

UKRAINE

MINE
ACTION
REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2021

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 DECEMBER 2023
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

10 KM²

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2020

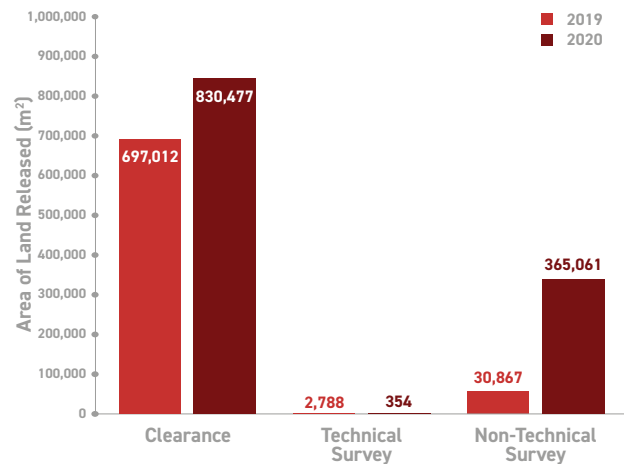
830,477 M²

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2020

5

(INCLUDING 1
DESTROYED IN
SPOT TASKS)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Ukraine's progress in demining remains slow. Long-awaited mine action legislation, pending since 2018 on the grounds of collision with a number of legal acts, was finally signed by the president in December 2020. The legislation foresees the establishment of the structures needed to operationalise a more effective national mine action response in 2021. The new law has largely taken into account recommendations from mine action stakeholders, but further legislative amendments are required to ensure a meaningful mine action programme.

Ukraine is not on track to meet its extended Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline of 1 December 2023 even in areas it controls.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ukraine should cease all use of landmines.
- Ukraine should expedite implementation of the mine action legislation, and create the necessary structures and procedures to allow systematic clearance of anti-personnel mines.
- Ukraine should undertake a baseline survey of anti-personnel mine contamination in areas to which it has effective access.
- Ukraine should elaborate a national strategic plan for mine action as soon as the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) is created.
- Ukraine should systematically collect data on contamination from mines, cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), as well as progress in survey and clearance, and establish a centralised database for planning purposes.
- Ukraine should report on contamination, survey, and clearance activities, in a manner consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

- Ukraine should elaborate standardised national criteria for the prioritisation of anti-personnel mine clearance in consultation with the mine action actors.
- Ukraine should elaborate a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan for mine action.
- Ukraine should amend the mine action law to allow operators to import dual-use items and to transport and use explosives in planned mine detonations.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2020)	Score (2019)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	3	3	The extent of anti-personnel mine contamination in Ukraine is not known and while some survey is being conducted it is not being systematically reported upon by Ukraine.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	5	4	The new mine action legislation, adopted in December 2020, foresees the creation of an NMAA and two National Mine Action Centres (NMACs), i) a NMAC sitting under the MoD, and ii) a humanitarian NMAC sitting under the Ministry of Interior (MoI). Responsibilities will be divided territorially. Despite taking into account most of the recommendations put forward by the mine action stakeholders, further amendments are required to allow an effective mine action programme, such as to allow operators to transport and use explosives to destroy mines cleared.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	2	2	Ukraine does not have a gender policy for mine action and does not report on whether gender is mainstreamed within its programmes. No reference was made to gender or diversity in Ukraine's 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request or in its Article 7 report covering 2020.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	4	There are two Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) databases in Ukraine. In 2019, the databases were transitioned to IMSMA Core. Ukraine submitted its Article 5 deadline extension request in June 2020 and, as with its latest Article 7 report, it continues to report in a manner inconsistent with the IMAS.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	3	3	There is no national strategic plan for mine action or standardised criteria for prioritising tasks in Ukraine. In August 2020, Ukraine submitted an activity plan, although in truth it was a list of general mine action activities and not an action plan as such.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	5	5	National mine action standards were published in April 2019 but, as at April 2021, were not fully applied in practice. In 2020, operators convened a working group to review the national mine action standards and submitted recommendations to the national authorities. As of writing, the group had not yet received feedback on the suggested amendments. In August 2020, Ukraine stated that its national standards on mine action management are being tested and that, based on the results of the testing, necessary amendments would be made in due course.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	5	5	Ukraine is not on track to meet its Article 5 deadline of 1 December 2023. It is not known precisely how much anti-personnel mined area was cleared in 2020 across the whole country as Ukraine does not report those figures and the Ukrainian government does not exercise effective control over all mined areas, impeding access for demining. In the area reported as cleared during the year, only four anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed.
Average Score	4.0	3.9	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or mine action centre
- Ministry of Defence (MoD)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- State Emergency Services of Ukraine (SESU)
- Security Service
- State Special Transport Service (SSTS)
- State Border Service
- Demining Team of Ukraine
- Demining Solutions

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Refugee Council's (DRC's) Humanitarian Disarmament and Peacebuilding sector (formally known as Danish Demining Group (DDG). Hereafter referred to as DRC
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) – operations resumed in 2020 following a suspension in 2019
- The HALO Trust

OTHER ACTORS

- Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Project Coordinator in Ukraine (PCU)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Mine Action Sub-cluster chaired by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The extent of anti-personnel mined area in Ukraine is not known. The heaviest mine and ERW contamination is believed to be inside the 15km buffer zone on either side of the Line of Contact between the warring parties within the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.¹ The limited access to some areas in the buffer zone hinders the ability to conduct comprehensive survey and clearance.²

In 2017, Ukraine estimated, highly improbably, that total contamination by mines and ERW could extend over 7,000km².³ The Ukrainian Ministry of Defence (MoD) accepted that this is a "rough" estimate.⁴ In its statement at the May 2019 APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Ukraine estimated, also improbably, that more than 8% of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions have been contaminated by anti-personnel mines.⁵ These estimates were also reported in Ukraine's 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request⁶ and the claim of explosive contamination covering 7,000km² of national territory was repeated in the additional information it submitted in August 2020 in response to comments provided by the Article 5 Committee.⁷

In fact, Ukraine cannot reliably estimate the overall extent of mine contamination until surveys have been completed.⁸ While some survey has taken place in the government-controlled areas ongoing conflict means that survey is not possible in the "grey zone": the sliver of territory along both sides of the contact line that divides Ukrainian government-controlled land from separatist-run areas. Ukraine has indicated that nationwide non-technical and technical survey will only be possible once its sovereignty has been fully restored over all territory under its jurisdiction.⁹

Ukraine reported in its latest Article 7 transparency report (covering 2020) that non-technical survey was conducted between 2016 and 2018 by the HALO Trust and the Danish Demining Group (DDG) known as Danish Refugee Council's Humanitarian Disarmament and Peacebuilding sector (DRC) with suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) identified in four districts (see Table 1).

Information was not provided on the number or estimated area of these SHAs and, according to the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), there is currently no agreed definition for a SHA or confirmed hazardous area (CHA) in Ukraine owing to a lack of implementation of national mine action standards (NMAS).¹⁰

As at April 2021, The HALO Trust had deployed three non-technical survey teams to determine the extent of mine contamination across the government-controlled area (GCA) in eastern Ukraine.¹¹ DRC had conducted 19 non-technical survey visits.¹² In 2020, a total area of 6.14km² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mined area was discovered and added to the database. According to information collected during the survey, the mines were laid during the peak of the conflict in 2014–15.¹³

Ukraine is contaminated by anti-personnel mines as a result of the ongoing conflict which broke out in 2014. In the first half of 2014, armed violence erupted between Ukrainian government forces and Russian-backed separatists in the Crimean peninsula and in the east of the country in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions (oblasts). Strong evidence indicates that mines were used in the resultant armed conflicts,¹⁴ including by Ukrainian armed forces, though the full nature and extent of contamination is likely to remain unclear until an effective cessation of hostilities. Prior to the current conflicts, Ukraine was affected by residual contamination of mines and other ordnance, mostly as a result of heavy fighting between German and Soviet forces in the Second World War, but also from combat in the First World War. MoD engineering units partially cleared affected areas in the mid-1970s, suggesting that a problem may remain, but the location and extent of any mine threat is not known.

Ukraine is also contaminated with CMR, the extent of which is not known, and by considerable quantities of other ERW used during the current conflict (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants* report on Ukraine for further information).

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area region (at end 2020)¹⁵

Region	District	Location
Donetsk	Sloviansk	Semenovka-1, and Rai-Oleskandrivka
	Lyman	Ozerne-2
	Bakhmut	Novoluhansk-5, and Novoluhansk-13
Luhansk	Stanicho-Luhansk	Chernova Talokva-7, and Chernova Talokva-6

NEW CONTAMINATION

Over the last few years, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)'s Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine has frequently reported on the use of both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines.¹⁶ A December 2017 report from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), covering 16 August to 15 September 2017, stated that: "The parties to the conflict continued the practice of placement of IEDs [improvised explosive devices] and anti-personnel mines in populated areas and near objects of civilian infrastructure."¹⁷ In 2018, the OHCHR called on all parties involved in hostilities to "cease the use of victim-activated devices".¹⁸

At the May 2019 APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Ukraine claimed that it had not used anti-personnel mines since it acceded to the APMBC in June 2006, and is not planning to do so, but accused Russia of having used anti-personnel mines

in its territory since 2014. According to Ukraine, these mines have been replaced by Russia-backed illegal armed groups in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and Russia has also put mines on the administrative border between Crimea and the rest of Ukraine.¹⁹ Ukraine stated that illegal armed groups had used different types of mines, including those banned by the APMBC and which Ukraine does not possess. The mines which Ukraine alleged have been used by the opposition groups include PMN-1, PMN-2, PMN-4, POM-2R, OZM-72, MES type mines, and MON-50 mines with tripwire.²⁰

In the past, Ukraine has reiterated that its armed forces are authorised to use MON-series and OZM-72 mines only in command-detonated mode (through electrical initiation), which is not prohibited under the APMBC. According to Ukraine, all mines planted in command-detonated mode are recorded and secured, and access to the area is restricted.²¹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

All areas of mine action in the Donetsk and Luhansk region, including humanitarian demining operations, are currently overseen and coordinated by the MoD which operates the Kamyanets-Podilsky Demining Centre.²² Operators submit annual plans for MoD's approval.²³ Other national bodies involved in the sector include the Ministry of Interior (Moi), under which sits the State Emergency Services of Ukraine (SESU); the Security Services; the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories; the State Special Transport Services (SSTS) of the MoD; the National Police; and the State Border Service.²⁴ The MoD has organisational control of operations, while SESU is generally responsible for conducting clearance.

Ukraine's national mine action legislation (Law No. 2642), was originally adopted by parliament on 6 December 2018 and signed into law by the President on 22 January 2019.²⁵ Prior to its adoption, Ukraine did not have any comprehensive legal act regulating the complex set of issues regarding mine action. The Law foresaw the establishment of special governmental institutions to lead the national mine action response in the country. However, the government did not implement the Law on the grounds of collisions with a number of other legal acts. None of the institutions was created, and national mine action response in Ukraine remained uncoordinated. Apart from its non-implementation, the Law also had certain gaps in terms of the victim assistance and safety and efficiency of mine action operators.²⁶

Following presidential and parliamentary elections in September 2019, a working group was set up comprised of representatives from relevant government ministries, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) NATO and the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine (PCU) to prepare amendments to the law.

In June 2020, the "Law on the Amendments to the Law on Mine Action in Ukraine" passed its first reading. UNDP, OSCE PCU, The HALO Trust, and DRC came together to prepare an explanatory note suggesting further amendments, with comments on the status of mine victims and their rights;

training and insurance of deminers; handover procedure and liability of actors after handover; and importation of dual-usage goods to allow international operators the possibility to use explosives in order to destroy items found during demining, as currently only MoD and SESU can perform that task.

The amendments to the Law on Mine Action in Ukraine was finally signed off by the president in December 2020 and the recommendations of the working group were broadly taken into account, including recommendations on the legal status and assistance and compensation of mine victims. The new draft also improved on the safety and efficiency of mine action operators; defined the minimum size of insurance sum for the operators' staff members; removed the requirement of operators providing insurance for damages for a period of ten years after the land release; it also removed the territorial restriction for operators' right to request support from the local authorities.²⁷

Nevertheless, the new Law fell short of addressing two major concerns of the mine action community, namely: operators' licence to carry out disposal, destruction, and transportation of explosive items for explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) procedures, and operators' permit for the importation and use of so-called dual-use items. Additional legislative amendments are required to fully address these two concerns.²⁸

The approved Law establishes a framework for humanitarian demining, divides responsibilities among State institutions, and foresees the creation of NMAA. However, it has a peculiarity in that it envisages the creation of two National Mine Action Centres (NMACs). There will be one NMAC under the MoD and one under SESU, which sits under the Moi. The latter centre will be named "Special Humanitarian Demining Centre". The two NMACs will share the remit of information management, quality assurance (QA), monitoring, planning, and certification of the operators and their responsibility will be divided territorially.²⁹ The SESU NMAC will be in charge of all humanitarian demining across Ukraine with the exception of MoD infrastructure, railways (out to five metres either side of the track), which is the remit of SSTS, and certain specific

areas assigned to other agencies.³⁰ The decision to create two NMACs as opposed to one comes as a compromise after competition between the MoD and the MoI on who takes the lead on mine action.³¹ But it does not augur well for either efficient or effective mine action.

The NMACs will be coordinated by the NMAA, an interagency body made up of the Cabinet of Ministers (CoM), which will be chaired by the MoD while "special conditions" exist in Ukraine and then during peacetime by the MoI. The NMAS and the national mine action strategy will be adopted by the NMAA.³²

As at May 2021, the Humanitarian Demining Centre has been created in Merefa (east); the MoD NMAC was in an advanced stage in Chernihiv (north) but not yet fully established. The NMAA has not yet been created. It was expected that all these structures would be fully established within the six-month period set by the Law, that is by June 2021.³³ As at July 2021, however, the NMAA was not yet fully established,³⁴ although the MoD was assuming an NMAA role on a de-facto basis.³⁵

Operators participate in monthly mine action sub-cluster meetings, which are attended by representatives of the MoD, SESU, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), and which is chaired by UNDP. There are also regular roundtable meetings organised by OSCE PCU on specific mine action topics and other sectorally relevant discussions.³⁶ However, exchange and dialogue among stakeholders (non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UN agencies, and government ministries) are said to focus on issues other than progress and challenges in completing clearance by the Article 5 deadline.³⁷ In October 2020, the working group initiated a separate platform inviting representatives from the national authorities with the aim of assisting the government to properly report on contamination, mine casualties, and to create a centralised national database, which, as of writing, was still lacking.³⁸

National funding is provided for clearance of mines and ERW and quality control (QC). The QC inspection teams from the MoD began conducting clearance inspection visits, which enabled an official land handover with the local authorities for the first time in 2019, and a total of 32 inspection visits for HALO Trust took place.³⁹ Additionally, the MoD and the Civil-Military Cooperation Directorate (CIMIC) of the Armed Forces of Ukraine continued to support survey and clearance activities through regular collaboration on all matters related to security, particularly in relation to HALO teams' deployment in the 15km buffer zone.⁴⁰

There is an overall positive environment and facilitation of the operators' work by the Ukrainian government (e.g. granting of visas, collaboration on security matters). But operators continue to face difficulties importing armoured equipment and dual-use items. The working group continues to lobby for amendments to the mine action legislation and to clarify these issues.⁴¹

DRC has a capacity building project that aims to stimulate the SESU involvement in developing and complying with NMAS. In the frame of this project in 2020, DRC supported the SESU in the revision of standing operating procedures (SOPs) and the improvement of the quality and compatibility of the SESU Data Management System. DRC also trained 74 SESU staff members, provided 12 metal detectors, uniforms, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) units and other supplies for field deployment. As a result, six SESU demining teams and one

non-technical survey team deployed for survey and clearance in 2020. As at May 2021, DRC delivered five four-wheel vehicles to SESU, provided deminer training to 29 SESU personnel, field medic training to eight and Microsoft Access training to 60.⁴² In 2021, DRC expected to train, equip, and deploy seven SESU demining additional teams in Luhansk region and to create a pool of competent SESU personnel who can independently cover the future training needs of the organisation. With funding from the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), DRC will also provide the Regional Operations Centre in Rubizne, Luhansk region with vehicles and communications and demonstration equipment.⁴³ DRC also trained SESU personnel to enable them to respond to EOD call-outs across Ukraine.⁴⁴

The Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) purchased two pickups, detectors, PPE units, medical kits, laptops, tablets, and printers, which it will provide to the MOD QA teams. In addition, FSD is planning to organise training for MoD and NMAC staff in 2021 and beyond.⁴⁵

The GICHD has been working with the OSCE PCU and the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) to help foster mine action institutions.⁴⁶ In 2020, the GICHD supported the OSCE PCU, MoD and SESU in information management; provided a training course on operational efficiency; and contributed to the efforts to update the NMAS and the National Mine Action Law.⁴⁷

In 2020, the HALO Trust conducted five capacity building training courses to 50 SESU staff in order to improve knowledge, skills, and capacity for mine action activities. The training covered the following topics in line with best practises and International Mine Action Standards (IMAS): non-technical and technical survey, information management, first aid, EOD, and mine clearance. As at March 2021, the HALO Trust provided a refresher demining training to 22 SESU personnel.⁴⁸ The trained SESU personnel have been deployed to survey and clear minefields with mentorship from HALO.⁴⁹ HALO also delivered the following equipment to SESU in 2020: 4 vehicles, 22 detectors, 22 sets of PPE, along with medical kits and radios.⁵⁰

The OSCE PCU has received funding until December 2021 to support Ukraine in establishing an NMAA and an NMAC, national standards and mine action legislation; to develop the International Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database in co-operation with the GICHD; to organise training for Ukrainian demining specialists in quality management (QM), non-technical survey, and IMSMA; to procure demining equipment for the MoD and SESU; and to develop mine risk education materials.⁵¹ In 2020, OSCE donated Protective Equipment to the SESU and MoD and printed explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) materials for the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories.

The UNDP, within the context of the UN Recovery and Peace Building Programme (UN RPP), launched a Mine Action Project "Capacity Development Support for Integrated Mine Action in Eastern Ukraine" in mid 2020. The project aims to support the Government of Ukraine in establishing a comprehensive, coordinated, and gender-sensitive mine action response. Funded by the government of Canada, the project interventions have been focused on a) enhancing mine risks prevention through an improved education framework, b) improving mine action information management through a system of systematic local information gathering on

risk education and victim assistance, and feeding these into IMSMA, c) establishing effective capacities for mines clearance, quality management and assistance to mines' survivors, d) providing advice and capacity building to national mine action institutions when set up, and e) continue effective coordination of mine action operational activities through the mine action sub-cluster, which sits under the protection cluster. Due to the delay in the adoption of the law on mine action, most project activities were postponed to 2021.⁵²

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

As at June 2020, no information had been provided on whether there is a gender policy and associated implementation plan for mine action in Ukraine. No reference was made to gender or diversity in Ukraine's Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2020 or in Ukraine Article 7 report covering 2020.⁵³

FSD does not have a gender and diversity plan in place but encourages females to apply in its job announcements. Selection and promotion is then based on qualifications. In 2020, 70% of managerial/supervisory positions in FSD were filled by women, including the Deputy Country Director and the Operations Coordinator. 20% of survey and clearance team members were women.⁵⁴

DRC has a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan. It ensures that all affected groups, including women and children, are consulted during survey and community liaison activities. As at April 2021, women represent 75% of the two non-technical survey teams, 19% of clearance teams, and 50% of EORE teams. In addition, 50% of managerial/supervisory positions were filled by women, including the Head of Programme position. In an additional step to improve participation of women and children in survey and clearance activities in 2021, the DRC Ukraine programme was selected for participation in a GICHD assessment that will strengthen capacity and practice on gender, equality, and inclusion.⁵⁵

The HALO Trust uses mixed gender non-technical survey and community liaison teams. HALO Trust began recruiting women for clearance roles in 2017, employing the first female deminers in Ukraine.⁵⁶ As at April 2021, 19% of operational survey and clearance staff were women,⁵⁷ along with 50% women in non-operational managerial positions.⁵⁸

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

There are two functioning IMSMA databases in Ukraine, one managed by SESU and the other by the MoD, both of which collect and analyse contamination and land release data from national operators and NGOs.⁵⁹ The databases are, though, claimed to be complementary, as they are separated based on region, thematic area, and operational purpose.⁶⁰

In 2019–20, the GICHD supported IMSMA Core installation and data migration. Both the MoD and SESU have IMSMA core, though the resources available to maintain the system were limited, a problem which might be addressed by the new structure in 2021. The IMSMA receives periodic information from operators, but it is not up to date. The data received are incomplete and further work is needed to ensure they are standardised. The GICHD continues to work with the authorities and stakeholders to develop data forms in line with the IMAS on minimum data requirements.⁶¹

The GICHD is currently working with its in-country partners to improve the quality of the data. An Information Management (IM) working group was created in 2020, which it chairs. The group plans to discuss the production of appropriate IM forms and processes to improve the efficiency of the national IM system.⁶² The group is attended by IM personnel from MoD, SESU, HALO Trust, FSD, and DRC.⁶³

In its activity plan presented to the APMBE Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties (18MSP), Ukraine reported that the MoD, with the assistance of the GICHD and OSCE PCU, has developed an interactive map of areas contaminated with mines and explosives. The MoD posted the map on its web-page and made it accessible to all operators. The map highlights areas identified as hazardous or suspected to contain mines or ERW and provides information on the area, type of hazard, date of identification, and the organisation which is responsible for tackling it.⁶⁴

Operators submit survey and clearance data to the MoD on a monthly basis and each submitted a report at the end of 2020 on all survey and clearance data for the year.⁶⁵

The DRC continues to build the competences of SESU with regard to IM and reporting. The second phase of a support programme that started in 2018 and which will continue until August 2024, began in September 2020. During this phase, DRC will help SESU expand its SOPs to cover IM, non-technical survey, QA, and QC. In coordination with the GICHD, the second phase also will aim to improve the quality and compatibility of the SESU data management system to support the integration of IMSMA Core. DRC also plans to train 60 SESU personnel on data collection, processes and organisation and to build the capacity of the IM personnel across all of the 25 regional SESU sub-offices. The data management trainings will contribute to the efforts of the mine action community to unify terminology across the SESU and MoD so that the two databases are compatible and can serve the national mine action programme effectively.⁶⁶

FSD planned an ArcGIS training as part of its capacity building package for MoD QA personnel in 2021.⁶⁷

Ukraine submits Article 7 transparency reports in a timely manner but does not report on its progress in a manner consistent with the IMAS or as treaty practice now requires. In its comments on Ukraine's extension request in October 2020, the committee on Article 5 implementation noted the importance of Ukraine to report on its progress following the IMAS, disaggregating by area cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey, and addressed through clearance. Ukraine responded that identification of specific areas will be possible after a complete ceasefire and a "technical inspection of the allegedly contaminated areas along the demarcation

line".⁶⁸ Ukraine's subsequent Article 7 report (covering 2020) continued not to be consistent with IMAS and lacks sufficient detail to be meaningful. With respect to Ukraine's Article 7 report of June 2021 and Committee on Article 5 Implementation highlighted the lack of clarity on the classification of hazardous areas, the contamination type, the remaining contamination, and Ukraine's plans to address it.⁶⁹

Ukraine will not meet its APMBC Article 5 deadline of 1 December 2023 even in areas it controls and has declared

that meeting this deadline is subject to restoration of Ukraine's control over its territories. In its Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in June 2020, Ukraine stated that "Ukraine is requesting a two year extension... provided completion of hostilities, restoration of the constitutional order and gaining the full control over the occupied territories".⁷⁰

PLANNING AND TASKING

Ukraine does not have a national mine action strategy and, as at April 2021, there were no plans to develop one.⁷¹ The GICHD was invited to a roundtable meeting in March 2020, where it presented the strategic planning process. The national authorities subsequently decided to wait for the implementation of the new Mine Action Law before developing a national strategy.⁷² The OSCE plans to support the NMAA, as soon as it is established, in developing a mine action strategy and expects this to be ready in 2022.⁷³

According to Ukraine's Article 7 report covering 2020, in 2021 clearance was planned in the Bakhmut, Lyman, and Sloviansk districts of the Donetsk region; and in the Popasna and Stanichno-Luhansk districts of the Luhansk region.⁷⁴ In August 2020, Ukraine submitted an "Action Plan" for 2020,⁷⁵ although in truth it was a list of general mine action activities and not an action plan as such. In its comments on Ukraine's Article 5 implementation, the Committee observed that Ukraine's action plan was not costed or evidence-based, and that it did not include clear milestones.⁷⁶

There are currently no standardised criteria at national level for task prioritisation.⁷⁷ Until an NMAC is fully functional, all tasking of operators is managed by the MoD in line with its annual action plan.⁷⁸ Local government have been helping the MoD to prioritise tasks based on humanitarian criteria.⁷⁹ The MoD approves annual survey and clearance work plans submitted by operators. Operators prioritise clearance according to humanitarian impact and in discussion with the local community.⁸⁰

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

NMAS were finalised by the MoD in September 2018 after multi-year input and review from key stakeholders.⁸¹ However, the NMAS did not consider all the inputs from the mine action stakeholders and have not been updated regularly to address new challenges and ensure employment of best practices.⁸² The NMAS were published in April 2019 but, as at April 2021, were not fully applied in practice.⁸³ In May 2020, representatives from the GICHD, OSCE PCU, DRC, and HALO Trust, formed a working group with the objective of revising NMAS to better align it with IMAS. The working group submitted its recommendations to the MoD, which was the acting NMAA at that time. According to DRC, the Ukrainian government set a deadline to finalise the NMAS by August 2021.⁸⁴ In April 2019, the CoM approved Resolution 372 on "Regulations on marking mine and ERW hazards", which are said to follow the provisions in the IMAS.⁸⁵ The lack of a functional NMAC also means that operators' SOPs are not currently accredited. Operators are therefore working in line with IMAS and donor contractual obligations rather than NMAS.⁸⁶

In August 2020, Ukraine stated that its national standard on mine action management was "being tested" and that, based on the results of the testing, necessary amendments would be made in due course.⁸⁷

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The MoD and several other ministries continue to deploy units that undertake clearance and destruction of mines and ERW. This includes engineer-sapper units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine; the National Guard of Ukraine; the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which conducts clearance through SESU and also has an engineering department that conducts EOD; the Security Service; the State Special Transport Service, which is responsible for demining national infrastructure; and the State Border Service, which conducts demining in areas under its control on land and in the sea.⁸⁸ In its 2020 extension request, Ukraine reported that 60 "local administrations" are involved annually in demining in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (up to 300 people).⁸⁹

Three international demining organisations—DRC, FSD, and The HALO Trust—are operating in Ukraine.⁹⁰ In addition, the Ukrainian organisations, Demining Team of Ukraine and Demining Solutions, are active in demining in eastern Ukraine.⁹¹ In its 2020 Article 5 deadline extension request, Ukraine reported that 41 demining "groups" with a total of more than 500 people were involved in mine action from these organisations.⁹²

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2020⁹³

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	Comments
HALO	25	300	0	3	Increased from 2019 by two manual demining teams (24 staff). Mechanical assets are a JCB excavator, Volvo front-loader, and case front-loader.
DRC	5	30	0	0	Increased from 2019 by three manual demining teams (7 staff). ⁹⁴
FSD	3	20	0	0	One clearance team operated with only 6 deminers. Medics and drivers are cross trained as deminers, and have therefore been included.
Demining Solutions	1	7	0	0	
Totals	34	357	0	3	

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

In 2020, DRC deployed two non-technical survey personnel in one team and five technical survey teams, which also conduct clearance (see Table 2).⁹⁵ DRC increased its survey and clearance capacity in line with increased funding and expected to significantly augment its capacity further to nine clearance teams and two non-technical survey teams in the course of 2021.⁹⁶

FSD has resumed its operation in 2020 after a suspension in 2019 due to the lack of funding. In 2020, it deployed four non-technical survey personnel across two teams and seven technical-survey personnel in one team. FSD does not have plans to increase its operational capacity in 2021, but this might change if additional funding becomes available.⁹⁷ FSD expects to receive a mechanical ground preparation machine (MV 4) early summer 2021 which will result in the formation of a dedicated mechanical team.⁹⁸

The HALO Trust deployed 12 non-technical survey personnel across three teams and 18 technical survey personnel across three teams.⁹⁹ HALO Trust increased its clearance capacity in 2020 compared to the previous year thanks to increased funding. HALO intended to maintain the same capacity of manual, clearance and technical survey in 2021, but might also increase its non-technical survey capacity if funding allows.¹⁰⁰ In 2020, HALO Trust deployed teams using Minehound detectors (with ground-penetrating radar) in conjunction with rapid excavation drills for clearance of minefields with prevalence of plastic anti-vehicle mines. This process involved teams mapping linear bounds with Minehound detectors, whereby the radar enabled clearance teams to identify the density and size of an object without the need to excavate at every metal signal. This has increased productivity rates by 60%.¹⁰¹

In 2020, MoD conducted QC of 21 cleared tasks by HALO Trust (eight in Luhansk and thirteen in Donetsk region). HALO Trust handed over 12 tasks to local communities and beneficiaries in 2020 (621,185m²).¹⁰² In addition, MoD conducted two QCs

of the area released in 2018 and 2019 by DRC. Subsequently, DRC handed over two areas of 505,698m² to the communities in 2020.¹⁰³

The DRC faced two stand-down periods due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first one was between mid-March and mid-May following the restrictions announced by the government. The second one, owing to infections among team members, started in November through to the end of 2020, where in any event operations are routinely put on hold during the winter season. The need to observe the number of passengers per vehicle further prolonged transportation of equipment and personnel. These conditions combined have negatively affected DRC's annual outputs.¹⁰⁴

COVID-19 restrictions meant that FSD had to limit the information-gathering methods of non-technical surveys and to conduct two separate basic clearance operator trainings instead of one in order to implement social distancing measures. This resulted in loss of time and additional costs.¹⁰⁵

The GICHD cancelled a number of planned activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including a non-technical survey course, baseline assessments of national capacities, support to revising NMAS, and IMAS outreach. These were re-scheduled for 2021.¹⁰⁶

On 12 March 2020, the Ukrainian Government imposed COVID-19 restrictions, and the HALO Trust briefly suspended its operations. Nine days later, teams were redeployed with strict preventative measures. Despite the measures, the operation continued largely uninterrupted after redeployment and the impact on outputs was minimal. During the first few months of the pandemic, HALO Trust reshuffled its activities to limit the contact of non-technical survey teams with the communities and informants. The non-technical survey teams instead focused on re-marking minefields but slowly resumed regular non-technical survey activities by July 2020 while maintaining the safety measures.¹⁰⁷

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2020

A total of 1.2km² of mined area was released in 2020, of which, 830,477m² was cleared, 354m² was reduced by technical survey, and 365,061m² was cancelled by non-technical survey.¹⁰⁸ Four anti-personnel mines were destroyed. In addition, one anti-personnel mine was found during an EOD call-out and subsequently removed and destroyed by the Ukrainian authorities.¹⁰⁹

In its Article 7 report to the APMBC, Ukraine reported clearance in Chernova Talikva by The HALO Trust, but without providing details about number of SHAs, areas cleared, or anti-personnel mines destroyed. Ukraine added that the MoD conducted QA in these areas in accordance with IMAS and the NMAS.¹¹⁰

In addition, a total of 6.14km² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination was discovered and added to the database.

SURVEY IN 2020

In 2020, DRC cancelled 365,061m² of land through non-technical survey (see Table 3). The HALO Trust reduced 354m² of mined area through technical survey (see Table 4).

Table 3: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2020¹¹¹

Region and District	Village	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Luhanska/Popasnianskyi	Myrna Dolyna	DRC	117,874
Luhanska/Popasnianskyi	Myrna Dolyna	DRC	78,162
Luhanska/Popasnianskyi	Hirske	DRC	99,480
Luhanska/Popasnianskyi	Hirske	DRC	69,545
Total			365,061

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey in 2020¹¹²

District/village	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Stanychno-Luhanskyi/ Krasna Talivka	HALO Trust	354
Total		354

In 2019, the HALO Trust cancelled 30,867m² through non-technical survey and reduced 2,788m² through technical survey.¹¹³ There was a significant decrease in the area cancelled and reduced by the HALO Trust in 2020 compared to 2019 as resources shifted to increase clearance operations.

DRC did not cancel or reduce any areas contaminated with anti-personnel mines in 2019.¹¹⁴ DRC survey operations saw

a significant increase in 2020 compared to 2019 thanks to an increased capacity and the creation of an independent non-technical survey team.¹¹⁵

As noted above, a total of 6.14km² of previously unrecorded anti-personnel mine contamination was discovered and added to the database. Of this, 3.49km² is of mixed anti-vehicle/anti-personnel mines or anti-personnel mines/ERW and was discovered by HALO Trust,¹¹⁶ 0.73km² of anti-personnel minefields were discovered by FSD,¹¹⁷ and 1.92km² of mixed mined area was discovered by DRC.¹¹⁸

The information collected during survey reveals that the mines were laid during the peak of the conflict in 2014–15 when the warring parties were moving positions across Donetsk and Luhansk regions.¹¹⁹

CLEARANCE IN 2020

A total of 830,477m² of mined land was cleared in 2020 (see Table 5).

The HALO Trust cleared 772,179m², destroying in the process four anti-personnel mines and thirty-five items of unexploded ordnance (UXO). Of the four destroyed anti-personnel mines, two were of an improvised nature.¹²⁰ In 2019, the HALO Trust cleared 697,012m², destroyed eight anti-personnel mines, 27 anti-vehicle mines, and 164 items of other UXO.¹²¹

DRC cleared 58,298m² of land. No anti-personnel mines were found during the clearance but two items of UXO were destroyed.¹²² In 2019, DRC did not conduct any clearance of anti-personnel mined area.¹²³ The increased clearance output is due to the increased operational demining capacity from two teams in 2019 to five in 2020, which enabled the survey of four sites.¹²⁴

The number of anti-personnel mines found during clearance continues to be very low and, in 2020, the HALO Trust cleared a total of 123,186m² in 13 areas that proved to contain no anti-personnel mines. However, it should be noted that anti-personnel mines were found on two of these thirteen areas in previous years' clearance. DRC cleared four mined areas that proved to have no anti-personnel mines but had not fully finished clearing any of these areas as at April 2021.

In addition, one anti-personnel mine was found during an EOD spot task. The mine was reported by HALO and then removed and destroyed by the MOD and State Emergency Service,¹²⁵ as operators are not authorised to conduct EOD in Ukraine.¹²⁶

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2020¹²⁷

District	Village	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Bakhmutskyi	Kodema	HALO Trust	136,467	1	8
Bakhmutskyi	Novoluhanske	HALO Trust	170,274	1	15
Bakhmutskyi	Riznykivka	HALO Trust	19,414	0	0
Bilovodskyi	Pervomaisk	HALO Trust	23,498	0	1
Lymanskyi	Kryva Luka	HALO Trust	3,580	0	1
Lymanskyi	Ozerne	HALO Trust	43,858	0	1
Lymanskyi	Yampil	HALO Trust	86,175	1	3
Mariupolska	Hnutove	HALO Trust	4,247	0	0
Mariupolska	Talakivka	HALO Trust	2,251	0	0
Slovianskyi	Andriivka	HALO Trust	39,579	0	2
Stanychno-Luhanskyi	Krasna Talivka	HALO Trust	85,145	0	0
Stanychno-Luhanskyi	Shyrokyi	HALO Trust	21,690	0	0
Stanychno-Luhanskyi	Kolesnykivka	HALO Trust	5,608	0	1
Stanychno-Luhanskyi	Komyshne	HALO Trust	127,275	1	1
Stanychno-Luhanskyi	Krasnyi Derkul	HALO Trust	3,118	0	2
Popasnianskyi	Komyshuvakha	DRC	26,243	0	0
Popasnianskyi	Myrna Dolyna	DRC	32,055	0	2
Totals			830,477	4	37

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (m ²)
2020	830,477
2019	697,012
2018	391,819
2017	220,887
2016	52,887
Total	2,193,082

Ukraine was not on track to meet its extended Article 5 APMBC deadline of 1 June 2021 and, in June 2020, submitted an extension request for two years through to 1 December

2023, although this would actually be a two year and six month extension. It is highly unlikely that Ukraine will meet this request and Ukraine has stated that the fulfilment of this deadline is dependent upon "completion of hostilities, restoration of the constitutional order and gaining the full control over the occupied territories, including over the state border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation".¹²⁸

The circumstances that made it necessary for Ukraine to request an extension in 2018 remain unchanged.¹²⁹ The lack of control over occupied territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and ongoing fighting pose significant challenges for the Ukraine to plan for fulfilment of Article 5. Even if Ukraine were to gain full control of all mined areas on its territory, it is highly improbable that it would be able to complete survey and clearance of all anti-personnel mined areas by December 2023. The extension request should therefore be

viewed as an interim request. Ukraine continues to provide very little information on outstanding mine contamination or the outputs from ongoing survey and clearance activities. This makes it very difficult to know the true extent of mine contamination in Ukraine or track progress in survey and clearance efforts.

The area inside the 15km buffer zone is believed to be heavily contaminated with mines and ERW, but access to the buffer zone for humanitarian survey and clearance operations is severely limited on the government side, and there is no access for humanitarian demining in areas not controlled by the government.¹³⁰ Within government-controlled areas, there is limited demining close to the contact line as mined areas are deemed to serve a tactical purpose and will not be demined until there is total de-escalation of the conflict. Despite the agreements between Ukraine and Russia to implement a “full and comprehensive” ceasefire in eastern Ukraine by the end of 2019, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine continued to record ceasefire violations in 2020.¹³¹

The amount of area cleared in 2020 was higher than the amount of clearance reported in 2019, though this data is only based on information provided by the HALO Trust, DRC, and FSD as Ukraine did not report clearance data for 2020 or in the previous year in a manner consistent with the IMAS to make comparable clearance and survey figures. Additionally, the number of anti-personnel mines found and

destroyed during planned clearance is very small—just four in 2020 and eight in 2019—, with both The HALO Trust and DRC clearing large areas without finding any anti-personnel mines. Clearance data is not available from areas outside of government control, though it is believed that, at least in earlier years, pro-Russian rebels conducted some ad hoc clearance.¹³²

While Russia is not a State Party or signatory to the APMBBC it also has obligations under international human rights law to clear mines as soon as possible in any areas of Ukraine over which it exercises effective control, by virtue of its duty to protect the right to life of every person under its jurisdiction.

A step forward in 2020 saw the passing of a long-awaited national mine action legislation in December 2020. The legislation provides a framework for humanitarian demining in Ukraine and will foresee the establishment of the NMAA and the NMACs, the implementation of national standards, and development of a national strategy with concrete milestones in place for survey and clearance in Ukraine. As at May 2021, the Special Humanitarian Demining Centre was fully established, the NMAC under the MoD was in its final stages, whereas the NMAA was not yet setup. The new law falls short of addressing two points concern for the mine action stakeholders and further legislative amendments are needed to allow operators to import and use dual-use items and conduct EOD, which would allow a more efficient mine action response.

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Ukraine has not provided information on whether it has a plan in place for dealing with residual risk post completion.

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