



IRAN

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Iran should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Iran should seek international assistance to develop a humanitarian mine action programme.

CONTAMINATION

Iran is contaminated by anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, mainly as a result of the 1980–88 war with Iraq. Mine contamination is concentrated in five western provinces bordering Iraq, although the extent of the remaining threat is unknown.

Minister of Defence Hossein Dehghan said in 2014 that the 4,500km² of mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination left by the Iran-Iraq war in the five western provinces had been reduced to 280km².¹ In February 2014, the Iran Mine Action Center (IRMAC) reported that the five Western provinces had remaining contamination totalling 250km².²

However, two anti-vehicle mine incidents occurred in early 2014 in the Lut desert spanning central and eastern Iran where police reportedly placed mines as a measure against drug traffickers, pointing to contamination outside the five most affected provinces.³ Sources report that security forces continue to emplace mines in areas close to Iran's borders in order to deter cross-border smugglers and infiltration by anti-regime groups. A further complication for contamination estimates are reports of continuing casualties in areas that were supposed to have been cleared.

An Iranian non-governmental organisation (NGO), Iran Without Landmines, documented 79 casualties from landmines and other ERW in 2017, (17 killed and 62 seriously injured). It said Ilam province, where four people were reported killed in 2017, had the highest number of casualties.⁴ Iranian media have reported additional mine/ERW casualties in 2018.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

IRMAC was established as the national mine action centre in 2005, taking the place of a Mine Action Committee within the Ministry of Defence. It is responsible for planning, data, managing survey, procurement, and the accreditation of demining operators. IRMAC's director is General Mohammad Hussein Amir Ahmadi and many staff are believed to be serving or former military personnel.

IRMAC issues clearance contracts to private companies, army engineers, and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. It also coordinates mine action with the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Interior, the Management and Planning Organisation of Iran, and other relevant ministries and organisations, and handles international relations.⁵

Quality Management

There is no available information on quality management procedures. In the past, very high levels of casualties were recorded during demining in Iran.

Information Management

IRMAC maintains a mine action database but it is not known if it is comprehensive, actively maintained, and up to date.

The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) also maintains a mine action database recording the results of its own clearance contracts.⁶

Operators

Mine clearance in Iran is mainly conducted by the Iranian Army and Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.

IRMAC combines the roles of regulator and operator, with demining teams and support staff employing around 250 personnel deployed in five affected provinces.⁷

Commercial operators include AOM Co., Immen Sazan Omran Pars International Co., Immen Zamin Espadana, and Solh Afarinan-e Bedoun-e Marz (SABMco). Two other companies, Moshaver Omran Iran and ZPP International Co., undertake QA/QC.⁸

Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC), the development arm of the NIOC, contracts and supervises commercial operators conducting clearance of Iran's oil and gas producing areas which are concentrated in mine-affected areas of south western Iran bordering Iraq.⁹

International operators are not believed to have been active in Iran since 2008.

LAND RELEASE

Iran has not published details of mine survey or clearance in recent years. In 2017, President Hassan Rouhani observed that countries which had supplied Iraq with mines during the Iran-Iraq war had not provided Iran with the technology to clear them.¹⁰

ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Iran is not a state party to the APMBC, but nonetheless has obligations under international human rights law to protect life, which requires the clearance of mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.

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- 1 Ministry of Defence, "Commander Dehghan in the ceremony of World Mine Awareness Day: In Iran 28,000 hectares of land are landmine-contaminated", 8 April 2014.
 - 2 IRMAC PowerPoint presentation at IRMAC headquarters, Tehran, 9 February 2014.
 - 3 "Mine Explosion Killed a Desert Explorer in Birjand", *Islamic Republic News Agency*, 4 January 2014; and "Four tourists hit a landmine in Lut: one was killed", *Iranian Students' News Agency*, 25 March 2014.
 - 4 Leila Alikarami, "Iran-Iraq War continues to claim lives", *Al-Monitor*, 4 April 2018.
 - 5 IRMAC PowerPoint Presentation, Tehran, 9 February 2014; and IRMAC, "Presentation of IRMAC".
 - 6 Email from Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for Development without Borders, Tehran, 9 July 2018.
 - 7 Information provided by mine action expert on condition of anonymity.
 - 8 Email from Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for Development without Borders, Tehran, 9 July 2018.
 - 9 PEDEC website, www.pedec.ir/en; and email from Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for Development without Borders, Tehran, 9 July 2018.
 - 10 "President: Those provided Saddam with mines denied Iran demining technology", *Iran Daily*, 2 May 2017, at: <http://www.iran-daily.com/News/191982.html>.