funding available to support operations.<sup>125</sup>

## PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

The National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027 includes management of residual contamination and staff transition as strategic objectives. Residual contamination will be managed by the SLA HDU, supported by the Police Special Task Force Bomb Disposal Unit for some EOD call-outs, with a staged transfer of the national database and IMSMA Core training to facilitate a smooth transition.<sup>126</sup>

The approach to staff transition is based on MAG's model developed in its "Skills Acquisition and Post-demining Livelihood Transition Strategy", supporting staff to move into alternative economic activities after redundancy, incorporating a staged transition process into high-demand occupations. The National Strategy also aims to integrate

gender dimensions effectively for non-discriminatory and sustainable outcomes. While several activities are underway the formal transition platform is still under development and timelines will need adjustment.<sup>127</sup>

To support this process, an MoU was signed in 2023 between NMAC, the Northern Provincial Council, and relevant ministries, with further MoUs in 2024 with the University of Vavuniya and Eastern University Sri Lanka to deliver training in employability, ICT, and personal finance. Additional awareness sessions and exposure visits on agriculture, animal production, and rural industries were also provided to help prepare staff for livelihood opportunities.<sup>128</sup>

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122 Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027, p. 19.

123 Article 7 Report (covering 2024), Form J.

124 Email from Ziggy Garewal, MAG, 8 October 2025.

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