

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 DECEMBER 2033
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION:

MASSIVE BUT UNQUANTIFIED

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2023

0.52 km²

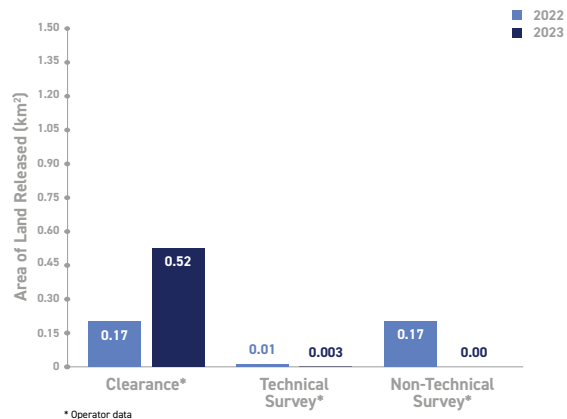
(OPERATOR DATA)

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2023

127

(OPERATOR DATA, INCLUDING 18 AP MINES REPORTED FOR SPOT-TASK REMOVAL BY AUTHORISED NATIONAL AUTHORITIES)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **NONE**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2023, Ukraine was granted a ten-year extension to its Article 5 deadline under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APBMC) with a new deadline set for 1 December 2033. On 30 April 2024, Ukraine acted upon the decision of the Twenty-First Meeting of States Parties (21MSP) and submitted a work plan for the implementation of Article 5. Clearance by international operators more than tripled in 2023 compared to 2022, though so too did the amount of mined area that they recorded. Capacity continued to expand, with more than 40 national and international mine action operators accredited as at July 2024. Three international demining NGOs were accredited during 2023 and at least one more was seeking accreditation at the time of writing. The Ukrainian authorities continued extensive clearance of explosive ordnance (EO) soon after use. Ukraine has stated its intention to survey all accessible areas by the end of 2026. Extensive use of anti-personnel (AP) mines by Russian forces continued in 2023. In June 2024, Ukraine informed the APBMC intersessional meetings that it was conducting a pre-trial investigation for criminal offenses from 24 February 2022 to 31 May 2024 concerning “the use of anti-personnel mines by unidentified military personnel of individual military formations in the territory of the city of Izyum, Kharkiv region, and surrounding areas.” As at June 2024, the pre-trial investigation in these criminal proceedings was ongoing.¹ This is the most serious violation of the prohibition on use by a State Party to the APBMC in the treaty’s history.

FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW

Over the past five years, only 3.48km² of AP mined area have been released through clearance in Ukraine, and a baseline survey of contamination has not yet been undertaken. Survey and clearance have of course been hugely impeded by the massive and ongoing armed conflict with Russia. Hostilities are significantly adding to EO contamination of all kinds, including AP mines, with Russia using AP mines extensively. Ukraine is conducting a pre-trial investigation of the use of AP mines by its own armed forces but suggests that this occurred in isolated incidents in the Kharkiv region. Ukraine has been able to scale up operational capacity considerably and has improved national ownership and programme management, but there is still a long

¹ Statement of Ukraine, APBMC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024, available at: <https://bit.ly/3N5UWrN>.

way to go. A national mine action authority (NMAA) was established in 2022 and a national mine action strategy was finalised in 2024. Operational inefficiencies continue to occur as the result of an overly bureaucratic approach to demining, in particular with respect to the granting of permission to international organisations to transport, store, and use explosives.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ukraine should ensure its forces never use AP mines and prosecute past offenders in accordance with its domestic law.
- Ukraine should ensure that survey, clearance, and contamination data disaggregate AP mines from explosive remnants of war (ERW).
- Ukraine should expedite permission to operators to use explosives in mine clearance and accreditation to conduct explosive ordnance disposal (EOD).
- Ukraine should provide a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan and report on its efforts to mainstream gender and diversity into mine action

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	5	In its latest Article 7 report (covering 2023), Ukraine has identified 35.22km ² of mined area containing AP mines. Ukraine cautions that it lacks complete information on contamination in the context of ongoing conflict and estimates that 156,000km ² of its territory needs to be surveyed.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	6	6	Ukraine's NMAA assumed its full responsibilities in 2022. The two national mine action centres also became fully operational in 2022. In April 2023, responsibility for State policy on mine action and for a new Centre of Humanitarian Demining Centre (CHD) transferred to the Ministry of Economy. An inter-ministerial Committee on Humanitarian Demining was also established, though it was unclear at the time of writing if this remains operational.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	3	2	Ukraine does not have a gender policy for mine action and does not report on whether gender and diversity is mainstreamed within its programmes. No reference was made to gender or diversity in Ukraine's Article 7 report covering 2023 or 2022 and only limited reference in additional information was provided on its 2023 Article 5 deadline extension request. Women are said to comprise 30% of the sector in Ukraine, including in management and operational positions.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION* (10% of overall score)	5	Not Scored	Ukrainian National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) include a chapter (11.2.9) on "Environmental regulations", and a section (12.6) on "Environment, occupational health and safety". Some operator feedback suggests that this is in line with IMAS, but that it needs to be updated. At the time of writing, it was not clear if Ukraine has an environmental management policy for mine action or if environmental assessments are conducted by the national authorities. International operators report on various measures to protect the environment.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	5	Ukraine uses Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core. The database was previously housed in two separate services, one owned by the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) and the other by the MoD. In 2023, IMSMA became fully cloud-based, with access rights and permissions to different datasets granted according to the requirements of the national authorities partners. Ukraine's reporting on contamination and land release continues to lack detail and appears to be under reported in 2023, compared to that of international operators. However, there was some improvement in reporting on 2023 with AP mined areas disaggregated by location and type of hazardous area, and land release disaggregated by type.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	4	3	Ukraine has elaborated a national mine action strategy. On 30 April 2024, Ukraine acted upon the decisions of the Twenty-first Meeting of the States Parties (21MSP) and submitted a work plan for the implementation of Article 5, with provision for further annual updates to 2032. There are no standardised criteria at national level for task prioritisation.

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM** (10% of overall score)	5	5	National mine action standards (NMAS) were published in 2019 but were not fully applied in practice. NMAS revision was initiated in March 2023 and certain revised NMAS were due to come into effect on 1 June 2024. As at June 2024, national standards on IMSMA and QA had been adopted and standards on land release, demining machines, and mine detection dogs were being drafted. International operators consider the current NMAS require further development before they can be considered to be fit for purpose.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	5	5	Ukraine's third request to extend its Article 5 deadline was granted at the 21MSP and a new deadline set for 1 December 2023, with a commitment by Ukraine to provide a detailed, revised work plan midway through the extension period, in addition to annual reporting. It is not known how much AP mined area is being cleared across the whole country. The scale of contamination and extent of areas no longer under control of the Ukrainian government have increased significantly since February 2022.
Average Score	4.8	4.6	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

* New criterion introduced in 2024 to assess performance.

** The weighting of this criterion was previously 20% of overall performance score, but is now given a 10% weighting

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Sectoral Working Group on Humanitarian Demining (SWG, under the Ministry of Economy (MoE))
- Center of Humanitarian Demining (CHD, under the Economic and Financial Department of the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine)
- National Mine Action Authority (NMAA, under the Ministry of Defence (MoD))
- Mine Action Centre (MAC, under MoD, at Chernihiv)
- Interregional Center For Humanitarian Demining and Rapid Response of the State Emergency Service Of Ukraine (SESU), at Merefa, (formerly the Centre of Humanitarian Demining Centre (CHD))
- Demining Center of Military Unit A2641 (at Kaminiets Podilsky)
- Social-Humanitarian Response Centre (under the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories)
- State Special Transport Service (SSTS)
- Military Engineering School

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Armed Forces of Ukraine
- Centre for Humanitarian Demining of the Subsidiary Enterprise of the State Company Ukrspecexport
- Demining Solutions
- Department of Maritime Safety
- GK Group
- Modern Village and City Charitable Foundation
- National Police
- Nibulon LLC
- Patron Demining (registered as an NGO and a company)
- Safe Path Group
- SC "Ukroboronservice" (UOS)
- SSTS

- State Border Service
- State Emergency Services of Ukraine (SESU)
- The Association of Sappers of Ukraine
- The Demining Team of Ukraine
- Ukrainian Deminers Association (UDA)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- DanChurchAid (DCA) – accredited in 2023
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI) – seeking accreditation
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG) accredited for risk education and NTS in 2023
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) accredited for risk education, NTS, technical survey, and clearance in 2023
- Fondation Suisse de Déminage (FSD)

OTHER ACTORS

- Chemonics
- East Europe Foundation
- Enhancing Human Security (ITF)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- Mine Action Sub-cluster chaired by the UN Development Programme (UNDP)
- Tetra Tech
- United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
- UN World Food Programme (WFP)

* Information based on data available at the time of writing. Due to the rapidly expanding mine action programme in Ukraine, there may be actors not included in this table.

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Ukraine has provided a very partial estimate of AP mine contamination of 35.22km²: 23.34km² in 408 confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and 11.88 km² in 116 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs)² (see Table 1). Ukraine duly cautions that this estimate of contamination is far from complete given the context of ongoing conflict, stating that “the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine currently lacks complete information on the coordinates of all areas where anti-personnel mines might be installed”.³ Hazardous areas are listed in six of Ukraine’s twenty-seven regions.⁴ Ukraine states that 156,000km² of land, including 14,000km² of water, where hostilities have taken place or are ongoing, remain “subject to preliminary survey” and that the Ministry of Defence is checking contamination in the liberated territories.

In 2023, 38 certified mine action operators were reportedly conducting non-technical survey (NTS) or technical survey (TS) of “contaminated territories”.⁵ While the full extent of AP mine contamination cannot yet be known until Ukraine regains effective control over all its territory, it has certainly increased since the Russian invasion began in February 2022. The current, partial estimate of contamination of 35.22km² is an increase on the 20.6km² across 192 hazardous areas identified as minefields a year earlier.

Table 1: AP mined area (at April 2024)⁶

Region	District	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
Dnipropetrovsk	Kryvorizskiyi	4	254,306	0	0	254,306
Kyiv	Brovarskiyi	2	20,950	0	0	20,950
Kyiv	Buchanskyyi	7	91,135	0	0	91,135
Kyiv	Vyshhorodskyyi	5	100,577	0	0	100,577
Mykolayiv	Bashtanskyyi	49	1,866,626	4	335,371	2,201,997
Mykolayiv	Mykolayivskyyi	74	4,229,268	5	360,030	4,589,297
Sumy	Konotopskyyi	1	9,978	0	0	9,978
Sumy	Okhtyrskyyi	17	379,563	6	180,042	559,605
Kharkiv	Izjumskyyi	83	5,968,565	88	9,904,005	15,872,570
Kharkiv	Kupianskyyi	8	689,649	0	0	689,649
Kharkiv	Kharkivskyyi	8	1,536,583	1	1,117	1,537,700
Kharkiv	Chuguevskyyi	86	2,662,414	4	68,120	2,730,534
Kherson	Berislavskyyi	48	4,895,622	4	446,215	5,341,837
Kherson	Khersonskyyi	1	19,687	1	353,416	373,103
Chernihiv	Nizhynskyyi	6	97,012	0	0	97,012
Chernihiv	Prylutskyyi	1	368,543	1	212,733	581,276
Chernihiv	Chernihivskyyi	8	153,968	2	16,876	170,844
Totals		408	23,344,446	116	11,877,925	35,222,370

The full extent of AP mined area in Ukraine is not known, but is certainly massive due to the widespread use of AP mines in the course of the current Russian military assault on Ukraine, since the war began in late February 2022. As at the end of April 2024, over one third of Ukraine’s territory had been affected by the current conflict with Russia. Ukraine has estimated that just under 16% of hazardous areas on agricultural land are contaminated with AP mines.⁷ EO, including AP mines, are most highly concentrated in the east and south of Ukraine.⁸

2 Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, submitted to the Chair of the APMB Committee on Article 5 Implementation, 30 April 2024, Table 2.

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

4 Ibid. Ukraine’s regions comprise 24 oblasts, the two cities of special status (Kyiv and Sevastopol), and the autonomous republic of Crimea.

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

6 Ibid.; and Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Table 2.

7 “Restoring Livelihoods and revitalising Rural Communities through Mine Action”, UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP), Presentation at side event, UN National Directors Meeting (NDM), Geneva, 29 April 2024 (hereafter, FAO and WFP Presentation, NDM, 2024).

8 Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), “Ukraine faces massive explosive contamination one year into the conflict”, 23 February 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3YNSxcb>.

Access by international operators to perform survey or clearance within 20km of the front lines of conflict and State borders was prohibited in 2023 and remained so at the time of writing.⁹ Outside this buffer zone, international operators newly recorded 12.71km² of AP mined area in 2023,¹⁰ more than three times the amount identified in the previous year. However, even in areas that are accessible, there are still barriers to accurate survey. Operators caution that resurvey will be necessary in many areas, either due to recontamination or due to the displacement of people leaving few or no witnesses to sources of new contamination. As such, some polygons will require further refinement once more data becomes available.¹¹

Extensive flooding caused by the explosion that destroyed the Nova Kakhovka dam in Kherson oblast in Southern Ukraine on 6 June 2023 has also been an impediment to survey in some areas. The collapse of the 30-metre-high, 2km-long dam sent a huge column of water down the Dnipro river, flooding vast areas of territory, mostly in the Russian-controlled areas to the south of the dam. According to The HALO Trust, the torrent of water was powerful enough to dislodge landmines and, in some cases, caused some anti-vehicle (AV) mines to detonate. HALO cautioned that the exact number of displaced landmines could only be ascertained once the waters had subsided.¹² In August 2024, HALO reported that water levels in HALO's area of operations have returned to near normal. However, the flood has left some changes to the water levels and riverbanks, with some mined areas, which were previously uncovered during the dry summer season, now underwater all year round. HALO has identified limited movement of surface-laid mines, such as PMN-2s, which have been found overturned or shifted in location. In general, these changes have not had a major impact on operations and HALO has been able to resume working safely in previously flooded areas.¹³

Extensive use of AP mines by Russian forces continues, including in areas with civilians. In June 2024, Ukraine stated that it is encountering an "unprecedented density" of contamination with up to three landmines in a single square metre of land. Ukraine also reports ongoing use of AP mines by Russian forces, "launched by land and air combat systems to hit civilians, as well as objects used or inhabited by civilians".¹⁴ Humanitarian organisations and media outlets

indicate that Russian forces have scattered mines in a haphazard and disorganized fashion across civilian areas.¹⁵

AP mined areas in Ukraine can be directly associated with Russian defensive positions. Among the contamination identified, HALO has encountered a significant number of tripwire AP mines, left behind when Russian forces retreated. In 2023, HALO identified four hand grenades attached to tripwire, which are considered AP mines under the APMB. HALO had similarly seen grenades set to be detonated by tripwire in 2022.¹⁷ It is not clear if any mines of an improvised nature are included in the numbers of AP mines noted in Ukraine's most recent Article 7 Report (covering 2023). However, Ukraine does believe that Russia has used "anti-personnel mines and improvised explosive devices, prohibited by the Ottawa Convention".¹⁸

Wherever possible, the State Emergency Services of Ukraine (SESU) personnel have cleared the contamination resulting from the use of EO, including AP mines, immediately after use.¹⁹ Ukraine continues to clear EO following liberation of areas²⁰ as well as undertaking rapid response to clear explosive ordnance contamination in the buffer zone along the line of conflict.²¹

In addition to contamination resulting from current conflict with Russia, Ukraine is contaminated by AP mines as a result of the conflict which broke out in 2014 with the Russian-backed, self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk republics. Prior to these 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. The Ministry of Defence engineering units partially cleared affected areas in the mid-1970s, suggesting that a problem may remain, but the location and extent of the legacy mine threat is unknown.

Prior to the 2022 conflict, the heaviest mine and ERW contamination was believed to be inside the buffer zone, which then separated the government-controlled areas from those controlled by the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk Republics.²² Ukraine indicated in 2020 that nationwide NTS and TS is only possible once its control has been fully restored over all sovereign territory.²³ Ukraine's

9 Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Annex 1.

10 Emails from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, HMA Programme Specialist, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), 12 June 2024; Tony Connell, Country Director, FSD, 14 June 2024; Michael Brown, Deputy Head, Operations (Support), HALO, 29 May 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, Country Director, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 5 May 2024.

11 Emails from Michael Edwards, HMA Operations Manager, DanChurchAid (DCA), 3 May 2024; Tony Connell, FSD, 20 August 2024; and Julie Bouvier, Armed Violence Reduction (AVR) Specialist, Humanity & Inclusion (HI), 16 May 2024.

12 HALO, "Kakhovka Dam: Floods Amplify Ukraine Mine Emergency", Press release, 8 June 2023 (updated on 21 June 2023), at: <https://bit.ly/3PM4Pxz>. See also: "Mines uprooted in Ukraine dam disaster could pose danger for years – Red Cross", *Reuters*, 8 June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3JQz969>.

13 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 13 August 2024.

14 Statement of Ukraine, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024.

15 "Land mines create a deadly legacy for Ukraine and possibly beyond", *The Washington Post*, 12 April 2022, at: <https://wapo.st/3e2X9WP>.

16 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

17 Email from Denys Holovetskyi, Head of Operations, HALO, 29 May 2023.

18 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 26.

19 "See how Kharkiv's bomb squad neutralizes cluster bombs in Ukraine", *National Public Radio (NPR)*, 24 April 2022, at: <https://n.pr/3NqnQ47>; and SESU Facebook page, 8 May 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3G04DDJ>.

20 Human Rights Watch, "Ukraine: Civilian Deaths from Cluster Munitions", 6 July 2023.

21 Interview with Col. Ruslan Berehulia, Head of Secretariat, NMAA, Ministry of Defence (MoD), in Geneva, 1 May 2024.

22 Email from Yuri Shahramanyan, Programme Manager, HALO Ukraine, 5 July 2018.

23 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information received on 27 August 2020, p. 98 (numbered page 3 in the document).

national mine action strategy includes a target to complete "initial non-technical survey in 100 percent of the territories controlled by Ukraine, where it is possible to carry out

humanitarian demining activities" by the end of 2026.²⁴ It is not yet clear whether the survey will disaggregate contamination by weapon type, in particular AP mines.

USE OF AP MINES

As at June 2023, Human Rights Watch has documented use of at least 13 types of AP mines since the 2022 assault on Ukraine.²⁵ The presence of AP mines was recorded in at least 11 of Ukraine's 24 regions (oblasts): Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Sumy, and Zaporizhzhia. All manner of delivery methods has been documented: hand-emplaced, mechanically laid, scattered by truck-mounted projectors, and remotely delivered by rockets.²⁶ Several new types of landmine have been used in hostilities for the first time in the ongoing armed conflict. These include the remotely delivered POM-3 AP mine, also known as the "medallion". The mine is typically aerially launched from a rocket, falling back to earth by parachute. It is equipped with a seismic proximity sensor that picks up approaching footsteps, and is said to be able to distinguish between humans and animals, making efforts to locate and destroy it far deadlier and more complicated. The POM-3 has self-destruct features that set the mine to explode after a certain period. Ukrainian deminers are using remote equipment to destroy these mines – an expensive undertaking.²⁷

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 AP and AV mines prior to the current conflict with Russia.²⁸ In addition, a December 2017 report from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) stated that: "The parties to the conflict continued the practice of placement of [improvised explosive devices] IEDs and AP mines in populated areas and near objects of civilian infrastructure."²⁹ In 2018, OHCHR called on all parties involved in hostilities to "cease the use of victim-activated devices".³⁰

Amnesty International has reported that, between March and April 2022, Russian forces fired rockets to disperse PTM-1S scatterable mines on residential neighbourhoods in Kharkiv killing at least three civilians. This type of attack combines the attributes of cluster munitions and AP mines. Russian

forces have also emplaced numerous victim-activated booby-traps as they retreated from positions they had taken, occupied, or fortified during the 2022 invasion. The booby-traps were constructed with various types of hand-grenades equipped with tripwires, including F-1, RGD-5, and RGN-type grenades.³¹ According to Ukraine, Russian forces have laid booby-traps in residential areas, vehicles, critical infrastructures, and even food. Ukraine added that it found booby-traps in dead bodies, including those of children.³² A considerable portion of the booby-traps are considered AP mines under the APMB.

Human Rights Watch documented repeated use of AP mines by Ukrainian forces during the summer months of 2022 when Russia controlled the city of Izium and its environs. In August 2023, an Independent International Commission Inquiry on Ukraine stated it had seen photos of weapons found in Izium city indicating that PFM AP mines had been delivered by a 220-mm Uragan rockets with a range of 10–35km, and that both Ukrainian and Russian armed forces were stationed within striking distance of Izium, but concluded it was likely that the PMF AP mines were used by Ukrainian armed forces.³³ Any use of AP mines by a State Party is a serious violation of the APMB. Ukrainian forces fired numerous 9M27K3 mine-laying rockets carrying PFM AP blast mines into at least nine different Russian-occupied areas or near Russian military facilities in and around Izium city. Researchers verified 11 civilian casualties from these mines. The Ukrainian Prime Minister, Oleksandr Polishchuk, responded to Human Rights Watch questions by saying that the Ukrainian authorities could not comment on the types of weapons used during the armed conflict "before the end of the war and the restoration of [Ukraine's] sovereignty and territorial integrity".³⁴

In February 2023, the President of the APMB Twentieth Meeting of States Parties issued a statement condemning the use of AP mines "anywhere, at any time, and by any actor", and requested clarification of the allegations of AP

24 "Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine order dated 28 June 2024 No. 616-p on approval of the National Mine Action Strategy for the period up to 2033 and approval of the operational action plan for its implementation in 2024–2026", section entitled "Strategic goals, objectives and expected results aimed at achieving the defined goals", at: <https://bit.ly/4cKpA5j>.

25 These are: MOB, MON-50, MON-90, MON-100, MON-200, OZM-72, PFM-1/PFM1-S, PMN-2, PMN-4, POM-2/POM-2R, and POM-3.

26 Human Rights Watch, "Landmine Use in Ukraine", Briefing Paper, 13 June 2023, pp. 2, 3, 8, and 10.

27 Human Rights Watch, "Landmine Use in Ukraine", Report, 15 June 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3P03Yss>, pp. 4, 7, and 8; "New Russian Land Mine Poses Special Risk in Ukraine", *The New York Times*, 6 April 2022, at: <https://nyti.ms/3TgF9bL>; and Presentation of Ukraine, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–21 June 2023, slide 4.

28 See: "Daily and spot reports from the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine", at: <http://bit.ly/2K4IFms>.

29 OHCHR, "Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 16 August to 15 September 2017", December 2017, p. 5.

30 OHCHR, "Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 16 February to 15 May 2018", June 2018, p. 29.

31 Human Rights Watch, "Landmine Use in Ukraine", Briefing Paper, 13 June 2023, pp. 3 and 8.

32 Presentation of Ukraine to the APMB Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–21 June 2023, slide 5. See also, "Russians hid an anti-tank mine in a pedestrian figurine - this is a war crime" (Ukrainian), *Channel 24*, 7 August 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/45rALvB>.

33 Human Rights Council, Conference room paper on the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, UN doc. A/HRC/52/CRP.4, 29 August 2023, p. 49.

34 Human Rights Watch, "Landmine Use in Ukraine", Briefing Paper, 13 June 2023, pp. 2 and 15.

mines use by the Ukrainian government.³⁵ At the subsequent intersessional meetings, Ukraine said that “it did not have information which would corroborate the veracity of allegations made by some [organisation] concerning the use of anti-personnel mines by the Ukrainian Armed forces” and that it stands ready to “conduct further inquiry into the manner and keep [the Convention] updated on the outcome”.³⁶ In June 2024, Ukraine informed the APMBC intersessional meetings that it was conducting a pre-trial investigation for criminal offenses from 24 February 2022 to 31 May 2024 concerning “the use of anti-personnel mines by unidentified military personnel of individual military formations in the territory of the city of Izyum, Kharkiv region, and surrounding areas.” As at June 2024, the pre-trial investigation in these criminal proceedings was ongoing.³⁷

Unverified reports were emerging at the time of writing of possible new use of landmines by Ukraine in the Kursk region of western Russia. On 6 August 2024, Ukrainian

troops and armoured vehicles entered Russia with the head of Ukraine’s armed forces claiming a week later that they controlled “about 1,000 square kilometres” and Ukraine’s President, Volodymyr Zelensky, saying that 74 communities were under Ukrainian control.³⁸ However, none of these claims regarding the extent of Ukraine’s advance into Russia could be independently verified. Unverified video footage, made publicly available by an individual reporting to be a civilian filming in Kursk on 10 August 2024, appears to show several AV mines laid across a road.³⁹ On 2 September 2024, a Russian news agency reported, based on information from the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations, that nine settlements in the Kursk region had been cleared of mines over the preceding week, with 150 munitions rendered safe. Teams were continuing survey of populated areas and infrastructure.⁴⁰ It is not known if Ukraine has emplaced AP mines as part of this offensive.

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Ukraine is also contaminated with cluster munition remnants (CMR), the extent of which is not known but is thought to be exceptionally large, as well as with considerable quantities of other ERW (see Mine Action Review’s *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2024* report on Ukraine for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Since the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022, mine action has gained critical relevance in Ukraine’s national plans for post-conflict recovery and development. This is illustrated by the inclusion of a dedicated session on humanitarian demining at the Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC) in June 2023, during which Ukraine’s First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy declared Ukraine’s intention to bring 80% of land potentially contaminated with EO back into productive use within ten years.⁴¹ It is in this context that Ukraine’s National Mine Action Strategy covering 2024–33 was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on 28 June 2024, having been developed by the Ministry of Economy (MoE) in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoI), and other central executive authorities, and with the involvement of national and international experts.⁴²

To help develop and steer a rapidly expanding national mine action programme with many national and international partners, the Sectoral Working Group on Humanitarian

Demining (SWG) was introduced in September 2023. The SWG is an advisory body at the MoE, which “functions as a unified platform for coordinating and aligning cooperation efforts in the field of humanitarian demining between Ukrainian governmental authorities and development partners.” The SWG held three meetings between September 2023 and May 2024. It is co-chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, United Nations Resident Co-ordinator, and the Ambassador of Japan.⁴³ The SWG makes major announcements on issues such as senior appointments, or national strategy, from the government to the international community. It has representation from several ministries, including the MoD and MoI; as well as other key national entities including, but not limited, to the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) Secretariat; the Mine Action Centre (MAC); the State Emergency Services of Ukraine (SESU); and the Centre of Humanitarian Demining (CHD).⁴⁴

This latter body, the Centre of Humanitarian Demining (CHD), was introduced in April 2023 as a State institution,

35 APMBC ISU, “Landmine treaty president to engage with Ukraine on allegations of use of prohibited weapon”, Press release, 3 February 2023.

36 Statement of Ukraine, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–21 June 2023.

37 Statement of Ukraine, APMBC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024, available at: <https://bit.ly/3N5UWrN>.

38 “What to Know About Ukraine’s Cross-Border Assault Into Russia”, *The New York Times*, 14 August 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3X1J6EX>; and “Ukraine claims to control 1,000 sq km of Russian territory”, *BBC News*, 12 August 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3SS4iL5>.

39 “Civilian gets shot after dodging landmines in Kursk 10.8.24”, *YouTube*, accessed 14 August 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3M30Bg4>.

40 “Nine settlements in Kursk Region cleared of explosive objects in past week”, *TASS Russian News Agency*, 1 September 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4gk1YH0>.

41 “Our goal is to bring 80% of potentially contaminated land back into use in ten years: Yuliia Svyrydenko at the London conference”, Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, 22 June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/4dMpGu3>.

42 “Cabinet adopts changes to the Humanitarian Mine Action Architecture in Ukraine”, Special issue of DRC Legal Alert, Issue 98, October 2023.

43 “The Sectoral Working Group”, Demining Ukraine, 2 July 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3zUWthA>.

44 Email from GICHD, 23 July 2024.

established under the Economic and Financial Department of the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers.⁴⁵ The CHD functions as a secretariat and think-tank, which collects and analyses information on demining needs from the MoD, MoI, SESU, regional military administrations, partner countries, and international organisations, with the aim of improving coordination and mobilising national and international resources.⁴⁶ It is also reported to take a leading role on fundraising and cooperation with donors.⁴⁷

There are nominally four national supervisory and management bodies in Ukraine: the MAC, located in Chernihiv, under the MoD (for operational matters, including co-ordination and tasking); the Interregional Centre for Humanitarian Demining and Rapid Response of the SESU, located in Merefá (hereafter referred to as "the centre at Merefá");⁴⁸ the interministerial NMAA, serviced by a secretariat; and, at the top of the hierarchy, an inter-ministerial committee on humanitarian demining.

Three bodies are responsible for certification of operators and processes:⁴⁹ the centre at Merefá; the Demining Centre of Military Unit A2641, located in Kaminiets Podilsky; and the MAC in Chernihiv. These three bodies are also responsible for quality management (QM) of demining. Ukraine's National Mine Action Strategy acknowledges that the ability of these institutions to carry out QM responsibilities "does not meet the needs of today" and that quality control (QC) and external monitoring require attention as part of systems improvement. It also cites the need for a "unified procedure" for certification of operators and processes.⁵⁰ As highlighted in a September 2024 report by the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, the strategy exemplifies Ukraine's political commitment to accelerate mine action operations and, going forward, regulatory change will also be critical to implement the strategy and scale up demining activities, particularly with respect to certification and licensing.⁵¹

The NMAA, which has been operational since 2022, is the body primarily responsible for developing and approving mid-term and long-term national plans for mine action alongside operational plans,⁵² with the Cabinet of Ministers issuing final approval for Ukraine's National Mine Action Strategy and implementation plan on 28 June 2024.⁵³ The secretariat of the NMAA has the responsibility of coordinating the work of the MAC and the centre at Merefá. These two Centres share the remits of information management (IM), QA, monitoring, planning, and certification of the operators.⁵⁴ The NMAA also coordinates the ministries; central and local State bodies; local government; and other organisations (including mine action operators). The NMAA approves and ensures State mine action policy; monitors and reports on State progress in fulfilling its obligations in mine action under international treaties; and coordinates the development and execution of mine action strategy, the national mine action programme, and action plans.⁵⁵ While the NMAA sits at a ministerial level, it is serviced by a secretariat that also has "some" managerial functions.⁵⁶

A national mine action law was adopted by Ukraine's parliament in 2018,⁵⁷ although the government did not proceed with its implementation on the grounds it was inconsistent with a number of other legal acts.⁵⁸ Amended legislation was passed in December 2020 which created the two National Mine Action Centres (NMACs) now operating at Cherniv and Merefá.⁵⁹ The MAC is said to play a pivotal role in ensuring effective planning and organisation of mine action, and, in the context of the current conflict, is the main coordination body for operations.⁶⁰ Reporting by mine action operators and their interaction with the NMAA is managed through the MAC and the NMAA Secretariat.⁶¹

In 2022, the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories set up the Social-Humanitarian Response Centre to help guide State policy in mine action. The Centre's

- 45 "Center for Humanitarian Demining established in Ukraine", *Interfax Ukraine*, 7 April 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3LDzj1g>; and "Cabinet adopts changes to the Humanitarian Mine Action Architecture in Ukraine", Special issue of DRC Legal Alert, Issue 98, October 2023.
- 46 "Humanitarian demining center to be established in Ukraine: Prime Minister", Government Portal of Ukraine, 11 February 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3WgUVUG>.
- 47 "Ukraine: Strengthening national mine action capabilities", DRC, 9 February 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3Sjnb9y>.
- 48 According to operators, the Interregional Center For Humanitarian Demining and Rapid Response of the SESU in Merefá was previously referred to as the "Humanitarian Demining Centre" (HDC). However, with the introduction of the Centre of Humanitarian Demining (CHD) in April 2023 there is some potential for confusion, hence Mine Action Review has followed the approach often taken by operators and refers to "the centre at Merefá", which is under SESU, as distinct from the CHD, which is under the Economic and Financial Department of the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers. According to Ukraine's mine action law, the MAC is tasked with the planning, organisation, and coordination of mine action activities, while the HDC, also referred to as the centre at Merefá, is responsible for "practical implementation of humanitarian demining".
- 49 Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine order dated 28 June 2024 No. 616-p, section entitled "Analysis of the current state of affairs, trends and justifications for the need to solve the identified problems", at: <https://bit.ly/4cKpA5j>.
- 50 Ibid. The document actually states that a fourth body is also responsible for quality management tasks, additionally naming the Humanitarian Demining Centre. However, it is not totally clear if this is intentional, as the centre at Merefá (previously referred to as the HDC) is also listed.
- 51 "From Economic Recovery to Global Food Security: The Urgent Need to Demine Ukraine", Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, 10 September 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3B9gr8w>, Chapter 5.
- 52 "Ukraine: Strengthening national mine action capabilities", DRC, 9 February 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3JY8fce>.
- 53 "Government approves National Mine Action Strategy and Operational Plan for its implementation for the first 3 years", Government of Ukraine, 28 June 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/46t1Tcj>.
- 54 The Law of Ukraine on Mine Action, No. 2642-VIII, Chap. III, Art. 23; DRC-DDG Legal Alert Special, "Mine Action Law Amendment", Issue 56, September 2020; and interview with Miljenko Vahtarić, OSCE, 13 February 2020.
- 55 The Law of Ukraine on Mine Action, No. 2642-VIII, Chap. III, Art. 23; and DRC Special Legal Alert – "NMAA Framework 2022", Issue 73, January 2022.
- 56 The Law of Ukraine on Mine Action, No. 2642-VIII, Chap. III, Art. 23; and email from GICHD, 17 June 2022.
- 57 OSCE, "Ukrainian parliament adopts legal framework for mine action, with OSCE advice provided", 10 December 2018, at: <http://bit.ly/2QdTaqq>; and interview with Miljenko Vahtarić, OSCE, 7 February 2019; and email, 13 June 2019.
- 58 DRC-DDG Legal Alert Special, "Mine Action Law Amendment", Issue 56, September 2020.
- 59 The Law of Ukraine on Mine Action, No. 2642-VIII, Chap. III, Art. 23; DRC-DDG Legal Alert Special, "Mine Action Law Amendment", Issue 56, September 2020; and interview with Miljenko Vahtarić, OSCE, 13 February 2020.
- 60 "Ukraine: Strengthening national mine action capabilities", DRC, 9 February 2024; and interview with Yevhenni Zubarevskiyi, Administrator, Information Management System for Mine Action, Ministry of Defence, in Geneva, 1 May 2024.
- 61 Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Annex 1.

remit includes informing the population about the dangers of explosive items; assisting victims; conducting survey of the presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO); and compiling specialised maps. The Ministry has also developed a mine and explosive ordnance victims database.⁶² As at June 2023, the Geneva International Centre of Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) was in the process of incorporating these data into the Information Management System of Mine Action (IMSMA) database. Ukraine is using IMSMA Core, the latest version.⁶³

The roles and responsibilities of both the MAC in Chernihiv and centre at Merefa have continued to evolve in the last two years. The centre at Merefa was accredited for NTS, TS, battle area clearance (BAC), manual mine clearance, and EOD in 2022. The MAC underwent accreditation from April to September 2022, which was received for NTS, TS, BAC, manual mine clearance, and risk education. In view of the potential number of international and national mine action operators and the volume of mine action tasks in Ukraine, the MAC began preparing to expand its accreditation in 2023 for use of machines, mine detection dogs (MDDs), underwater demining, and EOD.⁶⁴ Dual roles of coordination and operational implementation within a single body has long been considered poor practice in mine action.

In February 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers issued a regulation No. 136, which created a new coordination body, the Inter-agency Working Group on Humanitarian Demining. Chaired by the Minister of Economy, the Inter-agency Working Group on Humanitarian Demining “contributes to ensuring the coordination of the actions of executive authorities on issues that belong to [the competences of the Ministry of Economy]”, and “performs tasks related to providing assistance to the [NMAA] on issues related to the organisation of national anti-mine activities”.⁶⁵

Mine action stakeholders continued to meet regularly throughout 2023, with some meetings including discussion on progress, challenges and support for survey and clearance of Article 5 implementation.⁶⁶ Several implementing partners describe the coordination challenge in Ukraine as significant, given the number of national and international actors involved.⁶⁷ Indeed, one of the pillars of the national mine action strategy is to refine institutional clarity as part

of systems improvement.⁶⁸ It has been suggested, however, that coordination is improving, for example, with a recently implemented leading role for the MoE,⁶⁹ and the introduction of SWG meetings.⁷⁰ The UN Mine Action Team claims improved coherence across the mine action sector as a key success of 2023, with all UN agencies now falling under one team. The Mine Action AoR was also re-launched in 2023, led by UNDP,⁷¹ and continued monthly mine action meetings. The NMAC also organised meetings of stakeholders on an ad hoc basis.⁷²

Overall, operators have reported a positive environment for mine action and facilitation of the operators’ work by the Ukrainian government (e.g. granting of visas and collaboration on security matters).⁷³ HALO, the largest international operator working in Ukraine, reports a close working relationship with national and local authorities, but continues to advocate for greater involvement in strategic planning.⁷⁴ Ukrainian authorities are said to be quick to sign memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and facilitate cooperation with partners.⁷⁵ Operators report varying degrees of challenge with importing equipment. Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA), for example, has not been required to pay taxes or duties for the importation of any equipment (e.g. personal protective equipment (PPE), detectors, machines), except for certain duties and taxes which apply only to vehicles as of the end of 2023.⁷⁶ Some other operators, however, report that import taxes can be costly and importation legislation has proven restrictive, with some types of mine action equipment (e.g. machines and detectors) considered “military”, which involves additional constraints.⁷⁷ The Fondation Suisse de Démînage (FSD) notes that being registered as a “charitable fund” has removed certain challenges with importing equipment, allowing it to be treated in a similar manner to a national NGO.⁷⁸ Some operators also note that visa restrictions can make it difficult for international staff from some countries to enter Ukraine.⁷⁹

Ukraine requires that the destruction of any ordnance that is identified by international operators be conducted by the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the SSTS, or SESU.⁸⁰ Operators continued to face difficulties in 2023 in acquiring necessary permission regarding explosives, as had been the case in 2022.⁸¹ Operators must obtain permission to use, transport

62 Emails from Roxana-Cristina Boboticu, DRC, 1 April 2023, and Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 29 May 2023.

63 Email from the GICHD, 26 May 2023.

64 Emails from Roxana-Cristina Boboticu, DRC, 1 April 2023; and Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 29 May 2023.

65 2023 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Annex 2 and additional Information, pp. 1 and 2.

66 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

67 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024; and Dino Šujak, Head of ITF Implementation Office – Ukraine, 16 May 2024.

68 Online interview GICHD, 13 May 2024.

69 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

70 Interview with Miljenko Vahtarić, OSCE, Geneva, 1 May 2024.

71 Presentation by Denise Brown, UN Resident Coordinator in Ukraine, and Paul Heslop, UNDP Senior Technical Advisor, NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

72 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

73 Emails from Almedina Musić, DRC, 7 February 2022; and Imogen Churchill, HALO, 23 March 2022.

74 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

75 Email from Dino Šujak, ITF Ukraine, 16 May 2024.

76 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 28 August 2024.

77 Emails from Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024; and Nick Guest, APOPO, 24 June 2024.

78 Email from Tony Connel, FSD, 25 June 2024.

79 Emails from Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024; Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024; Tony Connel, FSD, 25 June 2024; and Nick Guest, APOPO, 24 June 2024.

80 Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Annex 1.

81 Emails from Roxana-Cristina Boboticu, DRC, 1 April 2023; Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 29 May 2023; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024; Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024; Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; and Tony Connel, FSD, 25 June 2024.

and store explosives as a prerequisite for undergoing the EOD accreditation process. These are two separate processes involving different stakeholders. The process for acquiring permission to use, transport, and store explosives is the same whether an organisation wishes to undertake demining or another relevant activity such as quarrying, and involves the Ministries of Labour and of the Economy. EOD accreditation, on the other hand, is implemented by the mine action centres. It is reportedly the permissions process regarding explosives, rather than the EOD accreditation process, which has caused the difficulties.⁸² Without the necessary accreditation, international clearance teams must await the availability of SESU, or very occasionally police EOD teams, to attend to a disposal task. In some cases, this can delay further work at a site until the hazard is cleared. Operators have reported some positive progress on the issue, with one international operator, HALO, securing such permission in 2023, and good cooperation with SESU and the Ukrainian Armed Forces in demolition of items found during clearance.⁸³ In 2024, FSD also applied for certification to conduct demolitions.⁸⁴

HALO eventually gained EOD accreditation in December 2023, after a ten-month, multi-stage process.⁸⁵ As at August 2024, FSD had started the process to meet all requirements prior to submitting the application for EOD certification.⁸⁶ However, challenges remain with the efficient management, storage, and transportation of explosives. Additionally, the current permission and simplified accreditation are only valid under martial law. Once martial law is lifted, all EOD operators will be required to meet the full list of accreditation requirements, which HALO says previously made it almost impossible to conduct EOD.⁸⁷

The World Bank estimates that it will cost US\$34.6 billion to clear Ukraine of landmines and other ERW, of which between \$50 million and \$200 million will be needed for NTS, \$8.95 billion will be needed for TS, and \$25.5 billion will be needed for clearance. However, this cost projection is likely to be revised down as further NTS is carried out across the country, given that large tracts of land suspected to be contaminated may be found free of EO. In fact, it has been reported that NTS over the course of 2023 alone resulted in the estimated

cost of demining Ukraine being revised down by US\$3 billion.⁸⁸ The 2024 budget for demining costs allocated by the Government of Ukraine is UAH3 billion (approximately US\$76 million), with implementing operators to be determined by open tender.⁸⁹ It is not known what national funding was allocated to implementation of Ukraine's Article 5 obligations in 2023, or to mine action generally in the year. Ukraine lacks demining equipment, including mine detectors and PPE.⁹⁰ Ukraine's new digitised mine action platform, implementation of which was underway as at April 2024, is intended to aid effective and transparent resource mobilisation, by providing a single repository of the resource needs of the national authorities and operators, ranked according to urgency and impact.⁹¹ Ukraine provided a comprehensive list of the critical equipment and training needs of its "first responders" in humanitarian demining, the SSTS, to States Parties to the APMBC in June 2024.⁹²

But among the key challenges for Ukraine's mine action programme identified by the UN Mine Action team are conflicting donor priorities inside and outside Ukraine and donor fatigue. As such, developing new potential sources of finance is a key objective for Ukraine's mine action programme in 2024, as well resource mobilisation for national NTS in particular.⁹³ To this end of developing innovative finance solution, Ukraine is undertaking workshops to collaborate with donors, investors, farmers and business on the creation of a model suited to the Ukrainian context.⁹⁴

In 2023, the GICHD supported the development of the national mine action strategy and continued to support the development and maintenance of IMSMA Core. The GICHD also co-chaired technical working groups to update specific chapters of the National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) and continued to deliver training courses on issues such as QM and NTS. The GICHD also facilitated an exchange visit between representatives of the Ukrainian national authorities and the Lebanese Mine Action Centre (LMAC).⁹⁵ The OSCE is engaged in mine action systems building.⁹⁶ In December 2023, UNDP announced a new initiative with SESU to bolster Ukraine's capacity to manage mine action operations and provide demining equipment.⁹⁷

82 Email from Emails Roxana-Cristina Bobolicu, DRC, 1 July 2024.

83 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

84 Email from Tony Connel, FSD, 25 June 2024.

85 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

86 Email from Tony Connel, FSD, 20 August 2024.

87 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

88 "From Economic Recovery to Global Food Security: The Urgent Need to Demine Ukraine", Chapter 5.

89 Presentation by Oleg Stoiev, Head, Mine Action Office, Ministry of Economy, "Ukraine: Meeting Food Security Needs Through Integrated Mine Action", Side event, NDM, Geneva, 1 May 2024.

90 2023 APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 3 and 4. A detailed list of the equipment requested by Ukraine is published online by the SESU at: <https://bit.ly/46j4Pe3>.

91 Presentation by Oleg Stoiev, Ministry of Economy, NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

92 Statement of Ukraine, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024.

93 Presentation by Denise Brown, UN Resident Coordinator, and Paul Heslop, UNDP, NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

94 Presentation by the Ministry of Economy, "National Mine Action Strategy: Streamlined Utilization of Advanced technologies", Side event, NDM, Geneva, 1 May 2024.

95 Email from GICHD, 23 July 2024.

96 "Support to Environmental Rehabilitation with Focus on Building National Humanitarian Mine Action Capacities of Ukraine", OSCE, accessed 15 April 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4dHL0ze>.

97 "UNDP and the Netherlands forge \$10 million partnership for mine action in Ukraine", UNDP, 16 December 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/44LLPoa>.

HALO delivered specialist training to several Ukraine state organisations, including training on NTS to SESU and SSTS, QM training to SESU and SSTS, deminer training to SSTS, and ordnance safety training to the National Police. HALO's donors also gifted a significant amount of equipment to SESU.⁹⁸

APOPO is engaged in training and deployment of Technical Survey Dog (TSD) teams in Ukraine, working in cooperation with MAG. APOPO established a training facility and launched training of the first group of all-female handlers in 2023. The goal of the initiative is to survey at least 5km² using TSDs by the end of 2025.⁹⁹ NPA provided six MDDs to SESU and trained dog handlers. SESU obtained MDD accreditation in the first week of October and started deployment. By the end of the 2023 demining season, the dogs had processed a total of 9,100m² and found 40 items of EO. NPA also fully equipped ten SESU EOD/demining teams with technical and safety equipment.¹⁰⁰

FSD did not conduct external capacity building with Ukrainian organisations in 2023. However, an internal capacity building programme was launched to bring selected national staff to a level of competency which will enable a reduction of supervisory international staff in 2024 and 2025.¹⁰¹

Danish Refugee Council's (DRC's) capacity building programme continued in 2023. Representatives from the NMAA, SESU, and MAC, underwent training in a range of activities, including EOD and NTS.¹⁰² DRC also provided SES and the MAC with various equipment including mine detection devices, EOD kits, and 14 vehicles.¹⁰³ DCA is providing mentoring and feedback during EOD courses delivered by SESU staff.¹⁰⁴ HI has a land release innovation project named Odyssey 2025, through which it provides capacity building in the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).¹⁰⁵ In early 2024, MAG provided quality management systems (QMS) training for SSTS.¹⁰⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Ukraine's National Mine Action Strategy includes some references to gender and diversity, stating that "certain social categories and groups", including women, veterans, persons with disabilities, and victims of EO, are of particular interest to the state, with regard to professional involvement in mine action and systemic and inclusive communication with society regarding mine action.¹⁰⁷ One of the tasks identified in the strategy's implementation plan, for the period 2024–26, is to increase the percentage that these previously stated social groups are "involved in mine action".¹⁰⁸ No reference was made to gender or diversity in Ukraine's Article 5 deadline extension request submitted in 2020 nor the one submitted in 2023, nor indeed in its most recent Article 7 report (covering 2023). In granting Ukraine's third extension request, the 21MSP noted that the detailed work plan to follow should contain information on how Ukraine ensures consideration for gender, age, and disability, and takes the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities in its implementation efforts,¹⁰⁹ but no such information was provided in the work plan submitted in April 2024.

However, women are said to comprise 30% of the sector in Ukraine, including in management and operational positions. Operator policies related to gender are reportedly given careful consideration before operators are accredited. The same considerations and recommendations for equality of opportunity are applied by the national authorities to groups with disabilities, and steps are taken to promote equal access to employment in mine action for these groups. National operator demining units, for example, are required to employ war veterans and civilian mine victims.¹¹⁰ Data on the gender split of national operator personnel was requested from the national authorities but not provided. However, Ukraine has stated that, as it expands mine action operational capacity in the MoD up to an estimated 5,000 personnel, it expects female specialists to form up to 30% of the units, although no time frame for this has been given.¹¹¹

Ukraine recommends the use of gender-mixed teams for NTS and deploys some female-only teams where this is more likely to ensure access to affected sections of the community. Operators are required to provide gender and age-disaggregated beneficiary data.¹¹²

98 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

99 Email from Nick Guest, Programme Manager, APOPO, 24 June 2024; and "Flanders Government Grants APOPO €1 Million For Landmine Clearance In Ukraine", APOPO, accessed 18 July 2024 at: <https://bit.ly/4cLaZXm>.

100 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

101 Email from Tony Connel, FSD, 24 June 2024.

102 Emails from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; and Roxana-Cristina Bobolic, DRC, 1 July 2024; and "Ukraine: Strengthening national mine action capabilities", DRC, 9 February 2024.

103 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; and "Ukraine: Strengthening national mine action capabilities", DRC, 9 February 2024.

104 Email from Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024.

105 Email from Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024.

106 Email from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024.

107 Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine order dated 28 June 2024 No. 616-p, section entitled "Analysis of the current state of affairs, trends and justifications for the need to solve the identified problems".

108 Ibid., section entitled "Strategic goals, objectives and expected results aimed at achieving the defined goals", at: <https://bit.ly/4cKpA5j>.

109 Decision of the 21MSP on Ukraine's Article 5 deadline extension request, p. 2.

110 Interview with Yevhenni Zubarevskyi, Ministry of Defence, in Geneva, 1 May 2024.

111 Answers to additional questions of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Ukraine's Article 5 deadline extension request, 1 September 2023, p. 2.

112 Ibid.

Table 2: Gender composition of operators in 2023¹¹³

Operator	Total staff	Women staff	Managerial or supervisory staff	Women in managerial or supervisory positions	Operational staff	Women in operational positions
DCA	112	37 (33%)	35	13 (37%)	65	17 (26%)
DRC	274	75 (27%)	19	6 (32%)	192	39 (20%)
FSD	249	72 (29%)	68	35 (51%)	179	72 (40%)
HALO	1,165	341 (29%)	180	83 (46%)	985	258 (26%)
MAG	186	69 (37%)	37	12 (32%)	129	49 (38%)
NPA	231	62 (27%)	56	12 (21%)	194	48 (25%)
Totals	2,217	656 (30%)	395	161 (41%)	1,744	483 (28%)

DCA is actively seeking to increase the number of female staff at all levels, for example, through a recruitment campaign featuring existing female staff as role models. DCA's NTS teams are gender-mixed and four of the six teams have female team leaders. DCA recruits staff from the local area to help encourage engagement with all segments of the community, including ethnic and minority groups and women and children. All DCA beneficiary data are disaggregated by sex and age.¹¹⁴

DRC conducted a perception survey in 2023, assessing attitudes towards women working in mine action and distributed among male and female personnel from various mine action NGOs. The survey highlighted prevalent misconceptions, such as the belief that prior military experience is necessary and that there are limitations on the demining positions women can apply for. Using these insights, DRC intends to refine its strategies for the recruitment and retention of women. To date in 2024, DRC has also implemented AGD (age, gender, disability) inclusion training and gender-based violence (GBV) training for all field staff.¹¹⁵ In 2023, the proportion of managerial or supervisory positions occupied by women in DRC more than doubled from 15% to 32%.¹¹⁶ All DRC's mine action data are disaggregated by age, gender, and disability.¹¹⁷

FSD is committed to providing an equal opportunity working environment. NTS, BAC, and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) teams are gender-mixed. In 2023–24, similar to the previous reporting period, 29% of FSD's

national staff in Ukraine were female.¹¹⁸ Women, including four female national clearance team leaders, occupied 14% of national management positions,¹¹⁹ a slight reduction on the 19% in 2022–23.¹²⁰ At the time of writing, persons with disabilities made up 6% of personnel in FSD Ukraine.

HALO has a global equality and diversity policy, which it applies to its programme in Ukraine, with all programming to be delivered in a gender-inclusive manner. HALO has continued to expand the criteria for its childcare stipend programme for mothers and single fathers working in HALO, first introduced in 2021, and now also offers parental leave.¹²¹ Having been the first operator in Ukraine to employ Ukrainian women as deminers in 2016, HALO planned to be the first operator to employ women as EOD team leaders and specialists, starting in 2024 once its EOD certification was received. Over half (59%) of women employed are in supervisory positions and HALO is determined to continue efforts to achieve gender parity. In order to reach all sections of affected communities, HALO deploys mixed-gender, Ukrainian- and Russian-speaking NTS teams.

With regard to other aspects of diversity, HALO is an equal opportunities employer and recruits staff from conflict-affected communities, including many who have been displaced by the conflict. As of the end of 2023, HALO Ukraine employed nine persons with declared disabilities, though HALO states that, due to some level of stigma surrounding disability in Ukraine, the actual number of staff with disabilities may be higher. HALO uses the Washington

113 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, 21 April 2024; Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024; Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and Tony Connel, FSD, 25 June 2024.

114 Email from Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024.

115 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; and Roxana-Cristina Bobolicu, DRC, 21 August 2024.

116 Emails from Roxana-Cristina Bobolicu, DRC, 1 April 2023; Almedina Musić, DRC, 7 February and 13 June 2022; and Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024.

117 Emails from Roxana-Cristina Bobolicu, DRC, 1 April 2023; and Almedina Musić, DRC, 7 February and 13 June 2022.

118 Email from Tony Connel, FSD, 25 June 2024.

119 Ibid.

120 Email from Tony Connel, FSD, 26 June 2023.

121 Emails from Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 29 May 2023; and Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

Group Short Set of questions to collect information about the number of beneficiaries with disabilities. HALO conducts pre- and post-clearance impact assessments in affected communities. The first post-clearance assessment was conducted in May 2023 and, as the data collected grows, HALO will use this to inform project design and planning.¹²²

MAG works according to its organisational gender, diversity, and inclusion policy and strives to ensure equal access for female and male candidates to all its positions. Measures to encourage equal access to employment include the use of interview panellists external to the organisation.¹²³ In 2023, the proportion of all staff positions and operational positions filled by women fell from 52% the year before to 37% and 38%, respectively.¹²⁴ MAG prioritises access to employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, aiming to reach the minimum target of 4% of the workforce as set in Ukrainian labour law, and has created a task force with other humanitarian actors to pool vacancies and encourage and facilitate more applications from persons with disabilities

and war veterans.¹²⁵ All MAG community liaison teams are gender-mixed and MAG disaggregates mine action data by sex and age.¹²⁶

NPA Ukraine has a gender and diversity plan.¹²⁷ It continues to explore strategies to attract more women, aiming to create more gender-balanced teams, and successfully increased the proportion operational positions occupied by female staff from 13% in 2022 to 25% as at April 2024.¹²⁸ However, NPA says the recruitment of women, for both operational and management positions, has been challenging. It continues to collaborate with local partner organisations to implement targeted recruitment campaigns to attract more women from local communities in its areas of operation, for example, proactively inviting women to apply for operational roles through visits of female deminers to Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS).¹²⁹ Staff are recruited from target communities and NPA strives to have a balance of staff with diverse ethnic backgrounds.¹³⁰

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Ukrainian National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) include a chapter (11.2.9) on "Environmental regulations", and a section (12.6) on "Environment, occupational health and safety".¹³¹ Some operator feedback suggests that this is broadly in line with IMAS,¹³² but that it needs to be updated.¹³³ At the time of writing, it was not clear if Ukraine has an environmental management policy for mine action. It was also not clear if environmental assessments are conducted by the national authorities. The OSCE is helping build the operational capacities of the MAC and centre at Merefa to systematically conduct "environmentally safe" demining.¹³⁴

A government High-Level Working Group on the Environmental Consequences of War published a report in February 2024, recommending that the national mine action strategy, at that time still being drafted, "should explicitly integrate environmental concerns" and incorporate the relevant guidance provided in the IMAS. The report also recommended the Strategy should provide for close

oversight of demining operators, with national legislation potentially needed to ensure environmental protection. The report further called for better coordination between demining operators and other organisations protecting the environment; the establishment of a national programme to address mine clearance in targeted forests, protected areas, and other natural spaces; measures to encourage sustainable land use practices following clearance; and the embedding of climate change and climate-related hazards into decision-making on the prioritisation of areas to be cleared.¹³⁵

The National Mine Action Strategy, approved in June 2024, does indeed acknowledge the need for systemic consideration of the environment in mine action and outlines tasks related to the environment under each of the strategy's three strategic goals. Such tasks include reducing pollution caused by EO; consideration of the environment during task prioritisation; and application of "environmentally friendly demining methods", especially in protected and conservation areas.¹³⁶

122 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

123 Email from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024.

124 Emails from Nick Guest, MAG, 23 March 2023; and Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024.

125 Email from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024.

126 Email from Nick Guest, MAG, 23 March 2023.

127 Email from Amela Balic, Deputy Programme Manager, NPA, 29 June 2023.

128 Emails from Alberto Rinaldo Serra, NPA, 15 March 2023; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

129 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

130 Ibid.

131 Emails from Almedina Musić, DRC, 7 February 2022; and Imogen Churchill, HALO, 23 March 2022.

132 Email from Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024.

133 Email from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024.

134 "Support to Environmental Rehabilitation with Focus on Building National Humanitarian Mine Action Capacities of Ukraine", OSCE, accessed 14 May 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4dHL0ze>.

135 "An Environmental Compact for Ukraine. A green future: recommendations for accountability and recovery", Andriy Yermak and Margot Wallström, Co-Chairs, High-level Working Group on the Environmental Consequences of War, Government of Ukraine, 9 February 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3YNolx0>, p. 14.

136 Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine order dated 28 June 2024 No. 616-p, section entitled "Strategic goals, objectives and expected results aimed at achieving the defined goals".

DCA has a Climate and Environment Policy and adopts a “do-no-harm” approach to all its activities including when establishing and maintaining training centres, remote camps and task sites. DCA undertakes an initial environmental assessment prior to any TS or clearance, primarily to minimise the risk of adverse environmental impact from technological methods.¹³⁷ DRC has an environmental management system in place, which is stipulated in its standing operating procedure (SOP) on health, safety, and environmental management¹³⁸ and is in line with IMAS. DRC implements measures to prevent or minimise environmental harm, in accordance with its SOPs, and maintains contingency plans in case of unexpected weather or ground conditions.¹³⁹

FSD has detailed SOPs on environmental management and maintains an environmental policy for mine action in Ukraine. FSD states that, like other operators, it works on a “do no harm” basis, although the use of heavy machinery to conduct ground preparation can make this challenging.¹⁴⁰

The HALO Trust seeks to minimise its environmental footprint.¹⁴¹ HALO has an environmental policy and SOPs that outline the potential negative environmental impacts that could result from large-scale demining and explosive

ordnance operations. The SOPs prescribe measures to eliminate the consequences of negative impacts, such as activities to ensure the regeneration of vegetation, re-planting of trees, and the return of cultivated soils to work sites (soil that was mechanically sieved).¹⁴² HALO is working on a framework to calculate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from operations, although reducing travel distances to demining sites is not possible at present due to security risks. HALO has also begun to develop Ukraine-specific baseline environmental assessment procedures. It has implemented adaptation measures for climate-change related extreme weather, for example, equipping deminers appropriately for heat waves and heavy rain and having shorter working days during extremely high temperatures.¹⁴³

MAG has an environmental SOP in place in Ukraine. It also conducts post-clearance environmental assessments in line with its global standards.¹⁴⁴ NPA has a Climate and Environmental Policy, as well as a Green Office tool, and is developing objectives and actions related to climate and the environment. NPA also has an environmental SOP that is said to comply with IMAS.¹⁴⁵

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Ukraine is using IMSMA Core¹⁴⁶ and national standards on IMSMA are in place.¹⁴⁷ In 2022, the database was hosted on two separate servers, one owned by SESU and the other by the MoD, but in 2023, IMSMA became cloud-based, with access rights and permissions to different datasets granted according to the requirements of the national authorities partners.¹⁴⁸ Mine actors were invited early on to provide feedback on the database, and some operators note significant improvements, such as increased digitisation in the reporting process and minimal paperwork.¹⁴⁹ IMSMA receives new information daily from operators that is shared across key partners¹⁵⁰ for use in their analysis and planning.¹⁵¹ Ukraine states that access to Ukraine’s IMSMA Core portal is open to all certified operators “within the defined limits that do not contradict the privacy policy of sensitive data”, as well as to executive authorities involved in mine action, local authorities, international organisations, and the public.¹⁵²

Survey and clearance data entered into IMSMA are validated by MAC.¹⁵³ Efforts are ongoing to maintain and improve data quality through regular meetings between the NMAC and operators to discuss potentially erroneous data.¹⁵⁴ Operators report that IMSMA Core functions effectively, and all operators have been trained in its use.¹⁵⁵ They also report that the national database is up to date (in so far as is possible in the context of the ongoing conflict).¹⁵⁶ As at April 2023, data collection forms

137 Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024.

138 Emails from Almedina Musić, DRC, 7 February and 13 June 2022.

139 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024.

140 Email from Tony Connell, FSD, 25 June 2024.

141 Emails from Imogen Churchill, HALO, 23 March 2022; and Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 29 May 2023.

142 Ibid.

143 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

144 Email from Nick Guest, MAG, 23 March 2023.

145 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

146 Email from GICHD, 26 May 2023.

147 Statement of Ukraine, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024.

148 Emails from GICHD, 17 June 2022 and 26 May 2023.

149 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024.

150 GICHD, “Ukraine faces massive explosive contamination one year into conflict”, 24 February 2023.

151 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

152 Answers to additional questions of the Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Ukraine’s deadline extension request, 1 September 2023, p. 7.

153 Emails from GICHD, 19 April 2023; and Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

154 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

155 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024.

156 Emails from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024; Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024; Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; and Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

were using the Survey123 platform, and were being used by all accredited operators.¹⁵⁷ Data collection forms are regularly discussed and agreed with operators.¹⁵⁸ The national authorities state that data, disaggregated by weapon type, are being collected by national operators working within the buffer zone, but remain classified at present.¹⁵⁹

Ukraine submitted an Article 7 Report covering 2023 on time and, on 30 April 2024, acted upon the decisions of the 21MSP and submitted a work plan for the implementation of Article 5.¹⁶⁰ The Article 7 report covering 2023 was better than the one submitted a year earlier in that it included information on AP mined areas and land release.¹⁶¹

PLANNING AND TASKING

Ukraine has developed a National Mine Action Strategy for 2024–33 as well as an implementation plan for the first three years. The strategy was endorsed by the NMAA in February 2024¹⁶² and both the strategy and implementation plan for the initial three years were approved by Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers on 28 June 2024.¹⁶³ The strategy focuses on three strategic goals: "land release"; "protection of the people", and "system improvement". Ukraine plans to update the implementation plan every three years.¹⁶⁴ An operational plan for 2024–26 is attached to the strategy, though this is available only in Ukrainian. Due to the extensive and mixed nature of explosive hazard threats in Ukraine, the strategy does not make separate provision for AP mines, but rather refers throughout to "explosive ordnance".¹⁶⁵

With a view to the first goal (land release), a tripartite MoU was signed in April 2024 between Ukraine's MoE, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and the World Food Programme (WFP). The initiative consists of three phases: identifying and prioritising households and land (Phase I: Prioritisation), surveying and clearing selected land (Phase II: Education and Mine Action); and restarting production (Phase III: Restoration).¹⁶⁶ The presence and fear of EO is preventing many Ukrainian farmers from cultivating their land, with significant implications for rural livelihoods and global food security. As such, mine action and the restoration of agricultural livelihoods have become highly integrated in Ukraine, with close collaboration between Ukraine's MoE, the FAO, WFP, and mine action implementing partners.¹⁶⁷

Broad priority areas for demining in Ukraine are listed as electricity infrastructure, water and heating infrastructure,

residential areas, transport infrastructure, critical industries, and agricultural land. But no standardised criteria exist at national level for task prioritisation.¹⁶⁸ Ukraine has stated that it prioritises the clearance of critical infrastructure facilities and population centres, in order to ensure safe access of the population to their homes.¹⁶⁹

An annual plan for demining in 2023 was approved in early January by the MoD.¹⁷⁰ In March, Ukraine approved an action plan to survey and clear, by the end of 2024, more than 4,700km² of agricultural land in nine regions (Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Mykolaiv, Sumy, and Zaporizhzhia). Of this land, 1,650km² was to be released by the end of 2023 and the remaining 3,050km² by the end of 2024.¹⁷¹ This plan covers "demining of agricultural territories contaminated by explosive objects".¹⁷² Ukraine's Minister of Economy, Yulia Svyrdenko, told the media in June 2023 that the Ministry planned to "survey, clear, and return to use most of all potentially contaminated areas within 10 years".¹⁷³

Ukraine submitted an annual work plan for 2024 to the APBMC, in accordance with the decision of the 21MSP in response to its Article 5 Extension request, and states in the document that it is "subject to annual updates until 2032". The plan has three main aims: to reduce the risks posed by EO to a level that is safe for the population; to minimise and prevent accidents from unauthorised handling of EO; and to reduce "social tensions" among populations residing in or near areas contaminated with EO. The plan contains a table detailing all known AP mined areas by district with precise coordinates.¹⁷⁴ Finally, annual land release targets for release of AP mined

157 Email from GICHD, 19 April 2023.

158 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

159 Interview with Yevhenni Zubarevskiy, Ministry of Defence, in Geneva, 1 May 2024.

160 ISU, "Ukraine", accessed 17 July 2024 at: <https://bit.ly/4d2mWrk>.

161 Article 7 Reports covering 2022 and 2023, Form D.

162 Online interview with GICHD, 13 May 2024.

163 "Government approves National Mine Action Strategy and Operational Plan for its implementation for the first 3 years", Government of Ukraine, 28 June 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/46i1Tcj>.

164 Presentation by Oleg Stoiev, NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

165 "Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine order dated 28 June 2024 No. 616-p.

166 FAO and WFP Presentation, NDM, 2024.

167 Presentation by Oleg Stoiev, NDM, Geneva, 1 May 2024.

168 Emails from Henry Leach, DDG Ukraine, 2 May 2019; Yuri Shahramanyan, HALO Ukraine, 16 May 2019; Almedina Musić, DRC, 7 February 2022; Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024; and Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

169 2023 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 3.

170 Email from Roxana-Cristina Bobolicu, DRC, 1 April 2023.

171 Ukraine's Ministry of Economy website, 30 May 2023, accessed on 22 June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3NH0sBN>.

172 Answers to additional questions of the APBMC Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Ukraine's deadline extension request, 1 September 2023, p. 6.

173 "We couldn't wait: Ukrainian farmers improvise to clear their land of mines", *The Guardian*, 19 June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/44IX13N>.

174 Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Table 3.

areas are given for the period 2024 to 2032, though these are provided only in Ukrainian and not in English.¹⁷⁵

The MoD does not issue task dossiers but approves an annual plan with the list of all known locations planned for either clearance or survey by an operator.¹⁷⁶ Operators are able to submit proposals for this annual plan and to propose clearance tasks to the Mine Action Centre.¹⁷⁷ If these tasks are in the hromadas (municipalities) where the operator has been conducting NTS, they are usually approved. However, tasks outside the respective hromada require negotiation with the MAC.¹⁷⁸

Once operators are allocated a hromada they are responsible for conducting the full land release process,¹⁷⁹ though prior to commencing clearance operators are required to submit an implementation plan to the NMAC for approval.¹⁸⁰ Some operators say the tasking process can be timely and cooperative,¹⁸¹ although challenges have been highlighted. For example, when operators liaise with local authorities to ascertain local priorities for land release, these are not always readily available or accessible. Added to this, criteria for prioritisation are determined by the military administration in the Oblast, and it can change at short notice, requiring an organisation to physically re-locate operations. Organisations sometimes have overlapping areas, which can cause complications.¹⁸² Finally, it has been noted that the need to renew task orders on a monthly basis is time consuming and could be made more efficient.¹⁸³ Ukraine identifies the strengthening of prioritisation as a key strategic objective,¹⁸⁴ with the focus on a data-driven and an outcome (rather than output) driven approach.¹⁸⁵

While nationally agreed criteria for prioritisation are not currently available, operators prioritise clearance according to humanitarian impact and in discussion with the local community.¹⁸⁶ For example, DRC has been liaising with both the MAC and oblast authorities to obtain tasks in areas that align better with its integrated mine action and wider development programming.¹⁸⁷ FSD prioritises areas based on the threat posed by the contamination, the number of potential beneficiaries, and the potential impact that will result.¹⁸⁸ HALO uses its "internal prioritisation matrix", which takes into account different humanitarian factors such as number of people who use the area of the task, proximity to settlements, proximity of schools and hospitals, number of accidents recorded, as well as threat type, balancing these considerations with security and access considerations.¹⁸⁹ NPA prioritises areas for survey and clearance on a needs-basis according to victim and accident data as well as on requests and tasking from local administrations and the MAC.¹⁹⁰

Under direct supervision of NMAA, the MAC has developed an interactive map for NTS planning jointly with regional authorities. This interactive tool contains different layers, including agricultural polygons which should be considered as the first priority during non-technical surveys.¹⁹¹

Ukraine's National Mine Strategy identifies a need for improved planning and tasking as part of systems improvement, citing "the formation of a system of prioritisation of tasks for mine action and the centralised distribution of relevant tasks by the authorised body" as prerequisites to effective, centralised task distribution in the country.¹⁹²

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

NMAS were finalised by the MoD in 2018.¹⁹³ The GICHD considered that these were in line with IMAS. Concerns, however, were raised by stakeholders that they did not contain sufficient detail in certain areas, and needed to be further refined and further detailed to meet the needs of the mine action sector in Ukraine.¹⁹⁴ For example, the criteria for direct and indirect evidence for

175 Ibid., Table 4.

176 Emails from Almedina Musić, DRC, 7 February 2022; and Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024.

177 Emails from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; and Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024.

178 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024.

179 Emails from Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024; and Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024.

180 Email from Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024.

181 Email from Dino Šujak, Head of ITF Implementation Office – Ukraine, 16 May 2024.

182 Email from Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024.

183 Email from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024.

184 Presentation by Oleg Stoiev, UN NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

185 Presentation by Denise Brown, UN Resident Coordinator in Ukraine, and Paul Heslop, UNDP, UN NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

186 Emails from Almedina Musić, DDG, 23 April 2020; and Toby Robinson, HALO, 27 April 2020.

187 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024.

188 Email from Tony Connet, FSD, 26 June 2023.

189 Email from Imogen Churchill, HALO, 23 March 2022.

190 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

191 Email from Roxana-Cristina Bobolicu, DRC, 1 April 2023.

192 Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine order dated 28 June 2024 No. 616-p, section entitled "Analysis of the current state of affairs, trends and justifications for the need to solve the identified problems".

193 Emails from Gianluca Maspoli, GICHD, 25 September 2018; and Miljenko Vahtarić, OSCE, 25 September 2018; and interview, 7 February 2019.

194 Emails from Nick Guest, MAG, 23 March 2023; Roxana-Cristina Bobolicu, DRC, 1 April 2023; Almedina Musić, DRC, 7 February 2022; Imogen Churchill, HALO, 23 March 2022; and Tony Connell, FSD, 10 June 2022.

establishment of hazardous areas needed to be tailored to the new operational context¹⁹⁵ and responsibilities for control and enforcement of marking systems remained inadequately defined.¹⁹⁶

In April 2023, Ukraine issued "improved" national standards covering NTS, TS, manual demining, clearance, mechanical demining, EO destruction, and EORE. These standards were developed with the involvement of the GICHD.¹⁹⁷ Co-led by the GICHD and the NMAA, an NMAS revision process was initiated in March 2023 during a stakeholder workshop.¹⁹⁸ Over the course of the rest of the year a technical working group (TWG), led by the GICHD,¹⁹⁹ focused on land release (clearance, reduction through TS, cancellation through NTS,²⁰⁰ as well as the notions of "all reasonable effort" and "acceptable risk"²⁰¹). Certain revised NMAS were due to come into effect on 1 June 2024.²⁰² The two chapters developed by the TWG (land release and mechanical land release) were submitted in Q1 2024 and were going through the national standardisation process as at July 2024. Standards on QM and IM (including cancellation criteria) were submitted separately and have been approved by the government.²⁰³ The GICHD has initiated a working group to develop the NMAS for MDDs.²⁰⁴

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The number of mine action operators in Ukraine has grown significantly since Russia's invasion of the country in February 2022. During 2023, it increased to 29, including six operators from among the units of the MoD and SESU.²⁰⁵ In total, 45 operators had been certified as at July 2024, eight of which were international operators according to data from the NMAA.²⁰⁶

The US Department of State has said that Ukraine and its partners deployed 3,000 deminers in liberated areas as at September 2023.²⁰⁷ As at June 2024, total demining capacity in Ukraine reportedly exceeded this figure but was changing regularly.²⁰⁸ In September 2023, Ukraine's Prime Minister, Denys Shmyhal, stated that more than 10,000 deminers will be needed to meet the government's target of returning 80% of potentially contaminated land back to productive use within ten years.²⁰⁹ The MoD and several other ministries continue to deploy units that undertake clearance and destruction of mines and ERW. This includes the military engineering school, which has a licence to accredit operators; the National Guard of Ukraine; the Mol, which conducts clearance through SESU and also has an engineering department that conducts EOD; the Security Service; the SSTS, 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.²¹⁰ The Armed Forces of Ukraine and police EOD teams are reportedly at the forefront of emergency response in disposing of ERW in newly accessible areas.²¹¹ The OSCE and UNDP are engaged in a project to develop a unified national EOD training curriculum.²¹²

Initial NTS of all types of ordnance in 2023 involved 103 teams comprising more than 350 personnel in total, although it was not stated which national or international operators this included. Clearance of all types of EO by government units in Ukraine in 2023 reportedly involved 384 teams of 1,503 personnel in total and 385 machines.²¹³ This is approximately in line with Ukraine's previously stated plan to expand from 200 demining teams of more than 1,000 personnel in December 2022, to 400 teams of 2,000 personnel in 2023;²¹⁴ nearly four times the capacity available in 2020.²¹⁵ In Ukraine's most recent Article 7 report (covering 2023), Ukraine stated that the personnel of the SESU pyrotechnic units was increased to 1,700 people during 2023.²¹⁶ As at May 2023, SESU had 30 demining teams (including three underwater teams), deployed in Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kherson, Konopelniuk, Kyiv, and Mykolaiv regions.²¹⁷

195 Email from GICHD, 19 April 2023.

196 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

197 Answers to additional questions of the APMBC Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Ukraine's deadline extension request, 1 September 2023, p. 7.

198 Emails from GICHD, 19 April 2023 and 23 July 2024.

199 Email from GICHD, 23 July 2024.

200 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024; and Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024.

201 Interview with Col. Ruslan Berehulia, Ministry of Defence, in Geneva, 1 May 2024.

202 Presentation by Col. Ruslan Berehulia, Ministry of Defence, NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

203 Email from GICHD, 23 July 2024.

204 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

205 Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine order dated 28 June 2024 No. 616-p, section entitled "Analysis of the current state of affairs, trends and justifications for the need to solve the identified problems".

206 "List of Mine Certified Mine Action Operators", ArcGIS Web Application, accessed 23 July 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3y9J58e>.

207 "To Walk the Earth in Safety, 23rd Edition, Fiscal Year 2023, Documenting the U.S. Commitment to Conventional Weapons Destruction", Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, US Department of State, at: <https://bit.ly/3wVINKT>, p. 32.

208 Email from Paul Heslop, UNDP, 7 June 2024.

209 "From Economic Recovery to Global Food Security: The Urgent Need to Demine Ukraine", Chapter 5.

210 Article 7 Report (covering 2018), Form F; and email from GICHD, 17 June 2022.

211 "Ukraine: Strengthening national mine action capabilities", DRC, 9 February 2024.

212 Email from Miljenko Vahtarić, OSCE, 26 June 2024.

213 FAO and WFP Presentation, NDM, 2024.

214 US Department of State, "Demining Ukraine: A Pre-requisite for Recovery: Michael Tirre Remarks before the U.S. Helsinki Commission", 8 December 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3KFdxzJ>.

215 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request.

216 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), "Implementation of demining measures in wartime", p. 26.

217 "More than 30 demining groups are working on demining de-occupied territories", *Ukrinform*, 23 May 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3NnTKzI>.

Ukraine stated in June 2024 that 42 mine action operators had been certified to date.²¹⁸ Multiple international demining organisations, including APOPO, DCA, DRC, FSD, HALO, MAG, and NPA, are operating in Ukraine, with DCA, MAG and NPA receiving accreditation during 2023.²¹⁹ HI, currently active in risk education, was undergoing accreditation for NTS as at May 2024.²²⁰ National operator Demining Solutions received accreditation for NTS, TS, manual demining, clearance, and risk education in July 2023.²²¹ The EO NTS and TS project implemented by Ukrainian NGO, Safe Path Group (SPG), and supported by the ITF ended in August 2023.²²² While Mine Action Review made every effort to contact both international and national operators, due to the rapidly expanding nature of Ukraine's mine action programme in 2023, it has not been feasible to source and include information from all national operators who may have conducted survey and clearance of EO in 2023.

HALO more than doubled its overall capacity, from 550 personnel in the final quarter of 2022 to 1,165 in the same period in 2023, and planned to increase the number of the operational staff from 1,000 to 1,300 by the end of 2024.²²³ FSD increased BAC, NTS and clearance capacity in 2023 and planned to add a further 20 clearance teams and eight NTS teams in 2024, as well as to deploy eight MDDs in late

2024.²²⁴ NPA added one NTS team in 2024.²²⁵ DCA increased survey capacity in 2023 and expected to increase TS and clearance capacity during 2024.²²⁶ APOPO planned to deploy TSDs in 2024, initially sub-contracted by MAG, who will use APOPO-managed and staffed TSD teams to support their manual demining.²²⁷

Ukraine has stated an intention to establish mine action operational capacity in the MoD with an estimated 5,000 personnel. As at September 2023, the Ministry was forming ten battalions and three separate demining companies, which will consist of 4,750 people as part of the SSTS and Support Forces Command, to be tasked exclusively with demining. The formation of two of these battalions was expected by the end of 2023, with operations to commence in 2024.²²⁸ In June 2023, Ukraine established a Demining Capability Coalition with Lithuania in order to train and equip these ten battalions and three demining companies.²²⁹ Ukraine has also launched a "Made in Ukraine" policy to support the production and procurement of much-needed demining equipment in-country, with MV-4 and MV-10 demining vehicles already partially manufactured in Ukraine. An accelerator programme has also been launched to support the scaling of innovative technologies.²³⁰

Table 3: International NGO operational survey capacities deployed in 2023*²³¹

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS/TS personnel*	Comments
DCA	6	24	
DRC	12	36	Deployed for NTS only.
FSD	12	36	
HALO	40	79	
MAG	6	18	Six teams at peak capacity, five at other times.
NPA	16	32	Deployed for NTS in Sumy, Mykolaiv & Kherson regions.
SPG (partnered with ITF)	2	10	Deployed for NTS only. Completed project in August 2023.
Totals	94	235	

* Information based on data available at time of writing. Full information not available on the capacity of national operators.

218 Statement of Ukraine, Intersessional Meetings, 18–20 June 2024, Geneva.

219 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024; Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024; Dino Šujak, ITF Ukraine, 16 May 2024; Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024; Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; and Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and FSD, "Ukraine", accessed 10 April 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/4bIMYPH>.

220 Email from Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024.

221 "DS successfully passed the certification process", Demining Solutions, 17 July 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/440NM37>.

222 ITF, Annual Report 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3K3frUG>, p. 63.

223 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

224 Emails from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June and 20 August 2024.

225 Email from Amela Balic, NPA, 5 June 2024.

226 Emails from Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 and 15 May 2024.

227 Email from Nick Guest, APOPO, 24 June 2024.

228 Answers to additional questions of the APMB Committee on Article 5 Implementation on Ukraine's deadline extension request, 1 September 2023, p. 2.

229 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form I.

230 "From Economic Recovery to Global Food Security: The Urgent Need to Demine Ukraine", Chapter 5.

231 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April, 5 June, and 28 August 2024; Michael Edwards, DCA, 3 May 2024; Dino Šujak, ITF Ukraine, 16 May 2024; Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024; Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024; Tony Connel, FSD, 24 June 2024; and Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and FSD, "Ukraine".

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2023^{*232}

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers	Dogs and handlers	Multi-task teams (MTTs)	Mechanical teams	Machines	Comments
DRC	N/R	75	0	15	0	0	Deployed for TS, BAC, and MMC.
FSD	12	120	0	0	2	6 2 x MV 10 2 x Front End Loaders 2 x excavators. The plant is used for rubble removal	8 MDDs to be deployed in late 2024.
HALO	74	578	0	0	13	30 3 x Traxx 10 x T800 (Robocuts) 16 x S300 (Robocuts) 1 x AMTRAC	Deployed for TS and clearance of AP and AT mines. Accreditation for remote mechanical clearance received in December 2023. Machines used for ground preparation only in 2023.
MAG	3	44	0	0	0	0	
NPA	0	80	8	16	5	0 (1 MV10 and 2 FAE machines in-country, but not operational in 2023. Accreditation issued April 2024.)	Conducting TS and clearance of AP and AV mines in Mykolaiv region. MDDs supporting clearance.
SESU	N/K	**1,700	***5	0	N/K	38	Machines include 22 DOK-ING machine, 12 GCS machines 1 MineWolf, 1 Armtrak, 1 Revival P, and 1 digger.
Totals	89	2,597	13	31	20	74	

N/K = not known. * Information based on data available at time of writing. Full information not available on the capacity of national operators.

** Ukraine's Article 7 report (covering 2023) states that SESU personnel increased to 1,700 in 2023 but does not state how many were deployed specifically to clear EO.

*** SESU had six MDDs and handlers in 2023, of which five MDDs were certified and operational from September 2023.

Implementing partners confirm that technological innovation is a key feature of Ukraine's mine action programme²³³ and the UN Mine Action Team highlights use of remote technologies to undertake assessments of contamination, as well as use of UAVs and new detection systems, as among the key successes of Ukraine's mine action programme in 2023.²³⁴ SESU has been using remote sensing technologies extensively to maximise efficient use of resources, shorten the timeline for returning safe land to beneficiaries, and help determine task sequencing.²³⁵ During 2023 and to date in 2024 the Interregional Humanitarian Demining Centre of the State Emergency Service (SES) and Polish NGO, Fundacja POSTUP, have conducted field testing of UAVs and magnetometers for survey.²³⁶

232 Emails from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April and 13 August 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April, 24 June, and 28 August 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May and 6 June 2024; Denys Holovetskyi, Head of Operations, HALO, 27 June 2024; and Tony Connell, FSD, 20 August 2024; and FSD, "Ukraine" and "Our Mine Action Programme in Ukraine, April 2024", FSD, accessed 10 April 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3wsUdFS>, p. 11; presentation by SESU, "Innovation in Mine Action: Ukraine", side event, NDM, Geneva, 1 May 2024; Presentation by MAG, "Animal Detection Systems Incorporation into Mine Action Programmes: Considerations from the Field", side event, NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), "Implementation of demining measures in wartime", p. 26.

233 Emails from Julie Bouvier, HI, 16 May 2024; and Michael Edwards, DCA, 15 May 2024; and remarks by Paul Heslop, UNDP, at "Innovation in Mine Action: Ukraine" side event, NDM, Geneva, 1 May 2024.

234 Presentation by Denise Brown, UN Resident Coordinator, and Paul Heslop, UNDP, UN NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

235 Presentation by SESU, "Innovation in Mine Action: Ukraine", Side event, NDM, Geneva, 1 May 2024.

236 Ibid.

International operators have also made use of UAVs, which HALO notes has allowed teams to focus on evidence points during the clearance process, making it more effective.²³⁷ NPA has also been using UAVs intensively for NTS, TS, and clearance, with good results in determining the extent of mine contamination. NPA suggests that piloting the application of technologies such as UAV and artificial intelligence (AI) would significantly leverage the effectiveness of survey, and that operators should consider documenting the application of such technologies in their SOPs.²³⁸ FSD intends to extend the use of UAVs to monitor all machines. First operational tests were planned for a later date for a UAV equipped with a ground-penetrating radar, intended to support NTS.²³⁹

As at June 2024, DRC had begun training staff on use of UAVs for NTS and also planned to pilot use of UAVs with magnetometers.²⁴⁰ In 2024, HALO intended to train personnel in UAV use, equip every NTS team with a dedicated UAV, and integrate remote sensing into clearance plans.²⁴¹ MAG notes that, while national authorities have eased restrictions to better facilitate the use of UAVs for NTS, the threat posed by Russian forces and their UAVs, has led to restrictions on use

being imposed by the military, posing a challenge to demining operations.²⁴² FSD has developed other new solutions to accelerate operations, including locally-produced mine rollers, with three such systems operational as at August 2024. Large-loop detectors mounted on Bobcat remote-controlled vehicles were certified by the NMAC in July 2024.²⁴³

Some highlight that, while a strong drive to study and apply new technologies is positive, there is also scope for more effective use of existing demining technologies and methods, such as manned mechanical assets, MDDs, and cancellation through NTS.²⁴⁴ Increased use of MDDs to confirm areas as free from contamination rather than to find mines in 2023, for example, has been highlighted as a positive step.²⁴⁵ More effective use of existing technologies and tools, alongside learning from other countries, will be vital to ensure that Ukraine can rapidly confirm the absence of explosive hazards or at least hugely reduce the size of areas currently perceived as potentially contaminated; a challenge that is having a significant impact on Ukraine's national economy and on world food supply.²⁴⁶

DEMINER SAFETY

Three HALO deminers were involved in an unplanned explosion of an OZM-72 mine at the Bruskiwke-1 minefield in Mykolaiv region in September 2023. One team leader suffered multiple, non-life-threatening injuries to hands and legs; a supervisor suffered light injuries; and another deminer was fatally wounded. HALO conducted a full investigation and the NMAC and police also conducted separate investigations. The findings were circulated to the donor community, State Pension and Occupational Health organisations, and in-country mine action operators.²⁴⁷

On the night of 23 April 2024, two missile strikes occurred in quick succession near DRC's office in Kharkiv. Significant damage was inflicted on the office, DRC vehicles and some demining, leading to the suspension of operations for a short period. No DRC staff members were injured in the attack.²⁴⁸

On 15 May 2024, a building 30 metres from MAG's operational base in Mykolaiv was directly hit by a Russian Iskander missile. As a result, one MAG staff member was wounded, six MAG vehicles were damaged, and significant damage was inflicted upon the MAG offices. Operations were suspended

for five days while MAG established alternative facilities to support operations.²⁴⁹

On 22 May 2023, a local administration building, located within twenty metres of the edge of a HALO clearance task (Chkalovske-1 task) in Chuhuiv, Kharkiv, was hit by two air strikes from two Russian S300 ballistic missiles. The strikes took place during stand-down, so no HALO staff were injured, although one Ukrainian soldier was killed and five others were injured and hospitalised. Through dialogue with the village mayor, HALO ascertained that the likely target was the site of the village council, where a small group of Ukrainian soldiers previously lived.²⁵⁰

On 24 July 2024, FSD's office building in Kharkiv suffered significant damage during a Russian missile attack, with the facade and ceilings on several floors destroyed. Six vehicles used by FSD medics were also damaged. No FSD staff were injured or killed.²⁵¹ It was reported that the Kharkiv Regional Prosecutor's Office believed FSD's building to be the primary target of the missile attack,²⁵² which was part of a series of attacks on Kharkiv and the surrounding region on the same day.²⁵³

237 Email from Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 29 May 2023.

238 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 21 April 2024.

239 FSD, "Our Mine Action Programme in Ukraine, April 2024", accessed 10 April 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3wsUdFS>, pp. 9 and 11; and email from Tony Connell, FSD, 20 August 2024.

240 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 12 June 2024.

241 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

242 Email from Jon Cunliffe, Ukraine, MAG, 26 April 2024.

243 FSD, "Our Mine Action Programme in Ukraine, April 2024", pp. 9 and 11; and email from Tony Connell, FSD, 20 August 2024.

244 Email from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024; and remarks by Paul Heslop, UNDP, at "Innovation in Mine Action: Ukraine" side event, NDM, Geneva, 1 May 2024.

245 Presentation by Denise Brown, UN Resident Coordinator, and Paul Heslop, UNDP, NDM, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

246 Remarks by Paul Heslop, UNDP, at "Innovation in Mine Action: Ukraine" side event, NDM, Geneva, 1 May 2024.

247 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

248 Email from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 10 May 2024.

249 Email from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 13 August 2024.

250 Emails from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 27 June 2024.

251 "Russian attacks kill three, damage Swiss NGO's office in Kharkiv, Ukraine says", *Reuters*, 25 July 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/46Cztlj>; and "Swiss NGO offices in Ukraine hit by Russian strike", *SwissInfo*, 24 July 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3WTQRg2>.

252 "Prosecutor's Office: in Kharkiv morning enemy attack hits office of Swiss Foundation for Mine Action", *UNN*, 24 July 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3yIsCbn>.

253 "Russian attacks kill three, damage Swiss NGO's office in Kharkiv, Ukraine says", *Reuters*, 25 July 2024.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2023

According to data provided by international operators, a total of 522,937m² of mined area was released in 2023, of which, 519,802m² was cleared²⁵⁴ and 3,135m² was reduced through TS.²⁵⁵ No land was cancelled through NTS by international operators. A total of 109 AP mines were found during clearance, along with 202 AV mines and 266 items of UXO.²⁵⁶ In addition, a total of 18 AP mines and 24 AV mines were reported separately by international operators for destruction by authorised national operators.²⁵⁷

In its work plan for 2024, submitted in April 2024, Ukraine confirms that no AP mined area was released through NTS in 2023 but provides differing data to international operators on TS and clearance, claiming that 4,275m² was released through TS and 184,797m² was cleared across nine "plots", with one AP mine destroyed along with 201 items of UXO (see Table 6 and 9).²⁵⁸ No details on which operators conducted land release of AP mined areas are provided.

It is not known if or how much AP mined area was released by Ukraine's national operators either by survey or clearance in 2023. In its most recent Article 7 report (covering 2023), Ukraine reports that 362km² of land was "inspected and demined" in 2023, neutralising in the process 153,000 items of EO. Ukraine also reports that NTS was undertaken over 1,125km², of which 547km² was "subject to demining" and 70km² was actually demined, though it is not stated how much of this is suspected or confirmed to contain AP mines. Ukraine says that the work was conducted "in cooperation with regional military administrations" and by units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the SSTS, the National Guard of Ukraine, and the National Police of Ukraine.²⁵⁹

A total of 26.97km² of previously unrecorded AP mined area was discovered and added to the national database by international operators in Ukraine in 2023 (see Table 7).²⁶⁰

SURVEY IN 2023

No AP mined area was reported as cancelled by international operators through NTS in Ukraine in 2023. HALO reduced 3,135m² through TS.²⁶¹ This is a considerable decrease on 2022, when 184,416m² of AP mined area was released through survey.²⁶² In its work plan for 2024, submitted in April 2024, Ukraine offers slightly differing data to international operators on TS, stating that 4,275m² was released by TS (see Table 6). No details on which operators conducted TS of AP mined areas is provided. No land is stated as released through NTS.

Operators highlight that comparing progress in land release outputs between 2022 and 2023 is not necessarily informative due to exceptional circumstances, most notably that some operators had to suspend operations for some portion of 2022 and to relocate following the Russian invasion, which prevented the resumption of operations after the winter shutdown. HALO, for example, was unable to resume operations until the end of May 2022.²⁶³ Also, in June 2023, the explosion of the hydro-power plant dam of the Kakhovska caused extensive flooding in the south of Ukraine, hindering both survey and clearance efforts.²⁶⁴ Operators also highlight that ongoing delay in the revision and issuance of relevant NMAS continues to prevent the cancellation of areas through the land release process.²⁶⁵

Table 5: Release of mined area through TS in 2023 (International operator data)²⁶⁶

Operator	District, Sub-district, locality	Oblast	Areas reduced	Area reduced (m ²)
HALO	Chuhuivskiyi, Pechenizka, Pechenihy	Kharkivska	5	3,135
Totals			5	3,135

254 Emails from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

255 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

256 Emails from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

257 Emails from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

258 Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Annex 1, Table 1.

259 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), "Implementation of demining measures in wartime", p. 26.

260 Emails from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 12 June 2024; Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

261 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

262 Emails from Roxana-Cristina Boboticu, DRC, 1 April 2023; and Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 29 May 2023.

263 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

264 Ibid.

265 Email from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024.

266 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

Table 6: Release of mined area through TS in 2023 (National authority data)²⁶⁷

Region	District	Area reduced (m ²)
Kyiv	Brovarskyi	1,098
Kyiv	Buchanskyi	3,177
Total		4,275

A total of 26.97km² of previously unrecorded AP mined area was discovered and added to the national database by international operators in Ukraine in 2023. All of this contamination has occurred since the start of the current conflict.²⁶⁸

Table 7: AP mined area newly recorded in Ukraine in 2023 (International operator data)²⁶⁹

Operator	SHAs recorded	Area (m ²)	CHAs recorded	Area (m ²)	Total hazardous areas recorded	Total area (m ²)
DRC	5	254,794	0	0	5	254,794
FSD	100	10,184,821	42	4,095,420	142	14,280,241
HALO	2	39,440	253	8,178,491	255	8,217,931
NPA	5	248,396	63	3,969,982	68	4,218,378
Totals	112	10,727,451	358	16,243,893	470	26,971,344

CLEARANCE IN 2023

A total of 519,802m² of AP mined area was cleared by three international operators in Ukraine in 2023,²⁷⁰ with the destruction of 109 AP mines, 202 AV mines, and 266 items of UXO (see Table 8).²⁷¹ A further 18 AP mines and 24 AV mines were reported separately by international operators and earmarked for spot-task removal by authorised national operators.²⁷² In its work plan for 2024, however, Ukraine provides very different data, stating only 184,797m² of AP mined area was cleared with one AP mine and 201 items of UXO destroyed.²⁷³ No details on which operators conducted clearance of AP mined areas is provided.

It is not known if or how much AP mined area was cleared by Ukraine's national operators through 2023. In its most recent Article 7 report (covering 2023), Ukraine reports that 362km² of land was "inspected and demined" in 2023, neutralising in the process 153,000 items of EO, including 984 aircraft bombs. Ukraine states that the work was carried out "in cooperation with regional military administrations" and by units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the SSTS, the National Guard of Ukraine and the National Police of Ukraine.²⁷⁴ By comparison in 2022, Ukraine reported having cleared 78.18km² of land from explosive ordnance, neutralising in the process 315,068 items of EO. Again, no disaggregated information was provided on the types of devices destroyed.²⁷⁵

Clearance by international operators in 2023 represents an increase on the 172,918m² of mined land cleared in Ukraine in 2022, all by HALO. HALO did not find any AP mines during clearance in 2022, only two AV mines and three items of UXO.²⁷⁶ HALO notes that it was able to increase clearance output in 2023 due to expanded capacity.²⁷⁷ MAG notes that, though its demining operations were due to start at the end of 2023, only some demarcation was possible, due to winter storms, which forced operations to stop.²⁷⁸

267 Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Annex 1, Table 1. The total figure for all land released by technical survey given in the table is "44275", but this appears to be a typographical error.

268 Emails from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 12 June 2024; Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

269 Emails from Sophie Breinholdt Nielsen, DRC, 12 June 2024; Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May and 13 August 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

270 Emails from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

271 Ibid.

272 Emails from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

273 Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Annex 1, Table 1.

274 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), "Implementation of demining measures in wartime", p. 26.

275 2023 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 1.

276 Email from Denys Holovetskyi, HALO, 29 May 2023.

277 Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May 2024.

278 Email from Jon Cunliffe, MAG, 26 April 2024.

Table 8: Mine clearance by international operators in 2023²⁷⁹

Operator	District, Sub-district, locality	Oblast	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
FSD	Chuhuivskiy, Chkalovska, Korobochkyne	Kharkiv	1	7,550	0	10	3
FSD	Iziumskiy, Oskilska, Topolske	Kharkiv	0	1,742	4	0	7
FSD	Iziumskiy, Kamianka	Kharkiv	0	*21	51	0	0
Sub-totals			1	9,313	55	10	10
HALO	Nizhynskiy, Talalaivska, Velyka Doroha	Chernihiv	0	4,793	0	0	250
HALO	Chuhuivskiy, Chkalovska, Chkalovske	Kharkiv	71	122,552	47	0	0
HALO	Chuhuivskiy, Chkalovska, Doslidne	Kharkiv	0	3,444	0	1	0
HALO	Chuhuivskiy, Chkalovska, Hrakove	Kharkiv	1	125	0	0	0
HALO	Chuhuivskiy, Chkalovska, Zaliznychne	Kharkiv	1	1,564	0	0	0
HALO	Chuhuivskiy, Pechenizka, Pechenihy	Kharkiv	10	53,580	4	0	0
HALO	Brovarskiy, Velykodymerska, Zalissia	Kyiv	3	27,065	0	0	0
HALO	Buchanskyy, Dmytrivska, Myla	Kyiv	5	162,105	0	0	0
HALO	Bashtanskyy, Shyroktivska, Novopetrivka	Mykolaiv	1	237	1	0	0
HALO	Bashtanskyy, Snihurivska, Bezimmenne	Mykolaiv	23	1,022	0	0	0
HALO	Bashtanskyy, Snihurivska, Snihurivka	Mykolaiv	0	711	0	1	0
HALO	Bashtanskyy, Snihurivska, Vasylivka	Mykolaiv	1	12,341	1	0	0
HALO	Bashtanskyy, Snihurivska, Yevhenivka	Mykolaiv	2	114,827	0	1	1
Sub-totals			118	504,366	53	3	251
NPA	Shevchenkiv, Liubomyrivka	Mykolaiv	0	5,403	1	189	5
Sub-totals			0	5,403	1	189	5
Totals				519,802	109	202	266

* Mechanical preparation of an area of 75,325m² undertaken by FSD with 21m² cleared.

In 2023, HALO cleared 321,393m² across 14 completed minefield tasks which proved to contain no AP mines.²⁸⁰ NPA cleared 2,153m² across five minefield tasks which proved to contain no AP mines.²⁸¹

²⁷⁹ Emails from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May and 13 August 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

²⁸⁰ Email from Michael Brown, HALO, 29 May and 29 August 2024.

²⁸¹ Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

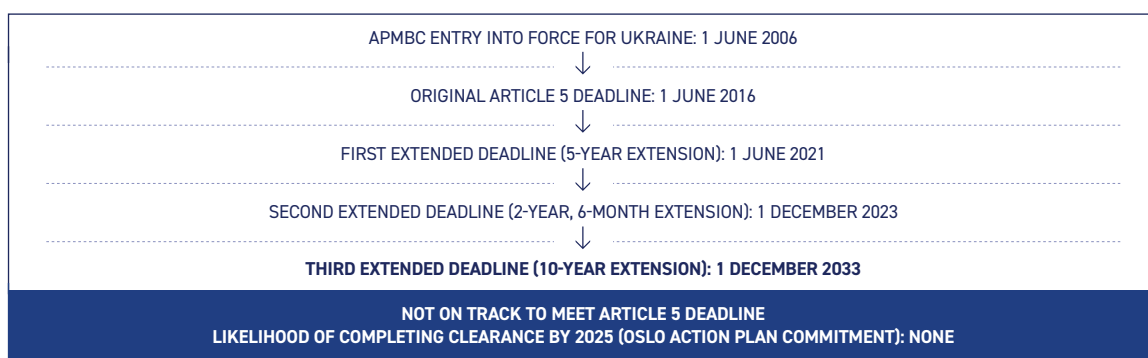
Table 9: Mine clearance in 2023 (National authority data)²⁸²

Region	District	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines neutralised	Other UXO neutralised
Kyiv	Brovarskiyi	93,898	0	0
Kyiv	Buchanskyi	46,865	0	3
Mykolaiv	Bashtanskyi	44,034	1	198
Totals		184,797	1	201

Table 10: AP mines identified during EOD spot tasks in 2023²⁸³

Operator	AP mines identified	AV mines identified
FSD	1	0
NPA	17	24
Totals	18	24

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with its latest extension), Ukraine is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 December 2033. It will not meet this deadline.

Ukraine could not meet its earlier December 2023 deadline, and in April 2023 it submitted a request for a 10-year deadline extension for consideration by 21MSP. Ukraine had been encouraged to submit a five-year extension, instead of the full ten-year extension, to take into account recommendations and best practices welcomed by the States Parties previously, in particular the identified "value of States Parties requesting only the period of time necessary to gather and assess data on landmine contamination and other relevant information with a view to develop a meaningful forward looking plan based on this information, and then submitting a second request containing plans based on a clearer understanding of the extent of the challenge and which project with greater certainty the amount of time that will be

required to complete Article 5 implementation".²⁸⁴ Following feedback from the Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Ukraine said that it did not object to reducing the requested extension to five years, through to 1 December 2028.²⁸⁵ However, on 1 September 2023, Ukraine submitted additional information to the Convention maintaining its request for a 10-year extension period. Ukraine justified the requested period of extension by the continued Russian aggression, the use of remote mining of its border territories, and the lack of understanding of the duration of hostilities.²⁸⁶ At 21MSP, Ukraine's 10-year extension request was granted and a new deadline set for 1 December 2033. In the 21MSP decision on the request, the Meeting noted "the commitment of Ukraine to present to the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the States Parties in 2028 a detailed overview of the national situation including a) the progress made since the granting of its request for extension; b) the remaining challenge, and; c) the plan to address this challenge by the 1 December 2033 deadline."²⁸⁷ This detailed overview midway through Ukraine's extension period, is in addition to the 21MSP requesting annual work

²⁸² Work Plan for Humanitarian Demining of De-occupied Territories of Ukraine for 2024, 30 April 2024, Annex 1, Table 1.

²⁸³ Emails from Tony Connell, FSD, 14 June 2024; and Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 5 May 2024.

²⁸⁴ APMBC, "Reflections on the Article 5 Extensions Process" (APLC/MSP.12/2012/4), submitted by the President of the 11th Meeting of the States Parties on behalf of the States Parties mandated to analyse requests submitted under Article 5 of the Convention, 2012.

²⁸⁵ 2023 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Additional Information, 1 September 2023, p. 1.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁸⁷ 21MSP, "Decision on the request submitted by Ukraine for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention", paragraph 3, November 2023, available at: <https://bit.ly/4dsKg0H>.

plans from Ukraine: "In granting the request, the Meeting, in noting the volatility of the present situation in Ukraine and the need for Ukraine to adjust its work plan, noted that the Convention would benefit from Ukraine submitting to the States Parties by 30 April 2024, and each subsequent year, an updated detailed work plan containing, amongst other: a) an updated list of all identified mined areas in accordance with IMAS (i.e. disaggregating by "suspected hazardous areas" and "confirmed hazardous areas" and their relative size, as well as by the type of contamination (e.g. anti-personnel mines, anti-tank mines, explosive remnants of war, etc.); b) annual projections of the areas where survey and clearance efforts will take place by which organisations and the methodologies to be employed; c) annual plan for context-specific mine risk education and reduction in affected communities and methodologies to be employed; d) how priorities have been established, and; e) a detailed budget for implementation."²⁸⁸

In 2020, prior to the 2022 conflict, Ukraine had previously stated that the fulfilment of its first extended deadline of June 2021 was 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".²⁸⁹ The 2022 conflict has resulted in huge new contamination as well as significant barriers to safe access for survey. The time

needed to clear AP mines in Ukraine can only be estimated once hostilities have ended and a national contamination survey has been completed.²⁹⁰ This said, in June 2023 Ukraine's MoE stated an intention to bring 80% of all land potentially contaminated with EO back into productive use within ten years.²⁹¹

Clearance data are not available from areas of Ukraine that were already outside of government control prior to Russia's invasion in February 2022. While Russia is not a State Party or signatory to the APMBC it also has obligations under international human rights law to clear AP 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.

Table 11: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2023	0.52
2022	0.17
2021	1.26
2020	0.83
2019	0.7
Total	3.48

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Ukraine reports that it is making provisions for a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas including regional military administrations, units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the SSTS, the National Guard, and the National Police.²⁹² The need for detailed planning for such residual risk is years if not decades away.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, paragraph 8.

²⁸⁹ 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 5.

²⁹⁰ Online presentation by Hannah Rose Holloway, DRC, CCM Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 16 May 2022.

²⁹¹ Ministry of Economy, "Our goal is to bring 80% of potentially contaminated land back into use in ten years: Yuliia Svyrydenko at the London conference", 22 June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/4dMpGu3>.

²⁹² Committee on Article 5 Implementation, "Preliminary Observations", Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024, p. 3.