

## KEY DATA

**ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: UNKNOWN, BUT NOT BELIEVED TO BE HEAVY**

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2022

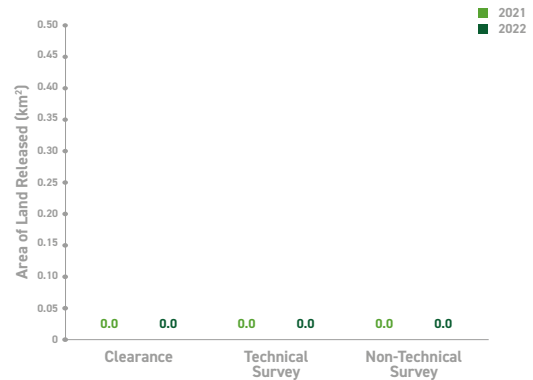
**0** km<sup>2</sup>

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2022

**9**

(BASED ON INGO AND QTMAC DATA, INCLUDING 7 DESTROYED DURING CALL-OUTS)

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2022, the Vietnam National Mine Action Centre (VNMAC) continued its efforts to strengthen coordination of humanitarian mine action in Vietnam. All data sets have now been standardised and combined into one consolidated Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. In another positive development, in April 2022, the Mine Action Working Group (MAWG) established sub-task forces focused on capacity development, gender, and the environment, among others. VNMAC's main focus remains on survey and clearance of explosive ordnance contamination (mainly explosive remnants of war, ERW), and not on releasing mined areas, which are prevalent along Vietnam's borders.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Vietnam should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Vietnam should clear anti-personnel (AP) mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, consonant with its obligations under international human rights law.
- Vietnam should publish a detailed assessment of remaining mined areas.
- The revision of National Mine Action Standards (TCVNs), in line with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), should be completed as soon as possible and should address action to tackle AP mine contamination, as distinct from battle area clearance (BAC).
- Items of explosive ordnance discovered and destroyed, should be clearly and accurately recorded, including distinguishing AP mines from anti-vehicle (AV) mines.

## DEMINING CAPACITY

### MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Vietnam National Mine Action Centre (VNMAC)
- Provincial mine action centres and authorities (such as the Quang Tri Mine Action Centre (QTMAC), Quang Binh database and coordination unit (DBCUC), and Thua Thien Hue database unit (DBU), among others)

### NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Ministry of Defence

### INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- PeaceTrees Vietnam (PTVN)

### OTHER ACTORS

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (Golden West)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

## UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The full extent of mined area in Vietnam is unknown. A Landmine Impact Survey published in 2018 reported the presence of AP mines in 26 of 63 cities and provinces but gave no further details.<sup>1</sup> According to VNMAC, the total area still contaminated with bombs, mines, and explosive ordnance in Vietnam was 56,000km<sup>2</sup>, which accounts for approximately 17% of Vietnam's land surface. Contamination is mainly concentrated in central provinces including Quang Tri, Quang Binh, Ha Tinh, Nghe An, and Quang Ngai.<sup>2</sup> Mine contamination, however, only makes up a small proportion of the total explosive ordnance contamination, with cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other ERW making up the vast majority.

Most mines were left by conflicts in the 1970s with neighbouring Cambodia and China, and affect areas close to its borders with those countries.<sup>3</sup> Clearance had been reported by Vietnam along its northern border with China in the 1990s and since 2004, but mined areas further inland are believed to persist.<sup>4</sup> It was reported in 2013 by Vietnam's Military Engineering Command that clearance had been completed in areas bordering Cambodia.<sup>5</sup> Many ports and river deltas were extensively mined during the armed conflict with the United States and were not completely cleared when it ended. A number of sea mines have been found on the coast. Some mines have also been found around former US military installations.<sup>6</sup>

### OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Vietnam has one of the world's most extensive remaining contamination from CMR and other ERW (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2023* report for Vietnam for further information).

## NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

VNMAC was established in 2014 by Prime Ministerial decree to strengthen the direction of mine action and provide a focal point for mine action operations.<sup>7</sup> VNMAC is under the direct direction of the Prime Minister and the direct management of the Ministry of National Defence (MoD).<sup>8</sup>

Vietnam's mine action programme continues to undergo significant restructuring and strengthening, following the Decree on the Management and Implementation of Mine Action Activities (Decree No. 18), and entered into effect on 20 March 2019, and subsequent approval of a guiding Circular (Circular No. 195) which came into effect in February 2020.<sup>9</sup>

1 VNMAC, "Report on Explosive Remnants of War Contamination in Vietnam, Based on the Explosive Remnants of War Contamination Survey and Mapping – Phase 1", provided by Vietnam National Mine Action Centre (VNMAC) 19 April 2018, p. 38.

2 Email from VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

3 Interview with Sr. Col. Phan Duc Tuan, Deputy Commander, Military Engineering Command, People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), in Geneva, 30 June 2011.

4 Information provided by Sr. Col. Phan Duc Tuan, PAVN, in email from Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAF), Hanoi, 24 September 2012; and in interview in Geneva, 30 June 2011.

5 Interview with Sr. Col. Nguyen Thanh Ban, Head of Bomb and Mine Department, Engineering Command, Hanoi, 18 June 2013.

6 Landmine Action, *Explosive Remnants of War and Mines Other than Anti-personnel Mines*, London, March 2005, p. 181.

7 Prime Ministerial Decree (No. 738 of 2013) on the management and implementation of mine action activities, Hanoi.

8 STA Capacity Development Project (NPA), 'Vietnamese legal framework in mine action', January 2023.

9 Emails from Jan Erik Støa, Country Director, NPA, 6 April 2020; and Tim Horner, Senior Technical Advisor, NPA, on behalf of Mr Phuc, VNMAC, 6 April 2021.

Decree 18 is currently the highest-level legal document governing mine action activities in Vietnam and is applicable to all domestic and foreign organisations operating in mine action in Vietnam.<sup>10</sup> Circular 195 provides detailed guidance on the implementation of the provisions of the Decree. Under Decree 18, the MoD continues to be the lead authority for the national mine action programme, in coordination with other relevant ministries and sectors;<sup>11</sup> while VNNMAC will, under the direction of the Prime Minister and management of the MoD, “monitor, coordinate and implement mine action tasks”.<sup>12</sup> In 2022, VNNMAC took a seat on the global IMAS Review Board for the first time.<sup>13</sup>

The Decree and the guiding Circular has, since 2020, given VNNMAC a clear mandate, roles, and responsibilities as the national coordinating entity for mine action operations, and this has further established the legal basis for revision and updating of the national regulations (QCVNs) and standards (TCVNs) (please see section below, Land Release System, for more information on the current status of the QCVNs and TCVNs) and for the adoption of regulations on information management.

Vietnam is preparing to draft an Ordinance for mine action in Vietnam,<sup>14</sup> following the direction of the Prime Minister at the high-level meeting on mine action in February 2022. The planned Ordinance, which is of greater regulatory status than Decree 18,<sup>15</sup> will be issued by the Standing Committee of the National Assembly of Vietnam. It is expected to be approved in 2024 and will be applicable to all domestic and foreign organisations and individuals involved in explosive ordnance clearance in Vietnam.<sup>16</sup>

VNNMAC is entirely nationally funded, and implementation of the National Mine Action Programme (Program 504) is funded by both state and international funding.<sup>17</sup> According to VNNMAC, the government has provided support for mine action, including i) establishment of coordinating agencies and associations to support all levels of mine action activities; ii) completion of a legal system, mechanism and policies, which create a legal basis for post-war demining activities (the MoD cooperates with other ministries to develop Circulars guiding QCVNs, TCVNs, and standard operating procedure (SOP) on quality management (QM), survey, and clearance and related issues); iii) facilitation of activities to develop the management and administration

capacity, and the survey and clearance capacity, of demining organisations; iv) formation of a national QM system for survey and clearance in accordance international standards; and v) formation of an information management system.<sup>18</sup>

VNNMAC’s involvement in coordination meetings, such as the Mine Action Working Group (MAWG, previously named the Landmine Working Group (LWG)), has increased in recent years. The MAWG, which is co-chaired by Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),<sup>19</sup> is a platform for all mine action stakeholders in Vietnam to meet quarterly to share and discuss on-going issues and plan for the next quarter.<sup>20</sup> In April 2022, MAWG members established sub-task forces, focused on different areas including capacity development, gender, the environment, victim assistance, and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE).<sup>21</sup> VNNMAC participates in all sub-task force and MAWG meetings.<sup>22</sup> The MAWG met three times in 2022: two full meetings in April and October, and an additional meeting of sub-task force chairs. In 2023, the MAWG was focusing on updating the terms of reference (ToR) for the MAWG; enhancing the functionality of the sub-task forces; and supporting development of the mine action ordinance and the TCVNs.<sup>23</sup>

International non-governmental organisations (INGOs) reported good cooperation and coordination with VNNMAC, with VNNMAC continuing to demonstrate a willingness to discuss ideas and challenges with international operators.<sup>24</sup> However, VNNMAC will always have to operate within the confines of the MoD.<sup>25</sup> There is a well-established process for granting work permits and visas to international mine action staff and for procurement of demining equipment, although the importation of equipment can be lengthy, depending on the nature of the items.<sup>26</sup>

MAG, Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA), PeaceTrees Vietnam (PTVN), the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (Golden West), and UNDP all provide capacity development support in Vietnam. Capacity development partners are also supporting VNNMAC to establish regional mine action structures. (See Mine Action Review’s *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2023* report on Vietnam for more details).

10 Email from Sarah Goring, Country Director, MAG, 5 April 2023.

11 Decree on Implementation and Management of Mine Action, No.18/2019/ND-CP, 1 February 2019.

12 Draft Decree on the management and implementation of mine action activities, Hanoi, April 2018.

13 Email from NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023.

14 Interview with Mr Hop, Permanent Deputy Director General, VNNMAC, Geneva, 22 June 2023.

15 Ibid.

16 STA Capacity Development Project (NPA), ‘Vietnamese legal framework in mine action’, January 2023.

17 Email from Tim Horner, VNNMAC, on behalf of Mr Phuc, VNNMAC, 6 April 2021.

18 Ibid.

19 Email from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023.

20 Email from VNNMAC, 14 July 2023.

21 Email from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023.

22 Email from Phạm Hoàng Hà, Country Director, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

23 Email from NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023.

24 Emails from NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023; and Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

25 Emails from Kimberley McCosker, Project Manager, NPA, 21 April 2022.

26 Email from Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020.

## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

---

Currently VNMAC does not have a TCVN or policy on environmental management. In 2022, however, in a positive development, a sub-task force on the environment was created under the MAWG.<sup>27</sup> VNMAC is considering how and when to incorporate environmental management into the TCVNs.

For more details on measures being taken by MAG, NPA, and PTVN in Vietnam, to take the environment into consideration during the planning and tasking process for survey and clearance of explosive ordnance, see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2023* report on Vietnam.

---

## GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In 2013, Vietnam amended Article 26 of the Constitution so that "male and female citizens are equal in all aspects" and prohibit gender discrimination. State policy is to guarantee equal gender rights and opportunities. In terms of national implementation, women participate more in victim assistance and EORE, while national survey/clearance and information management are still male-dominated and managed by the Vietnam Army.<sup>28</sup> A MAWG sub-task force on gender was established in 2022 and in December of that year MAG co-hosted a workshop in Hanoi on gender mainstreaming with UNDP.<sup>29</sup>

MAG, NPA, and PTVN all have policies and strategies on gender, diversity and inclusion to ensure the equal participation, and their respective operations data are disaggregated by sex and age. For more details on measures being taken by MAG, NPA, and PTVN to mainstream gender and diversity in their respective mine action programmes in Vietnam, see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2023* report on Vietnam.

In 2023, VNMAC requested assistance from MAG and the VNMAC Senior Technical Advisor in the development of a gender policy.<sup>30</sup>

---

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Information management is a top priority for VNMAC,<sup>31</sup> and in 2022 VNMAC put significant efforts into improving information management and data collection capacity nationwide. Decree 18 and Guiding Circular 195 make VNMAC responsible for the national information management system and give it a clear mandate and legal authority. All provinces and international organisations nationwide are now required to send operational reports to VNMAC.<sup>32</sup>

With support from NPA capacity development personnel, VNMAC developed regulations for a national Information Management System. The regulations were subsequently issued by VNMAC on 25 July 2022, following a consultative review process. The regulations establish a national information management system for standardised reporting of all mine action data from across Vietnam's provinces into the national IMSMA database held by VNMAC. The regulations also include the responsibilities of each stakeholder, including the collection, reporting, and provision of data on mines and ERW.

VNMAC now has authority over mine action data, which it is beginning to exercise by requiring all Provincial Military Commands or provincial mine action authorities (if any) to collect and report data to the VNMAC Information Management Unit (IMU) on a quarterly basis,<sup>33</sup> which is a legal requirement of the IM regulations.<sup>34</sup> The adoption of the legal framework also paves the way for provincial authorities to be recognised as having a key role in the reporting system between operators and VNMAC.<sup>35</sup>

Consolidation of data from five different IMSMA databases into one national IMSMA database was finished in December 2022. The consolidated IMSMA system is now operational and well-managed in VNMAC. VNMAC said that it was working to collect and consolidate previous data into the national database.<sup>36</sup> The national database process continues to be supported by NPA's capacity development project, funded by the US State Department Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA).

---

27 Email from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023.

28 Email from the GICHD, 5 May 2023.

29 Emails from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April and 19 May 2023.

30 Email from Sean Moorhouse, Senior Technical Advisor to VNMAC, NPA, 10 August 2023.

31 Interview with Mr Hop, VNMAC, Geneva, 22 June 2023.

32 Email from VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

33 Emails from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 13 May 2021; and VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

34 Email from Tim Horner, NPA, 7 September 2022.

35 Email from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 13 May 2021.

36 Email from VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

In recent years significant effort has been made to collect and migrate historic data (including paper records from Provincial Military Commands and Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) data), and all known data is now part of the new consolidated national IMSMA database.<sup>37</sup> Representatives from each of Vietnam's 63 provinces and 7 regions, including provincial and regional military commands, have now been trained on how to use the new national information management system, and have been given hardware containing IMSMA with all provincial data. This enables each of the provinces to fulfil their obligation to report mine action data into the national database.<sup>38</sup>

VNMAC personnel are now capable of conducting IM training without the assistance of US-funded advisors – a significant indicator of VNMAC's desire to have ownership over the national information management system and related trainings, and of their continually increasing capacity for information management.<sup>39</sup> All INGOs/operators can access the provincial IMSMA database through the approval of the provincial authorities where they work, or they can make a request to VNMAC for the information.<sup>40</sup>

VNMAC has now standardised the IMSMA reporting forms and all operators use the same forms, having developed the templates through a series of workshops, including consultation with international and national experts. The

templates were also piloted by experienced provincial authorities such as the Quang Tri Mine Action Centre (QTMAC) and the Hue database unit (DBU).<sup>41</sup> The standardised forms help enable VNMAC to routinely collect and input new mine action information into the centrally-owned standardised database.<sup>42</sup> Operators report to the database units in the province where they operate, and the provincial database units then report to VNMAC.<sup>43</sup> In addition, operators also send annual reports to VNMAC directly, as requested by VNMAC.<sup>44</sup> As at May 2023, 12 of the 63 provinces had reported mine action data to VNMAC – a number which VNMAC expects to rise, as it continues to provide direction for reporting to the remaining provinces.<sup>45</sup>

A Circular adopted in October 2021, relating to the QM procedure in survey and clearance, includes articles regulating the information QM process.<sup>46</sup> The provinces are responsible for quality assurance (QA) of data, typically by the respective DBU or Provincial Military Commands. VNMAC quality checks data for consistency and completeness. VNMAC is also responsible for the QA of the data received by the commercial operators.<sup>47</sup>

For details on information management and reporting at the provincial level, see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2023* report on Vietnam.

## PLANNING AND TASKING

Decision on Programme 504, approved by the Prime Minister in April 2010, set out a National Mine Action Plan for 2010–25. The plan, which covers mines, CMR, and other ERW, aimed to “mobilize domestic and international resources in making efforts to minimize and finally create impact-free environment for social economic development.” The programme foresees completing an impact survey to map contamination nationwide, developing national standards, and establishing a database management centre.<sup>48</sup> It called for clearance of 8,000km<sup>2</sup> of ERW between 2016 and 2025.<sup>49</sup> Vietnam does not yet have a strategy specifically targeting mines and plans to address all explosive ordnance comprehensively. VNMAC would benefit from elaborating a national mine action strategy and annual work plans for mines, with clear targets for survey and clearance.

During the national conference to review the achievement of Programme 504 in February 2022 in Hanoi, VNMAC shared the 10-year report on the progress and achievements of Vietnam on mine action (i.e. survey, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), clearance, risk education and victim assistance).<sup>50</sup> VNMAC also shared the five-year National Mine Action Plan (2021–25), which has been developed to implement the final period of the current National Mine Action plan. The plan, which was elaborated by the government without input from INGOs or other members of the then LWG (now the MAWG), also seeks to develop and implement TS of “zoning areas” confirmed as contaminated by mines and ERW, as the basis for strategic planning.<sup>51</sup>

37 Emails from NPA Vietnam, NPA, 16 June 2023; and VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

38 Emails from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 21 April 2022; Tim Horner, NPA, 7 September 2022; and NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023.

39 Email from NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023.

40 Ibid.

41 Email from VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

42 Emails from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023; NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023; and Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

43 Email from Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

44 Email from NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023.

45 Interview with Mr Hop, VNMAC, Geneva, 22 June 2023.

46 Email from VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

47 Email from NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023.

48 STA Capacity Development Project (NPA), “Vietnamese legal framework in mine action”, January 2023.

49 Prime Minister, “Decision on Approval of the National Mine Action Plan Period 2010–2025”, Hanoi, 21 April 2010.

50 Emails from Valentina Stivanello, Country Director, MAG, 29 April 2022; and Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 9 May 2022.

51 Emails from Tim Horner on behalf of Mr Phuc, VNMAC, 6 April 2021; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 29 April and 20 June 2022; and Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 22 June 2022.

In June 2022, VNMAC said the five-year plan was still undergoing Prime Ministerial review regarding two final issues concerning the budget and capacity for implementation of the plan.<sup>52</sup> On 22 June 2023, the National Action Plan in Mine Action 2023–25 (now a three-year plan), submitted by the MoD, was approved by the Prime Minister.<sup>53</sup> VNMAC had an annual work plan for 2022<sup>54</sup> and for 2023,<sup>55</sup> but neither report had been shared externally at the time of writing.<sup>56</sup>

VNMAC has said that its mission for the period 2021–25 includes objectives to complete the organisational structure and legal framework and policies; ensure effective mine action management; foster international cooperation to

mobilise necessary resources; complete the information management system for mine action nationwide; and implement survey and clearance activities over 5,000km<sup>2</sup>, with priority in heavily contaminated areas.<sup>57</sup>

There is currently no national prioritisation system in place for clearance of CMR, other ERW, and mines, and at present there is insufficient data in the national IMSMA database to prioritise on a task-by-task basis. Prioritisation at the task or lower administrative levels is currently the responsibility of provinces.<sup>58</sup> For details on explosive ordnance prioritisation at the provincial level, see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2023* report on Vietnam.

---

## LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

### STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Vietnam has both National Technical Regulations (QCVNs), which are mandatory and similar in content to SOPs, and National Mine Action Standards (TCVNs), which, despite being standards, are considered optional by VNMAC.<sup>59</sup>

VNMAC made significant progress in recent years to review and update the QCVNs to help bring them into line with IMAS.<sup>60</sup> The former QCVNs and existing TCVNs were drafted more with the MoD in mind, used terminology inconsistently, and chapters contradicted themselves.<sup>61</sup> INGOs welcomed the inclusiveness of the revision process,<sup>62</sup> which involved the establishment of four working groups, co-chaired by VNMAC, and extensive consultation with operators and international organisations, including the GICHD.<sup>63</sup>

A guiding Circular (No. 59)<sup>64</sup> was issued by the MoD on 30 August 2022 to promulgate the QCVNs, which include general provisions, technical regulations, regulations on

safety and on management, responsibilities of organisations and individuals, and organisation and implementation.<sup>65</sup> The revised QCVNs were approved in September 2022,<sup>66</sup> and rolled out across operators. VNMAC announced in a MAWG meeting that training would be given on the new QCVNs, but as at April 2023 this had yet to take place.<sup>67</sup> In Quang Tri, QTMAC coordinated among operators to provide a consolidated report to VNMAC on any discrepancies between the QCVNs and operator SOPs.<sup>68</sup>

Revision of the TCVNs was still ongoing at time of writing. As at August 2023, fourteen TCVNs had been completed and were awaiting approval and the first draft of the TCVN on risk management had been produced, which the GICHD was helping VNMAC to finalise.<sup>69</sup> VNMAC expected the review of the TCVNs to be completed in the last quarter of 2023.<sup>70</sup> A further TCVN on environmental protection in mine action is also expected to be developed.<sup>71</sup>

---

52 Interview with Mr Phuc, VNMAC, Geneva, 23 June 2022.

53 Email from NPA Vietnam, 7 July 2023.

54 Email from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 21 April 2022.

55 Email from VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

56 Email from NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023.

57 Email from Doan Thi Hong Hai, Capacity Development Project Officer, NPA, on behalf of Mr Phuc, VNMAC, 3 June 2022.

58 Email from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 21 April 2022.

59 Email from Resad Junuzagic, NPA, 6 May 2019.

60 Emails from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 8 April 2021; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 31 March 2021.

61 Emails from Resad Junuzagic, NPA, 6 May 2019; Jan Erik Støa, NPA, 6 April 2020; and Helene Kuperman, MAG, 10 April 2020.

62 Email from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 8 April 2021.

63 Emails from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 8 April 2021 and 21 April 2022; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 29 April 2022; GICHD, 24 April 2022; and Tim Horner on behalf of Mr Phuc, VNMAC, 6 April 2021.

64 Circular No. 59/2022 on promulgation of the National Technical Regulations (QCVN) in mine action.

65 STA Capacity Development Project (NPA), "Vietnamese legal framework in mine action", January 2023.

66 Email from Tim Horner, NPA, 7 September 2022.

67 Email from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023.

68 Ibid.

69 Interview with Mr Hop, VNMAC, Geneva, 22 June 2023; and email from Sean Moorhouse, NPA, 5 July 2023.

70 Email from VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

71 Emails from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023; NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023; and Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

A corresponding Circular (Circular 121) related to the revised non-technical survey (NTS), technical survey (TS), and clearance procedures was issued in September 2021, in addition to Circular 122 on guidelines for determining the rate per shift of demining machines and equipment and Circular 122 on guidelines for determining estimated norm and managing costs in the explosive ordnance clearance estimates.<sup>72</sup>

Circular 195 covers the whole QM system. In addition, QTMAC developed a field-orientated QM SOP which was approved by the Provincial Authority in July 2022, for use in Quang Tri province.<sup>73</sup> A corresponding Circular relating to the QM procedure in survey and clearance, was adopted in October 2021.<sup>74</sup>

The QCVNs and TCVNs cover AP mine operations under the heading mines/ERW clearance, but both documents lack clarity with respect to addressing mined areas, as distinct from battle areas.

## OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Most clearance in Vietnam is conducted by the Army Engineering Corps and military-owned commercial companies. Outside the central provinces, the current strength and deployment of military-related demining is unknown.

Vietnamese officials have previously reported that it had 250 mine clearance and BAC teams nationally. Vietnam reportedly has more than 70 military-owned companies undertaking clearance related to infrastructure and commercial and development projects.<sup>75</sup>

International operators active in 2022 included: MAG, working in Quang Binh and Quang Tri provinces; NPA, working in Quang Binh, Quang Tri, and Thua Thien Hue provinces, and most recently also in Kon Tum province since late 2022; and PTVN, who have been working in Quang Tri province since 1995 and now also in Quang Binh.<sup>76</sup>

INGO clearance operators are not currently operating in the areas close to Vietnam's borders, where many of the mined areas are located. Survey and clearance by the INGO operators are currently addressing contamination from CMR and other ERW, and not AP mines. For further details on survey and clearance capacity of humanitarian operators, see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2023* report on Vietnam.

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

### LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2022

No survey or clearance of mined areas was conducted by INGOs in 2022. However, two AP mines were discovered by INGOs during CMR clearance and a further seven were destroyed during EOD spot tasks following call-outs (six by NGOs and one by the provincial military). With the exception of the single mine reported by QTMAC as having been destroyed by the military in Quang Tri province in 2022, no other data has been made available on survey or clearance by the Army Engineering Corps or military-owned commercial companies. No survey or clearance was conducted under the KV-MAP project, for which operations ended in 2021 and the next phase of the project had yet to begin.

### SURVEY IN 2022

MAG, NPA, and PTVN did not survey any mined area in 2022.<sup>77</sup>

### CLEARANCE IN 2022

MAG, NPA, and PTVN did not clear any mined area in 2022, but a small number of mines (eight in total) were discovered by INGOs during CMR clearance and EOD spot tasks in 2022.<sup>78</sup> In addition, one M14 mine was found and destroyed by the provincial military during a spot task in Quang Tri province.<sup>79</sup> This is a decrease compared to the equivalent 20 AP mines destroyed by INGOs in 2021 (in addition to a further 101 landmines reported by QTMAC as having been destroyed by Provincial Military Commands in 2021, during EOD spot-tasks in Quang Tri province).

72 "Vietnamese legal framework in mine action", January 2023; and email from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023.

73 Emails from Kimberley McCosker, NPA, 8 April 2021; and Tim Horner, NPA, 7 September 2022.

74 "Vietnamese legal framework in mine action, January 2023; and emails from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023; and VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

75 Interview with Sr. Col. Nguyen Thanh Ban, Engineering Command, Hanoi, 18 June 2013; email from Executive Office of the National Steering Committee, 6 August 2012; and interviews with mine action stakeholders, Hanoi, 16-20 April 2018; and email from Lee Moroney, Golden West Humanitarian Foundation, 22 June 2019.

76 Emails from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023; NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023; and Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

77 Emails from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023; NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023; and Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

78 Emails from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023; and Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

79 Email from Vu Dinh Ngoc, Vice Director, QTMAC, 21 August 2023.

MAG found an M16 AP mine in Dong Son village, Hai Son commune, Hai Lang district, Quang Tri province, during BAC activities in August 2022. Discovery of the AP mine resulted in the suspension of the clearance site. A Community Liaison Team was deployed to reconfirm information with the local community regarding the former military base and mined area, and MAG returned the confirmed hazardous area (CHA) back to QTMAC.<sup>80</sup>

PTVN destroyed one AP mine during BAC and 6 AP mines during EOD spot tasks in 2022. The AP mine discovered during BAC was found during clearance of a CHA in Quang Binh province. Upon discovery of the mine, PTVN conducted risk evaluation to determine whether or not there was any further evidence of mines or of a minefield before continuing clearance.<sup>81</sup> As mentioned, PTVN destroyed a further 6 AP mines during EOD spot tasks in Quang Tri province.<sup>82</sup> As a result of PTVN continuing to discover mines during its operations, it conducted technical training on mine clearance

in 2022 and added operating procedures, including on the risk from mines found during BAC.<sup>83</sup>

NPA Vietnam did not encounter any AP mines during its operations in Vietnam in 2022.<sup>84</sup>

According to VNMAC, INGO's destroyed a total of 28 bombs, 15,625 submunitions, and 26,060 landmines and other unexploded ordnance (UXO) were destroyed in 2022. The number of landmines was not disaggregated from items of UXO.<sup>85</sup>

No data has been made available on clearance by the Army Engineering Corps or military-owned commercial companies. As at July 2023, VNMAC was still consolidating 2022 clearance data reported by the provinces, into the national database,<sup>86</sup> which is presumed to include clearance by commercial operators and the military.<sup>87</sup>

## PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Vietnam has not set a deadline for completion of anti-personnel mine clearance. In its national mine action plan for 2010 to 2025 it called for the clearance of 8,000km<sup>2</sup> of explosive ordnance from 2016 to 2025<sup>88</sup> but did not specify how much of this, if any, should be mined area.

## PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

The GICHD has been supporting VNMAC, NPA, and UNDP in the review of the current legislative and normative framework, with a focus on residual risk management. As a preparatory step, the GICHD and the VNMAC, with the support of UNDP and NPA, have worked on an assessment of the current residual risk management capacity and the required or desired capacities that VNMAC needs to manage residual contamination.<sup>89</sup> The GICHD and VNMAC co-organised a regional workshop on risk management and liability in land release and the management of residual contamination for Southeast Asia, in Hanoi from 22 to 26 May 2023.<sup>90</sup>

---

80 Email from Sarah Goring, MAG, 5 April 2023.

81 Email from Vu Dinh Ngoc, QTMAC, 21 August 2023.

82 Emails from Vu Dinh Ngoc, QTMAC, 21 and 31 August 2023.

83 Email from Phạm Hoàng Hà, PTVN, 3 May 2023.

84 Email from NPA Vietnam, 16 June 2023.

85 Email from VNMAC, 14 July 2023.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

88 Prime Minister, "Decision on Approval of the National Mine Action Plan Period 2010–2025", Hanoi, 21 April 2010.

89 Email from the GICHD, 24 April 2022.

90 Email from Sean Moorhouse, NPA, 5 July 2023.