

### KEY DATA

#### CLUSTER MUNITION CONTAMINATION: LIGHT

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

**1.77** km<sup>2</sup>

SUBMUNITION CLEARANCE IN 2021

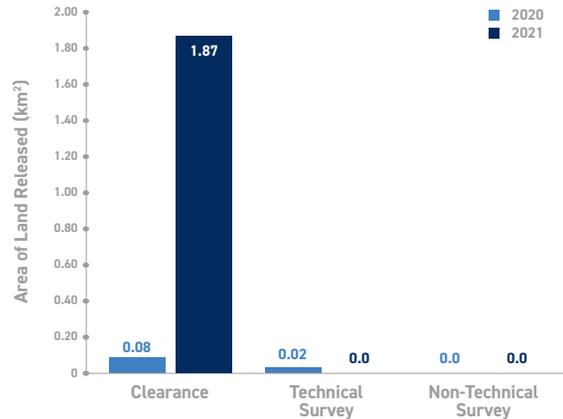
**1.87** km<sup>2</sup>

SUBMUNITIONS DESTROYED IN 2021

**1,165**

(INCLUDING 604 ABANDONED SUBMUNITIONS DESTROYED DURING SPOT TASKS)

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Tajikistan increased clearance output significantly in 2021 compared to the previous year. However, total cluster munition contamination increased significantly from 0.08km<sup>2</sup> at the end of 2020 to more than 1.8km<sup>2</sup> at the end of 2021, due to the identification of new contaminated areas.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Tajikistan should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.
- Tajikistan should comply with its obligations under international human rights law to clear CMR on territory under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- The Tajikistan National Mine Action Center (TNMAC) should conduct survey to clarify the extent of remaining contamination and ensure timely clearance and release of the cluster munition-contaminated areas.

## CLUSTER MUNITION SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

### MANAGEMENT

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

### NATIONAL OPERATORS

- TNMAC
- Union of Sappers Tajikistan (UST)
- Ministry of Defence – Humanitarian Demining Company (HDC)
- Border Guard Forces of Tajikistan

### INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)

### OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

## UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION

Tajikistan has a CMR problem that is estimated to extend over 1.86km<sup>2</sup> (see Table 1).<sup>1</sup> This is a significant increase on the 0.08km<sup>2</sup> identified at the end of 2020. This increase is mainly the result of non-technical survey in 2021 allied to technical interventions over 10 battle areas covering 2.54km<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, one battle area of 90,599m<sup>2</sup> in Darvoz district, was confirmed as containing CMRs and known contamination of one area in Vahdat district was expanded from 200,000m<sup>2</sup> to include a further 220,000m<sup>2</sup> following explosive accidents experienced by local residents.<sup>2</sup> As such, a total of 2.85km<sup>2</sup> of CMR contamination was confirmed and added to the database in 2021.

Nine previously unrecorded cluster munition-contaminated areas were added to the national database in 2021. Despite the considerable additions to the baseline in 2021, the authorities believe their understanding of contamination is "reasonably" accurate. Tajikistan cautions, though, that "taking into account the scale of the past civil war, unexplored military ranges, unexplored difficult areas where battles took place, it can be assumed that the number of explosive remnants of war (ERW) sites and dangerous areas may exceed those discovered and cleared so far".<sup>3</sup> Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) agrees that, while some further survey is required, it does not need to be extensive. A residual risk is, however, likely to remain after survey is complete.<sup>4</sup>

Most of the remaining CMR contamination appears to be concentrated in Vahdat as well as the mountainous Darvoz

district in central Tajikistan.<sup>5</sup> Tajikistan plans to finish surveying all explosive ordnance contamination by the end of 2025 in the districts of Darvoz, Rasht, and Vahdat where cluster munition-contaminated areas have continued to be identified.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 1: Cluster munition-contaminated area (National Authority estimate at end 2021)<sup>7</sup>**

Province	CHAs	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Darvoz	3	758,389
Rasht	1	32,000
Vahdat	4	1,073,414
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1,863,803</b>

This figure does not accurately reflect what remained as at the end of 2021, though clearance of 148,487m<sup>2</sup> in several CMR-contaminated areas is not deducted on the basis that the release of the areas was not complete by the end of the year. Mine Action Review calculates that a total of 1,766,311m<sup>2</sup> of cluster munition-contaminated area remained at the end of the year.<sup>8</sup>

Tajikistan traces its CMR contamination back to the civil war of 1992–97 but has not clarified who was responsible for using cluster munitions.<sup>9</sup> Most of the submunitions being cleared are Soviet-era AO 2.5RT/RTM type.<sup>10</sup>

## NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law (CIIHL), chaired by the First Deputy Prime Minister, and comprising senior representatives from relevant line ministries, acts as Tajikistan's national mine action authority, responsible for mainstreaming mine action in the government's socio-economic development policies.<sup>11</sup>

TNMAC is the executive arm of CIIHL and the body coordinating mine action, responsible for issuing task orders, information management, and quality assurance (QA)/quality control (QC).<sup>12</sup> It was set up by government decree in 2014, replacing the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre and assuming responsibility for the transition to a fully nationally-owned programme.<sup>13</sup> Tajikistan's Parliament adopted a Law on Humanitarian Mine Action in 2016, and the following year it approved a national mine action strategy for 2017–20.<sup>14</sup> TNMAC has submitted an evidence-based, costed, and time-bound mine action strategy for 2021–30 and an action plan for its implementation, both of which have been approved by the government.<sup>15</sup> Tajikistan has an updated work plan for 2021–25, and an annual detailed and costed work plan for 2021–22.<sup>16</sup> The Government of Tajikistan and TNMAC are enabling of mine action activities in the country. This includes the granting of visas, concluding memoranda of understanding with operators, facilitating imports, and involving operators in decisions as and when needed.<sup>17</sup>

1 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, Director, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

2 Ibid.

3 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2021), Form A.

4 Email from Melissa Andersson, Country Director, NPA, 21 May 2022.

5 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April and 4 May 2021.

6 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 and 24 June 2022.

7 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

8 This compares to the figure of 1,715,316m<sup>2</sup> that would result from National Authority estimates after deduction of the clearance in areas that had not been fully released as at the year's end.

9 Statement of Tajikistan, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015.

10 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 29 April 2020.

11 2019 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 20.

12 Ibid., pp. 20–21.

13 Ibid., p. 1; and TMAC, "About TMAC", 2012, accessed 10 March 2014 at: <http://bit.ly/2LvPub1>.

14 Email from Aubrey Sutherland-Pillai, NPA, 18 October 2016; and 2019 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 20–21.

15 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021 and 7 July 2022.

16 APMBC Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

17 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

In 2021, the Tajik government provided modest funding for mine action, including US\$480,000 in “technical and non-technical assistance” (the same level of funding it provided in 2020). A further US\$46,096 was allocated to support operational mine action.<sup>18</sup> The Ministry of Defence (MoD) plays a significant role in the mine action sector through the Humanitarian Demining Company (HDC), the biggest national operator, which is funded by the United States.<sup>19</sup>

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Programme Office in Dushanbe (OSCE POiD) has supported the Ministry of Defence to update its multi-year plan, entitled “Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Tajikistan Co-operation Plan for Humanitarian Demining 2018–2023”.<sup>20</sup> In 2020, it provided funding of approximately €250,000 to the mine action sector to finance three MoD HDC demining teams and seven TNMAC support staff.<sup>21</sup> In 2021, the OSCE provided €330,000 to TNMAC to enable it to continue supporting the three MoD demining teams (54 field operators in total) under the Centre’s supervision. The two vehicles (a pick-up truck and an ambulance) and other equipment provided for in the 2021 budget were expected to be donated to the teams in June 2022. The OSCE planned to continue supporting the three teams in 2022 with funding of approximately €250,000. However, OSCE notes this amount may change to allow for local currency fluctuation.<sup>22</sup>

The OSCE has supported the recruitment and appointment of an adviser for residual risk management, who took up post in March 2022, and is tasked with identifying improvements to the risk management of explosive hazards and to develop residual risk management guidelines to complement the national mine action standards (NMAS).<sup>23</sup>

Under the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Regional Cooperation Programme (EECCA RCP), TNMAC participated in three regional training courses offered by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in 2021.<sup>24</sup> Through GICHD sponsorship, TNMAC also participated in the 8<sup>th</sup> Technology Workshop in Geneva in 2021, providing the opportunity to witness and discuss the latest innovative solutions in Information Management, explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and Land Release.<sup>25</sup>

NPA does not have a formal capacity development agreement with TNMAC but assists informally with capacity development activities as and when requested.<sup>26</sup> Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, a multi-stakeholder mine action forum for Tajikistan met on a regular basis. These meetings ceased with the onset of the pandemic although NPA has suggested that they be revived.<sup>27</sup>

## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Clearance activities are undertaken according to Tajikistan’s national mine action standards (NMAS), which contains a chapter on the environment, health, and safety. This chapter covers issues such as safeguarding of the environment during the establishment and removal of worksites and accommodation, waste disposal, air quality, water supply, as well as the recording and reporting of environmental “incidents”.<sup>28</sup>

TNMAC further asserts that environmental issues are taken into consideration during survey and clearance to ensure that operations are conducted without negative environmental impact and that hazardous areas released and handed over to communities in a state suitable for intended use.<sup>29</sup>

NPA has its own environmental management system in place, which includes a policy adapted to the local context from NPA’s Head Office guidelines. NPA also has an environmental standing operating procedure (SOP) and an annual action plan linked to the environmental policy. NPA seeks to limit the environmental impacts of all survey and clearance activities. This includes waste management as well as the proper storage and disposal of fuel and lubricants.<sup>30</sup>

## GENDER AND DIVERSITY

TNMAC adopted a gender programme in October 2018 that was prepared by the GMAP, now a programme of the GICHD, and is committed to improving the situation of women in the mine action sector.<sup>31</sup> With the assistance of the GICHD, gender and diversity issues were integrated into Tajikistan’s national mine action strategy, updated to cover the period 2021 to 2030, with annual plans also addressing the issues.<sup>32</sup>

18 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021 and 19 June 2022.

19 2019 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 23.

20 Emails from Luka Buhin, OSCE Tajikistan, 9 October 2017; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 7 July 2022.

21 Email from Johan Dahl, Head of Arms Control and Mine Action, OSCE Programme Office, Dushanbe, 9 April 2021; and interview with Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 24 June 2022.

22 Emails from Saodat Asadova, Programme Assistant, OSCE, 3 and 9 June 2022; and interview with Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 24 June 2022.

23 Emails from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

24 Email from Maria Gurova, GICHD, 24 June 2022.

25 Email from Maria Gurova, GICHD, 1 July 2022.

26 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

27 Ibid.

28 Emails from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 and 9 June 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022; and NMAS, Chapter 20: “Environment, Health and Safety”.

29 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

30 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

31 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 14 June 2019.

32 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

Tajikistan reports that gender is mainstreamed in all aspects of their mine action programme based upon international and national guidelines and resolutions, covering the areas of management, mine risk education, victim assistance, and land release.<sup>33</sup>

A United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) evaluation at the end of 2019 concluded that TNMAC had made progress mainstreaming gender and diversity in mine action, but noted that the strategy had not yet been systematically implemented. Areas for further action included ensuring the training of trainers for risk education was gender balanced, introducing women QA/QC officers, and developing a code of conduct and complaints mechanisms.<sup>34</sup>

TNMAC has said it encourages women to apply for employment and planned to diversify survey teams to help reach a wider audience and more sources of information, but progress appears to be slow.<sup>35</sup> In 2021, 30% of TNMAC's employees in managerial/supervisory positions were women.<sup>36</sup> No women were employed by MoD's HDC in either operational or managerial/supervisory positions in 2021.<sup>37</sup>

TNMAC acknowledged it would be a challenge to achieve gender balance in view of the predominance of men in the military, where service is compulsory for men and voluntary for women. TNMAC said where it could identify key positions that can be filled by female candidates, such as paramedics and/or QA/QC officers, this will be discussed and prioritised. In addition, TNMAC will seek to increase female civilian capacity in coordination with other implementing partners.<sup>38</sup>

TNMAC confirms that survey teams collect information on hazardous areas on an annual basis as well as conducting risk education sessions, with both of these activities including inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men.<sup>39</sup> Tajikistan also reports that monthly briefings take place with local communities on demining operations, with records of the briefing kept as part of documentation.<sup>40</sup> The Ministry of Defence's HDC multi-task teams reportedly consult with all groups, including women and children, during survey and community liaison.<sup>41</sup> Relevant mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age.<sup>42</sup>

The OSCE seeks to promote gender awareness by collecting comprehensive relevant information during its work.<sup>43</sup> The OSCE also insists that a module on gender and human rights be included in all pre-season basic training of demining teams, in accordance with IMAS. The OSCE will continue to emphasise the importance of gender mainstreaming and balance throughout project implementation and raise awareness in the mine action community across Central Asia through joint events and training.<sup>44</sup>

NPA has a gender and diversity policy integrated into its Tajikistan operations. NPA's staff are diverse, employing staff from every region.<sup>45</sup> In 2021, 20% of NPA's staff in Tajikistan were women, with 29% of the managerial/supervisory positions, including task supervisors, team leaders, and organisational senior management being female. NPA have had no significant changes to the gender balance of personnel from 2020 to 2021 and have seen only a slight drop in operational positions occupied by women; from 17%, (including 11 deminers), in 2020 to 14% in 2021. This was due to some staff taking maternity leave.<sup>46</sup>

NPA ensures women and children in communities affected by CMR are consulted during community liaison activities, including impact assessment, which is conducted by both male and female staff. NPA highlights that consulting with women and children is more challenging in the border regions, where the military/border guard forces are mainly, if not exclusively, male. NPA also highlights that the majority of incidents in Tajikistan involve young men or boys working as shepherds. However, the needs of all affected residents are taken into account, in particular through the prioritisation of locations closest to populated areas, for example, those recently cleared in Sagidasht and Romit.<sup>47</sup>

NPA and TNMAC revived meetings of a gender working group in early 2020. Its meetings were interrupted by measures to control the COVID-19 pandemic but resumed in 2021 and the group met twice during the year. In addition, a consultant was hired to conduct gender sensitivity training with staff from both NPA and TNMAC.<sup>48</sup> Despite continuing cultural constraints that inhibit women from employment in mine action, particularly in field positions, NPA has found that greater knowledge about the activities of its female deminers has made it easier to recruit female staff.<sup>49</sup>

33 APMBC Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

34 R. Roberts, "Final Evaluation of Support to the Tajikistan Mine Action Programme", UNDP, 30 December 2019, pp. 17–18.

35 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.

36 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

37 Email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022.

38 2019 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received 3 August 2019.

39 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

40 APMBC Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

41 Email from Johan Dahl, with information provided by Khurram Maksudzoda, Head of the MoD HDC, 27 August 2019.

42 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 25 July 2019.

43 Email from Johan Dahl, Acting Head, Political-Military Department, OSCE Programme Office, Dushanbe, 13 May 2020.

44 Email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 9 June 2022; and interview with Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 24 June 2022.

45 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April 2020.

46 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 23 June 2022.

47 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

48 Emails from Melissa Andersson, Country Director, NPA, 21 April and 4 July 2021, and 21 May 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

49 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April and 4 July 2021.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

TNMAC is using Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core.<sup>50</sup> TNMAC hired an information technology (IT) specialist for the newly created post of IMSMA officer in 2020 to further improve data management and continued to fine-tune the system.<sup>51</sup> TNMAC introduced new data collection forms intended to simplify data entry and, in collaboration with NPA, drew on the experience of using the system in 2020 to make small adjustments to reporting forms in 2021.<sup>52</sup>

NPA maintains an accurate and up-to-date picture of activities through daily reporting into the IMSMA Core Portal, using the data collection forms introduced and the updated by TNMAC in 2020–21. The portal also contains completion reports and details of outstanding contaminated areas that are scheduled for further survey and clearance work. In 2021, there were efforts to simplify and streamline the reporting system as well as to archive data from previous years. Further improvements are under discussion.<sup>53</sup>

In 2021, TNMAC launched a progress monitoring tool, intended to improve resource mobilisation and task activity planning, with the aim of improving the efficiency of land release.<sup>54</sup>

## PLANNING AND TASKING

Tajikistan does not have a strategic plan that addresses cluster munitions, but TNMAC said in May 2020 it targeted completion of CMR clearance by 2023.<sup>55</sup> Tajikistan's 2021 updated work plan reported that priority setting tools identified livelihood areas located close to villages to be prioritised for land release.<sup>56</sup>

NPA is tasked by TNMAC after discussions that take account of humanitarian impact, national planning priorities, and seasonal access constraints.<sup>57</sup>

Tajikistan's Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in March 2019, which sought a new deadline for mine clearance of the end of 2025, forms the basis of its operational planning. The request said land release would concentrate on the Central region and the Tajik-Afghan border, especially the Shamsiddin Shohin district as the area most contaminated with anti-personnel mines.<sup>58</sup> A General Land Release Operational Plan for 2021–25 details areas targeted for clearance each year and the required funding.<sup>59</sup>

In August 2021, OSCE-supported demining teams were relocated from the Tajik-Afghan border-detached area to the central regions of the country and continued battle area clearance (BAC) in the Rasht region until November 2021. Since 18 April 2022, three demining teams have re-initiated clearance in the Khatlon Region (two teams in Shamsiddin Shohin and the other in Pyanj district).<sup>60</sup>

NPA reports that dossiers are issued in a timely matter by TNMAC.<sup>61</sup>

Tajikistan identifies several ongoing challenges for mine action across the country, including difficult terrain, harsh weather conditions, natural disasters such as rockfalls, avalanches and landslides, as well as dense vegetation. Tajikistan identifies a need for increased equipment and cross-country vehicles in order to fulfil the country's commitments under Tajikistan's APMBC Article 5 deadline extension by 2025. TNMAC also highlights ongoing security challenges along the Tajik-Afghan border as a significant challenge to mine action.<sup>62</sup>

## LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

### STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Tajikistan's revised National Mine Action Standards (TNMAS) were approved by Decree No. 162 on 1 April 2017. The revised standards have been translated into Russian and English.<sup>63</sup>

TNMAC reports that the NMAS are regularly updated. In general, demining operators are said to update their SOPs once every three years during the accreditation process.<sup>64</sup> NPA reports that Tajikistan's NMAS are adequate and that they enable efficient survey and clearance work.<sup>65</sup>

50 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020; and APMBC Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

51 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021.

52 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April 2020.

53 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

54 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

55 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020 and 19 June 2022.

56 APMBC Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

57 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April 2020 and 21 April 2021.

58 2019 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 35.

59 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021.

60 Email from Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 3 June 2022; and interview with Saodat Asadova, OSCE, 24 June 2022.

61 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

62 Presentation by Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 22 June 2022.

63 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 May 2017; and Second APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request (draft), 31 March 2019, p. 21.

64 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

65 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

In 2019, TNMAC agreed to an NPA proposal to introduce the Cluster Munition Remnant Survey (CMRS) methodology pioneered in south-east Asia to Tajikistan. A pilot project was conducted in the central region in July 2019<sup>66</sup> and the SOP was used in test mode by NPA, working with the Union of Sappers Tajikistan (UST), in 2019–20.<sup>67</sup> In 2022, however, TNMAC took the decision to exclude this CMRS SOP, concluding, after the test period, that it is better suited to flat terrain where there is a need to investigate large areas covering more than 1km<sup>2</sup>. Following efficiency analysis, TNMAC argues that standard survey methods have proved more suitable in Tajikistan's typically mountainous terrain.<sup>68</sup>

In 2021, Tajikistan developed new regulatory documents including for the accreditation of mine action organisations' activities and a technical manual, "Clearing the Battlefields".<sup>69</sup> TNMAC states that all updates to NMAS and SOPs made in 2021 were made in consultation with clearance operators.<sup>70</sup>

## OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Tajikistan significantly expanded its national mine action capacity in 2020, increasing the number of personnel from 71 the previous year to 150 by the end of 2020. The Ministry of Defence's HDC provided the main national capacity, and in 2020 added two demining teams raising the total number to seven, employing a total of 81 staff.<sup>71</sup> In 2021, Tajikistan maintained mine action capacity at 150 personnel across the combined survey and clearance teams. There were six manual demining teams operating in 2021, (a reduction of one team due to reduction of funding available to NPA), with 72 deminers; 12 more than in 2020. This increase in overall capacity was made possible by US Department of State (DoS) funding.<sup>72</sup>

Of these six teams, four are trained in battle area clearance (BAC) and undertook CMR clearance in 2021.<sup>73</sup> TNMAC did not expect any major changes to the number of survey or clearance personnel addressing CMR in 2022.<sup>74</sup>

UST, a national not-for-profit organisation accredited for risk education, survey, and victim assistance, added two non-technical and technical survey teams in 2020, raising the total number of teams in 2021 to four with a total of 28 personnel.<sup>75</sup> UST started to conduct CMRS in 2020, working with one of NPA's teams for three months on a task in Darvoz district's Sagidasht municipality. This joint task was undertaken with a view to building UST's capacity to conduct CMRS.<sup>76</sup>

NPA did not conduct further joint initiatives with UST in 2021. However, UST continued to survey and add further CMR-contaminated areas to the database in the Romit Valley in Vahdat in 2021, identifying 1.57km<sup>2</sup> of cluster

munition-contaminated area. UST has continued with two teams working in the Romit Valley and Rasht Valley in 2022, with the expectation that further contamination will be found.<sup>77</sup> TNMAC expects UST to take on clearance of any residual CMR contamination after release of all known hazards.<sup>78</sup> TNMAC plans to enhance UST's manual demining operations.<sup>79</sup>

NPA remains the only international operator undertaking CMR clearance in Tajikistan, operating in 2021 with six manual clearance teams, with a total of 50 deminers. These multi-task teams are capable of conducting both mine and battle area clearance. NPA's clearance capacity remained the same in 2021 as in the previous year, with five of the six teams (totalling 42 deminers), engaged in conducting CMR clearance at some point during the year (in conjunction with other mine clearance tasks). Due to funding restrictions, NPA has reduced capacity from six CMR clearance teams to five in 2022.<sup>80</sup>

NPA continues to cooperate with the Border Guard Forces, working in 2020–21 with 13 seconded guards and in 2022 with 12 seconded guards. The officers are part of NPA's multi-task teams, and the majority have been trained in conducting both demining and BAC.<sup>81</sup> NPA, in cooperation with HDC, reactivated a mini MineWolf mechanical asset in 2020. This was being used in 2022 but only for mine clearance not CMR clearance.<sup>82</sup>

NPA's Tajikistan programme was not significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, with COVID-19 related staff absences causing only limited disruption.<sup>83</sup>

66 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 29 April 2020.

67 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 7 July 2022.

68 Ibid.

69 'The Republic of Tajikistan. Updated information provided in accordance with paragraph 2, Article 7 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and their destruction, submitted April 30, 2022, for the period from January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021.'

70 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022; and APMBC Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

71 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April 2021.

72 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 and 24 June 2022.

73 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 24 June 2022.

74 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

75 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 24 June 2022.

76 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 29 April and 27 August 2020.

77 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May, 3 June 2022 and 17 June 2022.

78 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 22 April and 4 May 2021.

79 APMBC Committee on the Implementation of Article 5, Preliminary Observations on Tajikistan, Intersessional meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

80 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May and 23 June 2022; and interview with Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 24 June 2022.

81 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 April 2021 and 21 May 2022.

82 Email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

83 Ibid.

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2021

A total of almost 1.87km<sup>2</sup> of cluster munition-contaminated area was cleared in 2021 (see Table 2), a very significant increase on the 0.8km<sup>2</sup> cleared in 2020. No areas were cancelled through non-technical survey or reduced through technical survey in 2021.<sup>84</sup>

**Table 2: CMR clearance in 2021<sup>85</sup>**

Operator	Province	Areas released	Area cleared (m <sup>2</sup> )	Submunitions destroyed	Other UXO destroyed
HDC MoD	VMKB/Darvoz	2	798,300	140	27
HDC MoD	DRD/Rasht	1	473,900	357	10
NPA	VMKB/Darvoz GBAO	1	323,597	27	5
NPA	DRS/Sangvor	1	128,195	6	8
NPA	DRS/Vahdat	Suspended**	72,010	31	0
NPA	VMKB/Darvoz	Suspended**	1,901	0	0
UST	DRS/Vahdat	Suspended**	67,854	596***	0
UST	DRS/Vahdat	Suspended**	6,722	3***	0
FSD	Romit, Vahdat / Saghirdasht, Darvoz	*0	0	5	1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>1,872,479</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>51</b>

\* FSD destroyed 604 abandoned submunitions during a spot task in 2021, of which 599 were found by UST.<sup>86</sup>

\*\* Clearance of several cluster munition-contaminated areas was not complete as at the end of 2021.

\*\*\* Found by UST and destroyed by FSD.

NPA undertook only scheduled clearance work in Tajikistan in 2021, with no survey and no explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks. Its clearance greatly increased as a result of conducting clearance work in GBAO province (which had been surveyed in collaboration with UST in 2020), as well as additional clearance in Margak in the Districts of Republican Subordination (DRS) province.<sup>87</sup> This Margak field was registered in 2007 by a Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) non-technical survey team as a battle area without CMR contamination. In 2021, however, NPA discovered evidence of AO-1SCH submunitions and the area was reclassified as containing CMR.<sup>88</sup> TNMAC further attributes the increase in CMR clearance in 2021 compared to 2020 to the relocation of demining teams away from the Tajik-Afghan border to focus instead on survey and BAC in the central region. Demining was suspended along the Afghan border in July 2021 as a result of the political and military situation and concerns for the safety of personnel.<sup>89</sup>

All cluster munition-contaminated areas cleared by HDC and NPA in 2021 proved to contain CMR.<sup>90</sup>

TNMAC said in 2021 it hoped to complete CMR clearance by 2023.<sup>91</sup> It has also made clear that progress towards achieving that target depended on the availability of funding.<sup>92</sup>

**Table 3: Five-year summary of CMR clearance**

Year	Area released (km <sup>2</sup> )
2021	1.87
2020	0.08
2019	0.52
2018	0.41
2017	0.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.13</b>

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid.; and NPA data in email from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022.

86 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June and 7 July 2022; and interview with Dr Nickhah Din Mohammed, FSD, 24 June 2022.

87 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

88 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 24 June 2022.

89 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

90 Emails from Melissa Andersson, NPA, 21 May 2022; and Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 19 June 2022.

91 Emails from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 28 May 2020 and 19 June 2022.

92 Email from Muhabbat Ibrohimzoda, TNMAC, 4 May 2021.