

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2025
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM

NATIONAL AUTHORITY ESTIMATE

16.16 km²

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2023

1.91 km²

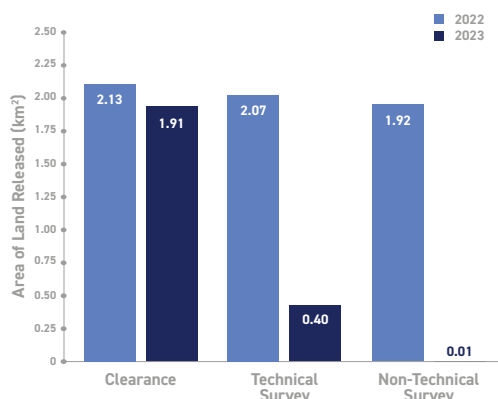
(NATIONAL AUTHORITY DATA)

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2023

37,360

(INCLUDING 30 DESTROYED
IN SPOT TASKS)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

All mined areas remaining in Zimbabwe are now confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs). The challenge for Zimbabwe in meeting its Article 5 deadline under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) remains securing the funding needed for clearance amid competing and significant social and economic challenges. Use of newer metal detectors has continued to increase demining efficiency in Zimbabwe in 2023, but the programme fell behind its annual land release target for the first time since 2018. In April 2024, Zimbabwe stated its intention to seek a two-year extension to its Article 5 deadline – to the end of 2027.

FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW

Zimbabwe has had a consistently strong demining programme over the last five years, with total clearance of 11.65km². But scope for cancellation and reduction of mined area is now low as the remaining polygons, especially in the cordon sanitaire minefields, are narrow. This means that clearance of most of the remaining mined area will be needed. Despite continued resource mobilisation efforts, Zimbabwe remains short of the funds needed to meet its current Article 5 deadline. Efforts by the Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC) and operators have seen the proportions of women working in mine action at all levels improving overall over the last five years, particularly since 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Zimbabwe should continue to prioritise efforts to secure additional national and international funding.
- Zimbabwe should elaborate a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan for the mine action programme.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	8	8	Zimbabwe has a good understanding of remaining mine contamination, all of which is in CHAs. ZIMAC believes that most of the 16km ² of mined area will need to be released by clearance – hard to reconcile with its aim of completing clearance in three years.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	8	The mine action programme is managed effectively by ZIMAC, with good consultation and collaboration with partners. There is a high degree of national ownership, with the government continuing to provide US\$500,000 annually to the mine action programme despite ongoing financial hardship in the country. An updated National Strategy for 2018–2025 was launched in January 2023 along with a Communication and Resource Mobilisation Strategy.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	7	6	ZIMAC does not have a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan and did not develop a policy by the end of 2022 as was its stated intention. However, the importance of gender is acknowledged in the National Mine Action Strategy and integrated into annual work plans. Survey and community liaison teams are reportedly inclusive and gender-balanced both in their make-up and during community consultations. Operators report varying but generally increasing proportions of women employed. The Zimbabwean Armed Forces' National Mine Clearance Unit (NMCU) has no women in operational roles.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION* (10% of overall score)	7	Not Scored	ZIMAC has stated that Zimbabwe has a national mine action standard (NMAS) on environmental management and a policy on environmental management, and states that environmental assessments are undertaken prior to operations commencing. The use of highly destructive mechanical clearance methods is not permitted in areas with very large trees. All operators take measures to reduce the environmental impact of demining operations, such as the use of electric vegetation trimmers and solar power in field camps. They vary in the degree to which they undertake environmental assessments or have environmental policies and management systems in place.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	8	8	ZIMAC continued to improve its information management in 2023, transitioning from Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation to IMSMA Core, with the migration expecting to be completed in 2024. Zimbabwe submits detailed Article 7 reports annually. Regular cross-checking of data with operators continues. Data collection forms are consistent and enable efficient collection of necessary data.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	8	8	Zimbabwe's National Mine Action Strategy for 2018–25 was re-launched in January 2023 following delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, Zimbabwe fell behind its cumulative land release target for 2018–25, citing insufficient funds and capacity, among other causes. In its latest Article 7 report, ZIMAC presented revised annual land release targets to 2025, identifying the resources, time, and funding needed to complete clearance. In April 2024, Zimbabwe said it would need a two-year extension to its Article 5 deadline, through to the end of 2027.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM** (10% of overall score)	9	8	Zimbabwe maintained approximately the same overall capacity across operators in 2023 compared to 2022, with an increased number of mechanical assets. These, alongside use of mine detection dogs (MDDs) and the accreditation of a new detector, has increased land release efficiency in recent years, including improved efficiency of missed-mine drills when gaps in the mine pattern are found. Operators continue to destroy tens of thousands of anti-personnel mines annually.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	8	9	Zimbabwe released 2.32km ² of mined area in 2023, mostly from clearance. But clearance output, at 1.91km ² , was a drop from than the 2.13km ² achieved in 2022. If Zimbabwe's request for a planned two-year extension is granted in 2025, it will still need to secure additional funding and increase capacity. Completion by the end of 2027 would be a considerable achievement for one of the world's most heavily mined countries in a particularly challenging political and economic context.
Average Score	7.9	8.0	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

* 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.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- National Mine Action Authority of Zimbabwe (NMAAZ)
- Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Zimbabwean Armed Forces' National Mine Clearance Unit (NMCU)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- APOPO
- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at the end of 2023 Zimbabwe reported a total of just over 16.1km² of confirmed mined area remaining across 89 hazardous areas (see Table 1)¹. This is down from the 18.3km² a year earlier.² Four of Zimbabwe's ten provinces are contaminated with anti-personnel (AP) mines. Five of the remaining minefields run along the border with Mozambique, covering four provinces, while one is located inland in Matabeleland North province.³

According to the ZIMAC, the baseline of contamination is complete following the completion of significant re-survey in 2016.⁴ The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian

Demining (GICHD) believes that Zimbabwe's understanding of remaining contamination is up to date and accurate.⁵ Nevertheless, ZIMAC added 166,815m² to the national database in 2023 as a result of expansion of the perimeter of an existing confirmed hazardous area (CHA).⁶ HALO notes that targeted survey may yet highlight some additional areas to be cleared.⁷ Despite this, while all contaminated areas remaining in Zimbabwe are CHAs, in general they are widely drawn. Indeed, some 13.3km² has been released through survey between 2021 and the end of 2023, compared to 6.48km² through clearance.⁸

Table 1: AP mined area (at end 2023)⁹

Province	CHAs	Area (m ²)
Manicaland	12	2,637,154
Masvingo	13	1,203,434
Mashonaland East	32	9,034,524
Matabeleland North	7	880,475
Mashonaland Central	25	2,408,710
Totals	89	16,164,297

Zimbabwe's mine contamination, the overwhelming majority of which is of AP mines, originates from the laying of minefields in the late 1970s during a decolonisation war. At the time of its independence in 1980, Zimbabwe was left with seven major mined areas along its borders with Mozambique and Zambia, and one inland minefield laid by the Rhodesian Army.¹⁰ Initially, AP mines were laid in very dense belts (on average 2,500 mines per kilometre of frontage)

to form a so-called "cordon sanitaire", with up to 5,500 mines per kilometre in some places.¹¹ Over time, this cordon sanitaire was breached or subject to erosion. In response, in many sections, a second belt of "ploughshare" directional fragmentation mines protected by AP mines was laid behind the cordon sanitaire. Few areas contain anti-vehicle (AV) mines and it is thought that the number of such mines remaining is low.¹²

1 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 6.

2 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), pp. 6–7.

3 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 3.

4 Email from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.

5 Email from Åsa Massleberg, Programme Manager and Senior Advisor, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), 16 May 2023.

6 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

7 Email from Oliver Gerard-Pearse, Programme Manager, HALO, 19 August 2024.

8 Article 7 reports covering 2021, p. 5; covering 2022, p. 6; and covering 2023, p. 6.

9 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p.6.

10 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, Executive Summary, p. 1; and email from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 10 October 2017.

11 "To Walk the Earth in Safety, Documenting the United States' Commitment to Conventional Weapons Destruction, Fiscal Year 2022, October 1, 2021–September 30, 2022", p. 10.

12 Email from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 19 August 2021.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The National Mine Action Authority of Zimbabwe (NMAAAZ) is a policy and regulatory body on all issues relating to mine action in Zimbabwe. ZIMAC was established in 2000 within the Ministry of Defence as the focal point and coordination centre of all mine action in the country. ZIMAC is mandated to report to NMAAAZ.¹³ In August 2019, ZIMAC's headquarters relocated to outside a military cantonment, thereby allowing access to civilian operators.¹⁴ There is no national legislation specific to mine action in Zimbabwe.

Stakeholders believe that the existing structure and routines of coordination suffice. However, it has also been pointed out that a national forum was one of the objectives identified at the National Stakeholder Dialogue meeting in January 2023, and that such a forum could help better integrate mine action into the national development strategy.¹⁵ ZIMAC is awaiting feedback on its proposal to include mine action in the national development goals.¹⁶ Nevertheless, operators are involved in key decision-making, with strategic and technical working group (TWG) meetings between operators and ZIMAC held regularly. ZIMAC holds quarterly coordination meetings with all stakeholders.¹⁷ Communication between ZIMAC and NMAAAZ, operators, and other Zimbabwean government ministries is reported to be good, with regular bilateral meetings.¹⁸

Operators report an enabling environment for mine action in Zimbabwe.¹⁹ Demining equipment can be imported without significant complications²⁰ and administrative support in liaising with government departments from ZIMAC is generally good.²¹ However, operators do note that security clearance, a prerequisite for obtaining work permits for international staff, is often a lengthy process and can make it impractical for international instructors to conduct field training.²² Security clearance is the responsibility of NMAAAZ, which seeks authority through the defence and national security departments. ZIMAC's role is to follow up on this process with NMAAAZ on behalf of the operators. Steps were taken in 2022 to speed up the process²³ and ZIMAC

continued efforts to facilitate security clearance for operators in 2023 although it finds it difficult to appeal to senior government authorities to resolve this challenge.²⁴ On another administrative matter, The HALO Trust notes that the *de facto* process for securing import fee waivers remains unclear.²⁵

The Government of Zimbabwe continues to fund mine action in line with previous commitments, with the national financial contribution to the implementation of its obligations in 2023 unchanged from the previous year at US\$500,000.²⁶ Zimbabwe also reported that the Ministry of Defence continues to pay for deployment and human resource expenses, and that the government provides all funding for the National Mine Clearance Unit (NMCU) through the national budget. It says funding will remain at its current level until completion, but possibly increasing as the economy strengthens.²⁷ In 2023, the Government provided the national demining unit with new detectors.²⁸

Zimbabwe's mine action programme requires a total of US\$24.64 million in 2024–25, of which US\$17.75 million was still to be secured from donors as at the end of 2023.²⁹ Having launched an updated Communications and Resource Mobilisation Strategy in January 2023,³⁰ previously delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic,³¹ resource mobilisation efforts continued in 2023. Zimbabwe has officially written to the Ambassador for the European Union (EU) following the EU's pledge of support, made during the National Stakeholder Dialogue meeting in January 2023. Current and potential donors were also invited to meet with Zimbabwe during the International Day for Mine Awareness and Victim Assistance in Mine Action in April 2024.³² International operators have submitted a joint proposal, seeking €10m from the EU and European Commission in Zimbabwe.³³

While it is positive that these vital resource mobilisation efforts continue, Zimbabwe has stated that it does not expect to meet its existing Article 5 deadline of the end of 2025, with the Minister of Defence stating in April 2024 that “due to

13 2013 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.

14 Email from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.

15 Emails from Mikael Bold, Programme Manager, APOPO, Zimbabwe, 10 June 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, Head of Donor Management and Partnerships, HALO, 21 June 2024; Peter Avenell, Country Director, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), 24 May 2024; and Åsa Møller, GICHD, 16 May 2023.

16 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 3.

17 Emails from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023; and Miroslav Pisarević, Programme Manager, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 11 June 2024.

18 Email from Gemma Welsh, Programme Manager, NPA, 19 April 2023; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

19 Emails from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 12 May 2023; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 March 2023; and Gemma Welsh, NPA, 19 April 2023.

20 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

21 Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

22 Emails from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024.

23 Email from Gemma Welsh, NPA, 19 April 2023.

24 Emails from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

25 Email from Nicholas Torbet, (then) Programme Manager, HALO, 19 April 2023; and Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

26 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 17; and email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 28 August 2024.

27 Preliminary Observations, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, APBMC Intersessional Meetings, 18–20 June 2024, p. 2.

28 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

29 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex A, Zimbabwe's Revised Mine Action Work Plan for 2022–2025, p. A-18.

30 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 17 and Annex A, pp. A-21.

31 Emails from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020; and (as Major) 27 April 2021 and 2 June 2022; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Annex A, p. A-19.

32 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

33 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

some financial gaps it is no longer realistic to achieve". The Minister also stated that Zimbabwe remained "optimistic" that clearance could be completed by 2027,³⁴ and in its most recent Article 7 report (covering 2023), Zimbabwe stated its intention to seek a two-year extension to 31 December 2027. The report cites "natural disasters", reduction of operational capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic, and withdrawal of funding during the pandemic as the causes of Zimbabwe not being able to meet its 2025 goal.³⁵

In 2023, ZIMAC continued to receive capacity development support, including training in national mine action standards (NMAAS) development and mine action management from the

GICHD, and in non-technical survey (NTS) from Norwegian People's Aid (NPA).³⁶ NPA planned to launch a project in August 2024 to support the development of national capacity to manage residual explosive ordnance (EO) contamination after completion of clearance.³⁷ As at June 2024, HALO was engaged in a project to equip NMCU deminers with sophisticated Minelab GPZ 7000 detectors and train them in their use. These detectors have already greatly improved efficiency in Zimbabwe. In 2023, operators continued to work closely with each other and the national authorities on standard operating procedures (SOPs) and plans for demobilisation and capacity development of staff.³⁸

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

ZIMAC had pledged to seek assistance from international stakeholders to formulate a gender and diversity policy by the end of 2022.³⁹ However, in its latest Article 7 report covering 2023, as per its previous Article 7 reports in recent years, Zimbabwe stresses that it is bound by national policy, which upholds gender equality of opportunity and seeks to support women to take on roles which have been male-dominated. Zimbabwe asserts that no barriers exist to gender-balanced participation in mine action.⁴⁰

Table 2: Gender composition of operators in 2023⁴¹

Organisation	Total staff	Women staff	Total managerial or supervisory staff	Women in managerial or supervisory positions	Total operational staff	Women in operational positions
ZIMAC	43	5 (12%)	6	1 (17%)	37	1 (0.27%)
APOPO	72	18 (25%)	19	5 (26%)	52	13 (25%)
HALO	453	144 (32%)	30	7 (23%)	345	103 (30%)
MAG	58	26 (45%)	7	2 (29%)	48	22 (49%)
NPA*	142	48 (34%)	18	7 (39%)	92	31 (34%)
Totals	768	241 (31%)	80	22 (28%)	574	170 (30%)

* Figures are given as at May 2024.

34 "Government committed to a landmine free nation", *The Herald*, 13 April 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3zvY0dt>.

35 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex A, p. A-1.

36 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

37 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

38 Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

39 Email from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 2 June 2022.

40 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex A, pp. A-1 – A-2; Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Annex A, p. A-1; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Annex A, p. A-1.

41 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

Zimbabwe's National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 does refer to the importance of addressing gender and diversity considerations and existing guidelines that stakeholders should use as a reference, including the UN's Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes.⁴² Zimbabwe has also included gender considerations in NMAS 07 ("Management of Demining Operations"), which calls for "special efforts" to be made "to ensure gender balance and diversity of background for Community Liaison Officers".⁴³ With regard to equal access to employment, ZIMAC highlights that it is a small entity and therefore has limited opportunity to fill positions with female candidates.⁴⁴ Having increased between 2021 and 2022, the proportion of female employees in ZIMAC fell from 23% in 2022 to just 5% in 2023, although one woman was employed in a managerial or supervisory position, where none had been in 2022.⁴⁵

No women are employed in operational roles in the NMCU because staff are recruited from the corps of military engineers, where very few women are working. NMCU deminers are drawn exclusively from soldiers and are therefore all male.⁴⁶ ZIMAC notes that, thanks to community liaison efforts, all international operators employ considerable numbers of female deminers, team leaders, and supervisors.⁴⁷ This represents progress since 2020, when ZIMAC stated that the number of women employed in mine action fell short of "required" levels and noted that Zimbabwean women were somewhat reluctant to work in mine action.⁴⁸

ZIMAC confirms that all community groups are routinely consulted in the NMCU's survey and community liaison activities, using teams that are gender-balanced and diverse. Personnel are recruited locally, to incorporate ethnic and minority groups who speak the language of the community.⁴⁹ ZIMAC reports that gender is taken into account during the planning and prioritisation of minefields for clearance, such as consideration of the risks taken usually by women and girls to cross minefields to fetch water and that of men and boys who often herd cattle or plough near mined areas.⁵⁰ However, given the nature of the minefields, which are essentially one long and continuous line, operational access constraints often dictate clearance priorities as much as other factors.⁵¹ All mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age.⁵²

All international operators in Zimbabwe have either global or country-specific gender policies in place for their programme staff⁵³ and demonstrate continued commitment to measures that encourage and support employment of women in mine action as well as the integration of gender and diversity concerns and the needs of affected communities into their operations.

HALO has an up-to-date gender and diversity policy and implementation plan and strives for equal access to employment at all levels for qualified women and men. HALO has put a range of relevant initiatives in place, including measures to ensure gender equality in recruitment and promotion, skills training for female staff to support their wider employment opportunities after HALO; and material and financial support to pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers.⁵⁴ HALO continues to build on steps taken between 2021 and 2023 to support female staff to obtain or upgrade their drivers licences,⁵⁵ provide childcare allowances; and deploy a female nurse who rotates through HALO's operations camps.⁵⁶ In 2023, the overall proportion of positions occupied by women in HALO in Zimbabwe increased slightly compared to 2022 from 28% to 32%, with the proportion of managerial or supervisory and operational positions filled by women also increasing slightly. This builds on similarly steady progress between 2021 and 2022.⁵⁷

HALO's community liaison team, which also undertakes survey when necessary, is gender-balanced with both Shona and English-speaking staff to help facilitate access and participation by all groups, including women and children. HALO consults with the communities in which it works to understand their needs and prioritises areas for release that impact their daily activities, such as those near to schools, clinics and water sources. HALO's area of operations (AoO), is mostly culturally homogeneous, comprised largely of Shona people.⁵⁸

NPA has a dedicated gender policy and implementation plan for its Zimbabwe programme⁵⁹ and has noted that refresher training for staff on gender and diversity was due in 2024. NPA confirms that its recruitment process is guided by its gender equality policy, as well as its Code of Conduct and safeguarding policies, which aim to provide a secure environment for both female and male staff and beneficiaries. NPA has a global target of a minimum of 25% female

42 Email from Tom Dibb, HALO, 22 February 2018; and Zimbabwe National Mine Action Strategy, 2018–2025, p. 15.

43 Email from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 20 July 2019.

44 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023.

45 Emails from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 27 April 2021 and 2 June 2022; and interview in Geneva, 24 June 2022; and emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023 and 3 June 2024.

46 Emails from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, 23 August 2022; and Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

47 Email from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 2 June 2022.

48 Emails from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019 and 6 April 2020.

49 Emails from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019 and 6 April 2020, and (as Major), 2 June 2022.

50 Emails from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 31 July 2019 and 6 April 2020.

51 Emails from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 20 July 2019; and Adam Komorowski, Regional Director West Africa and Latin America, MAG, 1 August 2019.

52 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex A, p. A-1; and email from Åsa Massleberg, GICHD, 8 July 2022.

53 Emails from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024; and Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

54 Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

55 Email from Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023.

56 Emails from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 30 May 2022; and Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023.

57 Emails from Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023; and Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

58 Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

59 Online interview with Justin McCormack, Operations Manager, NPA Zimbabwe, 7 August 2024.

mine action staff, with representation in operational and management roles, though NPA Zimbabwe aims to achieve a higher target of 50% female recruitment.⁶⁰ To this end it undertakes targeted recruitment campaigns to encourage more women to apply, particularly for male-dominated roles, as well as to encourage applications from members of marginalised communities.⁶¹ In 2023, NPA had planned to train all its programme staff in use of Rapid Gender Assessment tools, although this was reprogrammed for 2024.⁶² In 2023, the overall proportion of positions occupied by women in NPA Zimbabwe increased slightly compared to 2022, from 27% to 34%, and the proportion of managerial or supervisory and operational positions occupied by women both increased – from 29% to 39% and 24% to 34%, respectively.⁶³

Mines Advisory Group (MAG) has a global gender and diversity policy and implementation plan, which it adheres to in its Zimbabwe operations. The organisation reports equal access to employment and promotion opportunities for qualified women and men of all tribal ethnicities in its survey and clearance teams, including for managerial level/supervisory positions.⁶⁴ In 2023, the overall proportion of positions occupied by women, as well as operational positions occupied by women, increased to 49% compared to 37% in 2022. The proportion of managerial or supervisory positions filled by women also saw a slight increase from 29% in 2022

to 36% in 2023. These figures build on previous increases seen between 2021 and 2022. MAG has arrangements in place to support female staff who are breastfeeding. It launched an all-female team in January 2023, inclusive of team leader, deminers, medics, and drivers. MAG has a gender-balanced community liaison team. MAG's AoO are broadly similar to each other in their context, with all communities coming from the Shona tribe.⁶⁵

APOPO has a global gender and diversity policy and implementation and reports offering equal access to employment for qualified women and men in survey and clearance teams, including for managerial level/supervisory positions.⁶⁶ In 2023, 25% of APOPO's personnel were women, with 26% of managerial/supervisory positions and 24% of operational positions occupied by women. These are all slight decreases on the figures for 2022, when APOPO also saw a decrease in female representation compared to its first year of operating in Zimbabwe in 2021.⁶⁷ That said, APOPO asserts that is dedicated to ensuring that gender equality and considerations are reflected in all aspects of its work, including its partnerships and beneficiaries.⁶⁸ APOPO planned to update its impact assessment in the course of 2024.⁶⁹ APOPO points out, however, that relatively few people live in its area of responsibility (AoR), which is a wildlife corridor adjacent to a national park.⁷⁰

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

All mine action activities in Zimbabwe are conducted in line with the Zimbabwe Environmental Agency (EMA) regulations and requirements.⁷¹ ZIMAC has stated that Zimbabwe has an NMAS on environmental management (ZNMAS 10.07) and a policy on environmental management, with ZNMAS 10.07 updated in 2023 and shared with operators.⁷² However, awareness of these documents varies among operators.⁷³ NMAS 10.07 covers "Safety and Occupational Health and Protection of the Environment". This standard provides operational guidance on air, water, and soil pollution; reduction and disposal of waste, especially toxic and hazardous waste; obstruction of watercourses; burning of vegetation; environmental considerations at worksites and

temporary accommodation facilities, as well as at fuel, oil, and lubricant storage and maintenance areas. It also covers reduction of energy consumption and carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and environmental considerations related to use of land and risk to heritage.⁷⁴ ZIMAC states that environmental assessments are undertaken prior to operations commencing.⁷⁵ In terms of good practice, the use of highly destructive mechanical clearance methods is not permitted in areas with very large trees. Manual clearance only is used in such areas, with back-filling of soil undertaken soon after clearance.⁷⁶ Additionally, use of mechanical assets is limited to five hours per day, which helps reduce emissions.⁷⁷

60 Email from Gemma Welsh, NPA, 19 April 2023; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

61 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

62 Emails from Gemma Welsh, NPA, 19 April 2023; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

63 Ibid.

64 Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024.

65 Emails from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 March 2023 and 24 May 2024.

66 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

67 Emails from John Sorbo, Programme Manager, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, APOPO, 20 June and 16 August 2022; and Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

68 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

69 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 9 August 2024.

70 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

71 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023.

72 Emails from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 2 June 2022; and Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 28 August 2024.

73 Emails from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 March 2023 and 24 May 2024; Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 12 May 2023 and 10 June 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

74 Zimbabwe National Mine Action Standards (ZNMAS) 10.07, First edition (February 2013), "Safety and Occupational Health. Protection of the Environment".

75 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

76 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023.

77 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

All operators take measures to reduce the environmental impact of demining operations but vary in the degree to which they have environmental policies and management systems in place. APOPO has an environmental policy and action plan for 2021–25, with environmental management procedures outlined in its SOP on Safety And Occupational Health.⁷⁸ APOPO conducted environmental assessments when its initial planning and tasking was completed in 2021, and continually assesses environmental considerations as it moves into new sectors of its assigned Area of Operations.⁷⁹ In April 2023, APOPO began a global initiative, including within its Zimbabwe programme, to record all known carbon footprint data in order to establish a baseline.⁸⁰ It then developed a carbon sequestration plan for its Zimbabwe programme, which includes emissions reduction as well as a primary goal to plant and monitor more than 110,000 trees.⁸¹ APOPO's syntropic agroforestry or "food forests" initiative, piloted in Zimbabwe, aims to increase food yield per acre, regenerate soil, restore eco-systems, minimise the need for irrigation, and maximise climate resilience for crops,⁸² as well as provide economic opportunities for local subsistence farmers through spice trading. APOPO considers climate-related or extreme weather risks when planning, but recognises that it could gather more data and improve on this.⁸³

The HALO Trust has global policies and SOPs on environmental management.⁸⁴ HALO says that the selection of manual versus mechanical teams to conduct clearance is the primary environmental consideration in Zimbabwe, weighing the impact of the more environmentally intrusive mechanical clearance against the operational benefits. HALO also aims to situate field camps in areas that will not impact the local environment, and place camps as close to minefields as possible to minimise travel times, and thus vehicle emissions. Waste generation and disposal at camps are closely monitored and HALO field camps have been run on solar power since 2016. Since trials in 2022,⁸⁵ HALO uses electric trimmers to clear vegetation, thereby reducing petrol emissions. The HALO Zimbabwe programme also recruited a dedicated Environmental Officer in 2023.⁸⁶

MAG has a global environmental policy but has not yet developed one specifically for Zimbabwe. MAG does not formally undertake environmental assessments to inform planning and delivery of tasks,⁸⁷ and does not have an environmental management system in place.⁸⁸ However, MAG operations follow the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) 07.13, and take into account the need for vegetation and ground preparation, measures to avoid soil erosion and pollution, and the duty to manage deminer worksites to ensure proper disposal of waste.⁸⁹ MAG minimises vehicle use where possible and uses solar power for field activities, including charging of batteries for detectors. MAG notes that extreme heat caused by the El Niño weather pattern in the six months up to late May 2024, necessitated stoppage of operations to ensure staff safety. MAG does not recall El Niño affecting Zimbabwe in this way previously,⁹⁰ highlighting the potential impact of climate-related risk to future operations in the country.

NPA has an environmental management system in place, including an environmental policy and environmental SOP, last updated in 2021 and intended to "prevent or mitigate all significant harmful effects of demining camps and operations to an acceptable level". To protect vegetation, NPA cuts shrubby vegetation at ground level to allow the swinging of detectors, but only cuts trees if they present an obstruction to the use of the detector to confirm a hazard in the safe lane.⁹¹ NPA Zimbabwe plans to fully transition its field camps away from diesel generators to solar energy in 2024. It is also working to introduce water boreholes at operational locations, rather than bringing water to the sites.⁹² NPA undertakes environmental assessments to support planning and delivery of survey and clearance and considers climate-related or extreme weather risks as part of its risk matrix when planning. In 2022, NPA began trialling its Green Office and Green Field Tool to support environmental assessment and management in a few national programmes, including Zimbabwe. At the time of writing, it expected to roll this tool out globally in the near future.⁹³

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

ZIMAC operates an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation (NG) database with

all data disaggregated by type of munition and method of land release.⁹⁴ Zimbabwe and operators confirm the national

⁷⁸ Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 12 May 2023.

⁷⁹ Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

⁸⁰ Emails from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 12 May 2023 and 9 August 2024.

⁸¹ Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

⁸² APOPO presentation, National Stakeholder Dialogue (NSD) on Humanitarian Demining: For a Mine-Free Zimbabwe by 2025, Harare, 24 January 2023.

⁸³ Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

⁸⁴ Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

⁸⁵ Emails from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 30 May and 14 August 2022; and Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023.

⁸⁶ Emails from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; and Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024.

⁸⁷ Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024.

⁸⁸ Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 March 2023.

⁸⁹ Email from Roxana Bobolicu, MAG, 29 September 2022.

⁹⁰ Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 March 2023 and 24 May 2024.

⁹¹ Emails from Gemma Walsh, NPA, 2 June and 8 July 2022 and 19 April 2023.

⁹² Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

⁹³ Emails from Gemma Walsh, NPA, 19 April 2023; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

⁹⁴ Email from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 12 June 2018.

information database is accurate and up to date.⁹⁵ ZIMAC holds regular meetings with operators to cross-reference data, which according to some operators has improved their accuracy and reliability.⁹⁶ Polygon data are also reviewed when it is deemed prudent to do so, for example, whenever a resurvey takes place.⁹⁷

In 2023, ZIMAC staff undertook further information management online training courses. At the time of writing, ZIMAC was close to completing the installation and migration of data to IMSMA Core,⁹⁸ although as at August

2024, operators were still reporting to IMSMA NG. A visit to Zimbabwe from the GICHD was planned for Q3 2024.⁹⁹ Operators confirm that data collection forms are consistent and enable efficient collection of necessary data.¹⁰⁰ APOPO considers ZIMAC's requirements on the data that operators must provide to be minimal and expanded its own daily data collection practices in 2023.¹⁰¹

As in previous years, ZIMAC's latest Article 7 report (covering 2023) was detailed and of good quality.

PLANNING AND TASKING

An updated National Mine Action Strategy for Zimbabwe's current extension period through to the end of 2025 was launched in January 2023.¹⁰² The strategy sets out clear objectives, baselines, indicators, and targets for four strategic mine action goals around survey and clearance; explosive ordnance risk education; victim assistance; and advocacy and communication.¹⁰³ Zimbabwe's latest Article 7 report (covering 2023) includes a detailed, revised work plan for 2024–25.¹⁰⁴

In 2023, Zimbabwe fell behind its annual land release target for the first time since 2018,¹⁰⁵ releasing only 2.31km² during the year instead of the 6.39km² projected.¹⁰⁶ Zimbabwe has now revised the annual targets through to the end of 2025 (see Table 3).¹⁰⁷ Zimbabwe will need to set out revised targets and an updated work plan once it requests an extension to the end of 2027.¹⁰⁸

Table 3: Revised NSP (National Strategic Plan) Projections, 2022–25 (m²)¹⁰⁹

Minefield	2022	2023	2024	2025	Totals
Musengezi to Mazowe (HALO)	1,400,000	1,400,000	1,400,000	335,475	4,435,475
Mazowe to Rwenya River (MAG)	700,000	1,335,653	1,000,000	1,215,610	9,521,239
Ploughshare (NPA)	N/A	N/A	1,500,000	1,503,354	
Ploughshare (HALO)	100,000	500,000	900,000	766,622	
Crooks Corner to Sango Border (Reinforced Ploughshare) (NMCU)	900,000	1,017,880	N/A	N/A	1,917,880
Crooks Corner to Sango Border (Cordon Sanitaire) (NMCU)	138,918	N/A	N/A	N/A	138,918
Crooks Corner to Sango Border (Cordon Sanitaire) (APOPO)	500,000	590,000	503,064	100,000	1,693,064
Rusitu to Muzite Mission (NPA)	1,500,000	2,401,766	N/A	N/A	3,901,766
Sheba Forest to Leacon Hill (NPA)	993,548	N/A	N/A	N/A	993,548
Lusulu (NMCU)	100,000	300,000	505,537		905,537
Totals	6,332,466	7,545,299	5,708,601	3,921,061	23,507,427

95 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 3; and emails from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024.

96 Emails from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

97 Email from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 2 June 2022; and interview, in Geneva, 24 June 2022.

98 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

99 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 9 August 2024.

100 Emails from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

101 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

102 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Annex A, pp. A20–A21.

103 Zimbabwe, National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2018–2025, Reviewed Version, pp. 18–27.

104 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex A, p. A-1.

105 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Annex A, p. A-2.

106 Ibid., Annex A, p. A-23.

107 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 5.

108 Ibid., Annex 1.

109 Ibid., p. 6.

Historically, clearance was prioritised by ZIMAC according to impact, with contaminated areas closest to highly populated areas to be addressed first.¹¹⁰ However, as most of the minefields are along the border with Mozambique, operations tend to proceed in a linear fashion to allow for optimal use of resources and facilitate concentrated logistical support and command and control, rather than opening tasks all over the frontage of the border.¹¹¹ ZIMAC and operators claim, however, that factors such as national priorities, community impact, and the level of incident risk do inform ongoing task prioritisation.¹¹²

As Zimbabwe's due completion date of the end of 2025 approaches, it has taken steps to adjust plans and redistribute areas of operation so that operators who

complete assigned tasks or gain additional capacity may deploy their resources elsewhere. ZIMAC has, for example, re-allocated some of MAG's tasks to NPA,¹¹³ which initiated demining in Mudzi district in Mashonaland East in November 2023.¹¹⁴ HALO was allocated part of MAG's minefield in Mashonaland East in 2022.¹¹⁵ MAG adds that the remaining areas that MAG cannot reach, due to limited capacity, will be regularly discussed at coordination meetings and most likely re-allocated in the coming months and years depending on the capacity of other operators.¹¹⁶

Operators report that clearance and survey task dossiers have been issued in a timely and effective manner,¹¹⁷ with all remaining tasks now allocated among them.¹¹⁸

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

ZIMAC last reviewed the NMAS and updated some chapters in 2022,¹¹⁹ and states that NMAS are reviewed every three years and in line with updates to the IMAS.¹²⁰ Operators confirm that they were consulted during this last review.¹²¹ SOPs are also reviewed regularly and as needed to address new challenges, ensure the employment of best practice, and update them in line with IMAS and Zimbabwe's NMAS.¹²² Operators have made some suggestions for improvement. While HALO, for example, believes that the NMAS are suitably adapted to the local threat and enable efficient, evidence-based survey and clearance, it does point out that no criteria are set for cancellation or reclamation of land, an omission it believes should be rectified to help aid the decision-making process for operators.¹²³ APOPO suggests that the NMAS on quality management systems (QMS) requires updating to be brought in line with the IMAS on Quality Management for Mine Action, and that the NMAS for accident investigation also requires revision.¹²⁴

ZIMAC conducts quality assurance (QA) and operators have previously confirmed that the ZIMAC QA/quality control (QC) process was rigorous, with well trained and experienced staff.¹²⁵ In 2023, ZIMAC noted that, in addition to having a QA Officer attached to each operator, a stand-alone, external QC team samples completed tasks in line with Zimbabwe's inspection procedures as per the NMAS.¹²⁶

Missed-mine drills, which are required when gaps in the mine pattern are found, had been an ongoing challenge to land release efficiency for Zimbabwe,¹²⁷ proving time consuming and seemingly ineffective as mines were found only rarely.¹²⁸ Use of mine detection dogs (MDDs) has been considered, with the key consideration being to establish the maximum depth at which dogs can detect, given that mines are being found at depths of up to 40cm in Zimbabwe,¹²⁹ although APOPO points out that almost all mines (98%) in its operational area are found at a depth of no more than 13cm.¹³⁰ Following trials in

110 Email from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.

111 Emails from Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024.

112 Emails from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; and Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

113 Email from Gemma Welsh, NPA, 19 April 2023.

114 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

115 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 7.

116 Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 March 2023.

117 Emails from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; and Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

118 Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

119 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 3; and emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023 and 7 June 2024.

120 Email from (then) Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.

121 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 12 May 2023; Gemma Welsh, NPA, 2 June 2022 and 19 April 2023; and Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023.

122 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p.3.

123 Emails from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; and Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024. The term "reclamation criteria" refers to a situation where the land has been reclaimed through activities such as construction or cultivation. If the relevant criteria are met, the area may be considered for cancellation.

124 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 9 August 2024.

125 Email from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 20 July 2019.

126 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023.

127 Emails from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 20 July 2019; and Adam Komorowski, MAG, 1 August 2019.

128 Emails from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 5 August 2021; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 20 May 2020.

129 Interview with Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, in Geneva, 24 June 2022.

130 Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 9 August 2024.

2023,¹³¹ ZIMAC elected not to implement the use of MDDs in missed-mine drills, deciding that the application of physical reasonable effort was preferable.¹³² MDDs are currently used only by NPA in Zimbabwe. They have played a crucial role in expediting technical survey and facilitating prompt deployment of deminers to mine lanes.¹³³

Operators note that use of the Minelab GPZ 7000 detector has significantly improved the efficiency and effectiveness of clearance generally as well as reducing the need for missing-mine excavations. Accreditation for use of the detector in detection of high-metal AP mines (of the types VS50 and M969), the mine types most commonly found in the

country, was granted in 2022.¹³⁴ In April 2023, the detector was also accredited for use in detection of R2M2 AP mines, also common in Zimbabwe.¹³⁵ As at June 2024, HALO had received approval from ZIMAC to use the GPZ-7000; APOPO had completed its own trials; and MAG and NPA had trials ongoing. Wider deployment of the detector across operators was expected to significantly increase overall efficiency in Zimbabwe's programme,¹³⁶ and ZIMAC asserts it has been instrumental in keeping Zimbabwe's land release programme on track.¹³⁷

All areas cleared in Zimbabwe in 2023 proved to contain anti-personnel mines.¹³⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Land release in Zimbabwe is conducted by the Zimbabwean Armed Forces' NMCU and four international operators: APOPO, HALO, MAG, and NPA.¹³⁹

Table 4: Operational NTS and TS capacities deployed in 2023¹⁴⁰

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS personnel	Comments
APOPO	0	1	Deploys combined TS and clearance personnel.
HALO	0	0	No specific NTS teams. NTS managed by Community Outreach team (3 personnel). Deploys combined TS and clearance personnel.
MAG	2	5	Reduced to 1 team of 3 personnel from June 2023 for remainder of year. Deploys combined TS and clearance personnel.
NPA	1	3	NTS team trained in early December. Deploys combined TS and clearance personnel.
NMCU	1	3	Deploys combined TS and clearance personnel.
Totals	4	12	

131 Emails from Gemma Welsh, NPA, 19 April 2023; and Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023.

132 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

133 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex I, p. A-3.

134 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023; and Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023.

135 Emails from Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 12 May 2023; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024.

136 Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

137 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Annex A, p. A-2.

138 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; and Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024.

139 Emails from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 2 June 2022; and John Sorbo, APOPO, 20 June 2022.

140 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

Table 5: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2023¹⁴¹

Operator	Manual teams	Mechanical teams	Total deminers	Dog teams	Machines	Comments
HALO	30	2	219	0	13 (3x tracked 360 excavators, 9 x Mini Excavators, and 1x tractor with front loading shovel.)	Increased from 25 to 30 teams in July 2023 for remainder of year. Also undertake TS.
NPA	8	0	84	4 (4 dogs, 4 handlers)	0	Increased from six manual teams in September 2023 for remainder of year. Also undertake TS.
APOPO	4	0	32	0	0	Represents personnel at end of 2023 after reductions in Q3 & Q4 2023. Also undertake TS.
MAG	4	0	36	0	0	Reduced to 3 teams of 37 personnel from June 2023 for remainder of year. Also undertake TS.
NMCU	13	1	84	0	1 (bulldozer)	Also undertake TS.
Totals	59	3	455	4 dogs, 4 handlers	14	

Overall, Zimbabwe maintained a similar technical survey (TS) and clearance capacity in 2023 as it did in 2022, with the combined capacity of humanitarian operators and the NMCU totalling 59 teams of 455 deminers in 2023 (see Table 5) compared to 59 teams of 496 deminers in 2022,¹⁴² and similarly, 58 teams of 500 deminers in 2021.¹⁴³ Zimbabwe's programme saw an increase in mechanical assets deployed, with 14 machines in 2023 (see Table 5) compared to eight machines in 2022.¹⁴⁴

In 2023, APOPO's clearance capacity was reduced from five to four teams and the number of deminers per team from ten to eight. APOPO states that it may have to reduce this further in 2024, due to a lack of donor funding.¹⁴⁵ HALO was able to restore capacity to 30 manual clearance teams, having previously decreased by five teams in 2022, when funding

declined. It was also able to increase from seven mechanical assets in 2022 to 13 in 2023. HALO did not expect any major changes to survey or clearance capacity in 2024.¹⁴⁶ MAG was able to increase capacity in January 2023 from three Mine Action Teams (MATs) to four but had to reduce back down to three teams in July 2023, due to a drop in funding. MAG expected NTS capacity to remain the same in 2024 but was able to add two MATs in Q1 2024.¹⁴⁷ ZIMAC estimates that MAG would have to double its capacity to meet its land release targets set for the end of 2025 and has already been reassigning some of MAG's AoO to other operators, as noted above.¹⁴⁸ NPA was able to increase clearance capacity, adding two manual teams in 2023. It expected no major changes to capacity in 2024, unless further funding was secured. NPA plans to introduce drones for NTS and quality management in 2024.¹⁴⁹ If efforts to secure additional funding are successful,

¹⁴¹ Ibid.; and email from Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex 1, pp. A-6 – A-9; and A-10 – A-11.

¹⁴² Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023; Gemma Welsh, NPA, 19 April 2023; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 March 2023; and Mikael Bold, APOPO, 12 May and 8 August 2023.

¹⁴³ Emails from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 2 June 2022; Peter Avenell, MAG, 17 May 2022; Gemma Walsh, NPA, 2 June 2022; and John Sorbo, APOPO, 20 June 2022.

¹⁴⁴ Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023; and Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023.

¹⁴⁵ Email from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024.

¹⁴⁶ Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

¹⁴⁷ Emails from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May and 15 August 2024.

¹⁴⁸ Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex A, pp. A-8 and A-9.

¹⁴⁹ Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

this would allow additional capacity to be deployed, including some to address the areas in Mashonaland East that have been re-allocated from MAG to NPA.¹⁵⁰

Zimbabwe maintained the same operational capacity in its NMCU from 2022 to 2023, but thought this might increase in 2024 once a second batch of new detectors, purchased at the time of writing, were delivered.¹⁵¹ ZIMAC notes that government funding for NMCU is guaranteed at the current level until clearance is complete.¹⁵² Resources allowing, Zimbabwe hopes to form a second NMCU unit to expedite clearance,¹⁵³ although no time frame for this has been given. ZIMAC envisages using some of the NMCU's capacity to support any areas assigned to operators that lag behind schedule.¹⁵⁴

Zimbabwe first introduced mechanical assets in 2016. These have been useful in tackling deeply buried mines on hard ground as well as in areas with highly mineralised

soils.¹⁵⁵ Following trial and ZIMAC's approval of relevant SOPs in 2022,¹⁵⁶ HALO introduced a micro excavator in 2023.¹⁵⁷ The machine works in conjunction with manual demining to complete excavations that would otherwise be done entirely by hand. In 2022 trials by HALO, the machine demonstrated the capacity to reduce the number of manual-only excavations by 80% and complete an excavation in under one minute, thus increasing both deminer safety and overall efficiency.¹⁵⁸ As at June 2024, MAG was also trialling use of the micro excavator.¹⁵⁹ In 2023, the US Demining Research and Development Program partnered with HALO in Zimbabwe to evaluate three technologies developed by the programme: a soil-sifting excavator attachment, the dual-sensor HSTAMIDS mine detector, and the GPZ-7000 detector. It also partnered with APOPO in its evaluations of the GPZ-7000 and the Vallon VMX-10 unexploded ordnance (UXO) detector.¹⁶⁰

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2023

A total of just over 2.3km² of mined area was released in 2023, of which 1.91km² was cleared, just over 0.01km² was reduced through TS, and just over 0.4km² was cancelled through NTS. A total of 37,360 AP mines were found and destroyed,¹⁶¹ including 30 during explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks.¹⁶² A total of 28 items of UXO were also found during EOD call-outs outside the known mined areas in MAG's AoO in Mashonaland East.¹⁶³ A total of 166,815m² was added to the database in 2023 as a result of expansion of the perimeter of a known CHA.¹⁶⁴

SURVEY IN 2023

In 2023, more than 0.4km² of mined area was released through survey, of which 10,845m² was cancelled through NTS by MAG¹⁶⁵ (see Table 7) and 404,311m² was reduced through TS (see Table 8).¹⁶⁶

Land release by survey was down significantly from 2022, when 2.07km² was reduced through TS, and almost 1.92km² was cancelled through NTS.¹⁶⁷ ZIMAC states was due to a decrease in donor funding and therefore in available capacity.¹⁶⁸ HALO had previously noted in 2022 that it expected reduction levels to decrease going forward, as it was nearing completion of

¹⁵⁰ Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Annex A, p. A-12.

¹⁵¹ Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024. ZIMAC reported to Mine Action Review in 2023 that the NMCU had 134 deminers in 2022 and 150 deminers in 2021. It has since clarified that these figures included non-deminer personnel, such as supervisors and support staff. As such, NMCU deminer capacity has remained fairly consistent from 2021 to 2023.

¹⁵² Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Annex A, p. A-16.

¹⁵³ Col. M. B. Ncube, Director, ZIMAC, "Overview of the Strategic Plan and the Resource Mobilisation Strategy and Progress Implementation", National Stakeholder Dialogue on Humanitarian Demining: For a Mine-Free Zimbabwe by 2025, Harare, 24 January 2023.

¹⁵⁴ Article 7 Report (covering 2022), Annex A, p. A-16.

¹⁵⁵ Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Annex A, p. A-2.

¹⁵⁶ Email from Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex 1, Page A-2.

¹⁵⁷ Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

¹⁵⁸ Email from Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023.

¹⁵⁹ Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

¹⁶⁰ "To Walk the Earth in Safety, 23rd Edition, Fiscal Year 2023, Documenting the U.S. Commitment to Conventional Weapons Destruction", US Department of State (US DoS), Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, at: <https://bit.ly/3wVINKT>, p. 20; and email from Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024.

¹⁶¹ Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 6.

¹⁶² Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023; and Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024.

¹⁶³ Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 15 August 2024.

¹⁶⁴ Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

¹⁶⁵ Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May and 15 August 2024; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 6.

¹⁶⁶ Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June and 9 August 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024; and Article 7 report (covering 2023), p. 6.

¹⁶⁷ Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023.

¹⁶⁸ Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

all ploughshare tasks and would soon be primarily focused on clearing the remaining cordon sanitaire minefields.¹⁶⁹ Cordon sanitaire minefields are tasks that normally require full clearance with no reduction possible as the polygons are usually very accurate and there is strong evidence of contamination within fence-lines and roads.¹⁷⁰ As such, HALO's land release by TS decreased from 0.89km² in 2022¹⁷¹ to 0.15km² in 2023.¹⁷²

A total of 166,815m² was added to the database in 2023. This was an expansion of a known CHA.¹⁷³ This compares to 0.91km² of contamination added to the database as a result of survey in 2022.¹⁷⁴

Table 6: Release of mined area through NTS in 2023¹⁷⁵

Area	Operator	Number of areas cancelled	Area cancelled (m ²)
Mashonaland East (Mazoe to Rwenya)	MAG	1	10,845
Totals		1	10,845

Table 7: Release of mined area through TS in 2023¹⁷⁶

Area	Operator	Areas reduced	Area reduced (m ²)
Masvingo / Chiredzi / Mwenezi to Sango Border Post	APOPO	2	17,317
Mashonaland Central (Musengezi to Mazoe)	HALO	2	154,562
Mashonaland East (Mazoe to Rwenya)	MAG	1	130,507
Manicaland (Rusitu to Muzite)	NPA	4	97,193
Matabeleland North (Lusulu)	NMCU	1	4,732
Totals		10	404,311

CLEARANCE IN 2023

A total of just under 1.91km² was released through clearance in 2023, with 37,330 AP mines destroyed as well as 34 items of UXO (see Table 9).¹⁷⁷ In addition, a total of 30 AP mines were also destroyed by HALO during EOD spot tasks in 2023.¹⁷⁸ Some 28 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) were also found during EOD call-outs outside the known mined areas in MAG's AoO in Mashonaland East.¹⁷⁹

Clearance in 2023 represents a decrease on the just over 2.13km² cleared in 2022.¹⁸⁰ ZIMAC explains that this was due to a drop in donor funding and therefore in capacity,

as well as the fact that operators are now working on a greater proportion of cordon sanitaire minefields, which are inherently slower to clear,¹⁸¹ as they are particularly densely mined in Zimbabwe, and require full clearance, with time-consuming excavations.¹⁸² HALO's drop in clearance output of 0.35km² was due to a combination of factors including extended leave granted to personnel so they could travel to vote in the national election and the need for several shortened working days due to extreme heat.¹⁸³ NPA experienced a minor decrease in clearance in 2023 compared

169 Email from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 2 June 2022.

170 Emails from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 13 April 2021 and 30 May 2022.

171 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April and 13 July 2023; and Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April and 21 June 2023.

172 Emails from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; and Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; and Article 7 report (covering 2023), p. 6.

173 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024.

174 Article 7 Report (covering 2022), p. 2.

175 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; and Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May, 30 July and 15 August 2024.

176 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June and 9 August 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May, 30 July, and 15 August 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024; and Article 7 report (covering 2023), p. 6.

177 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June and 9 August 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May and 15 August 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024; and Article 7 report (covering 2023), Form D.

178 Email from Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024.

179 Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 15 August 2024.

180 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023.

181 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023 and 3 June 2024.

182 Email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 28 August 2024.

183 Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

to 2022 due to mountainous terrain and dense vegetation; the time taken to perform missing-mine drills; and operational requirements that necessitated the movement of field staff from one camp to another.¹⁸⁴

All areas cleared in Zimbabwe in 2023 proved to contain AP mines.¹⁸⁵

Table 8: Mine clearance in 2023¹⁸⁶

Area	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Mashonaland Central (Musengezi to Mazowe)	HALO	21	840,228	30,934	6
Mashonaland East (Mazowe to Rwenya)	MAG	1	158,195	2,510	28
Mashonaland East (Mazowe to Nyahuku)	HALO	1	20,277	0	0
Mashonaland East (Nyahuku to Nyamapanda)	NPA	0	9,905	5	0
Masvingo (Mwenezi to Sango Border Post) (Cordon Sanitaire)	APOPO	2	250,503	2,308	0
Masvingo (Mwenezi to Sango Border Post) (Cordon Sanitaire)	NMCU	1	112,115	1,002	0
Manicaland (Rusitu to Muzite)	NPA	4	492,172	567	0
Matabeleland North (Lusulu)	NMCU	0	24,012	4	0
Totals		30	1,907,407	37,330	34

DEMINER SAFETY

Four accidents involving deminers were reported in Zimbabwe in 2023, all involving excavation of R2M2 AP mines (see Table 9).

Table 9: Demining accidents in Zimbabwe in 2023¹⁸⁷

Operator	No. of accidents	Activity	Type of AP mine	No. of deminers injured
HALO	1	Clearance	R2M2	1
MAG	1	Clearance	R2M2	1
APOPO	1	Clearance	R2M2	1
NMCU	1	Clearance	R2M2	1

¹⁸⁴ Email from Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

¹⁸⁵ Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; and Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024.

¹⁸⁶ Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June and 28 August 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June and 9 August 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May and 15 August 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024; and Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 6.

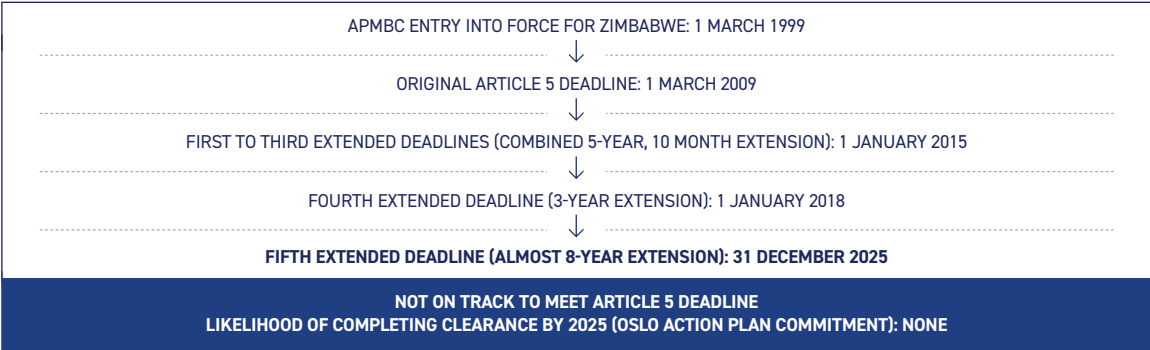
¹⁸⁷ Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 3 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024; Oliver Gerard-Pearse, HALO, 19 August 2024; Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024.

HALO's accident investigation included physical evidence-gathering, a review of SOPs, documents review, and interviews with staff. The report was reviewed by HALO's headquarters, regional, and country level teams, shared with other operators in-country, and discussed by operators at a TWG meeting.¹⁸⁸ MAG's investigation, with technical oversight from HQ, showed no breach of SOPs and concluded the accident had been caused by a sensitive mine. Findings were shared with operators, ZIMAC, and donors.¹⁸⁹ APOPO's investigation found that the factor contributing to the accident was likely to be the earth mound that had built up between the deminers legs behind the base stick, as it may have affected his balance and control during the excavation drill. The

investigation also identified the possibility of the mine being tilted as a potential contributory factor. Tilting of mines can occur due to migration of soil or when mines are adjacent to trees, and can hence be activated or detonated if tree roots are disturbed during mine excavation. No breaches of SOPs or relevant standards, or gaps in operational training or APOPO's overall quality management system were identified.¹⁹⁰

ZIMAC and operators confirmed that, as previously, all incidents and accidents were investigated in accordance with Zimbabwe's NMAS and guided by the IMAS, with findings and learning shared across operators.¹⁹¹

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC (and in accordance with the eight-year extension granted in 2017), Zimbabwe is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025.¹⁹² However, Zimbabwe announced in April 2024 that it will seek a two-year extension to the end of 2027.¹⁹³

In its latest Article 7 Report (covering 2023) Zimbabwe notes that the main risks that could impede progress towards completion are potentially insufficient funding; the heavy rains and risk of flooding experienced in Zimbabwe from November to March each year; and potential changes in the political or economic climate, given that national capacity is dependent on government funding. Zimbabwe does note, however, that the ailing economy is showing some signs of improvement, and that the government has continued to prioritise demining in spite of economic challenges in recent years.¹⁹⁴

Since 2022, redistribution of AoOs among operators, co-ordinated by ZIMAC, has helped to keep the sector moving towards national completion as quickly as possible,¹⁹⁵ illustrating the effective cooperation and coordination across the national authority, ZIMAC, and operators that Zimbabwe has consistently demonstrated. There are many other consistent strengths in Zimbabwe's mine action programme,

including strong national ownership and programme management; a reliable and improving information management system; robust planning; and recent gains in land release efficiency through effective trial and deployment of new technologies. With this strong programme in place, the extent to which Zimbabwe can secure additional funding going forward, with US\$17.75 million still to be secured from donors as at the end of 2023,¹⁹⁶ will most likely be the deciding factor that determines by when Zimbabwe can complete clearance.

Table 10: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2023	1.91
2022	2.13
2021	2.44
2020	2.41
2019	2.76
Total	11.65

188 Email from Nokutenda Masiyanise, HALO, 21 June 2024.

189 Email from Peter Avenell, MAG, 24 May 2024.

190 Emails from Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June and 9 August 2024.

191 Emails from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023 and 3 June 2024; Mikael Bold, APOPO, 10 June 2024; and Miroslav Pisarević, NPA, 11 June 2024.

192 Article 5 Update to the APBMC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022, p. 1.

193 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex A, p. A-1.

194 Ibid., Annex A, pp. A-17 to A-18.

195 Emails from Samuel Fricker, HALO, 30 May and 14 August 2022; and Nicholas Torbet, HALO, 19 April 2023; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Annex A, pp. A-7, A-13, and A-15.

196 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Annex A, p. A-18.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

On the matter of contamination that might be found after completion of major clearance operations, ZIMAC has national capacity to deal with this and plans in place, as the NMCU will remain operational after international demining operators have left Zimbabwe.¹⁹⁷ ZIMAC observes that Zimbabwe's military forces began mine clearance long before international operators boosted efforts and, if well-equipped, the same army engineers are fully capable of dealing with residual contamination.¹⁹⁸ It will fall to ZIMAC, the NMCU, and the army engineers, who are stationed in all provinces, to deal with any new explosive devices discovered.¹⁹⁹ It is planned that, as the army will have responsibility for clearing any residual contamination, the NMCU will develop a strategy on the management of residual contamination as Zimbabwe's completion date approaches.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 5; and email from Capt. Patson Mandaba, ZIMAC, 13 April 2023.

¹⁹⁸ Email from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 23 August 2022.

¹⁹⁹ Email from Capt. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 6 April 2020.

²⁰⁰ Emails from Maj. Cainos Tamanikwa, ZIMAC, 2 June 2022; and Åsa Massleberg, GICHD, 8 July 2022.