

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2028 ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION:

MEDIUM, 10KM²
(ESTIMATED)

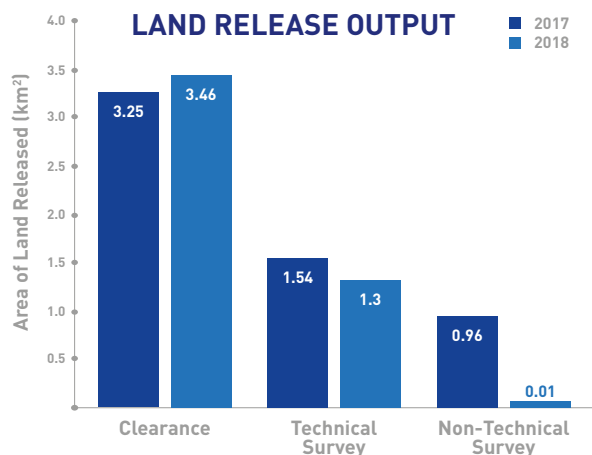
AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2018

3.46KM²

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2018

31,622

(including 299 destroyed during spot tasks)



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per Maputo +15 Political Declaration aspiration): **HIGH**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Sri Lanka officially became a state party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) on 1 June 2018, becoming the 163rd country to adhere. While its Article 5 deadline is 1 June 2028, Sri Lanka has set a far more ambitious goal to complete mine clearance on its territory by the end of 2020.

While initially optimistic that Sri Lanka was on track to meet this goal, at the end of 2018, The HALO Trust and Mines

Advisory Group (MAG), the two international demining operators in Sri Lanka, reported that with existing capacity and funding levels, Sri Lanka is unlikely to complete clearance by the end of 2020. However, with relatively small extra funding, Sri Lanka's mine action operators could expand their capacity and operational output, making the end-2020 goal a possibility. Even if Sri Lanka is unable to meet the end-2020 goal, Sri Lanka should still complete clearance far in advance of its APMBC deadline.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Sri Lanka should clarify the total estimate of remaining mine contamination.
- Greater efforts should be placed on information management and ensuring that the database is up to date and that survey and clearance reports are sent to the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) and entered into the national database in a timely fashion.
- Any changes in capacity or funding requirements that will impede completion of mine clearance should be reported as a matter of priority.
- Greater resources should be allocated to develop long-term national capacity, in particular the NMAC and the Sri Lankan Army (SLA) Humanitarian Demining Units and national mine action operators.
- Increased interaction between the NMAC and mine action operators would enhance the efficiency of the national mine action programme.
- Sri Lanka should develop plans for the management of contamination found after Article 5 completion. Strategies for the vocational retraining of deminers should be put in place.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2018)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	8	A district-by-district re-survey in 2015–17 resulted in the cancellation of 42.4km ² , providing far greater clarity on the extent of confirmed contamination remaining. However, Sri Lanka's official reporting of the estimate of contamination in its Article 7 transparency reports contain discrepancies and are inflated estimates based on projections for survey and reduction and outstanding survey and clearance reports not accounted for in the national database.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	Sri Lanka's national mine action programme is fully nationally owned, with considerable committed funding from the national government and significant contribution from the Armed Forces in the dedicated demining units.
GENDER (10% of overall score)	8	Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020 contains a section on gender and diversity as cross-cutting themes for all mine action. It reflects awareness of the cultural context of gendered employment in mine action specific to Sri Lanka, with a focus on women's empowerment.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & REPORTING (10% of overall score)	6	As required under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), Sri Lanka has submitted an initial Article 7 report and a subsequent annual updated report. While progress can be seen in information management, data reporting between operators and the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) continued to reflect a number of disparities and inconsistencies, which are also apparent in the Article 7 reports.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	8	Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020, developed with the support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining Centre, elaborates the national planning and tasking criteria, which are strongly centred around resettlement and urgent livelihood priorities for displaced civilians.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	Ongoing revisions to Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards took place in 2017 and in 2018, in a reportedly extensive review process. They were not yet made public. Improvements to land release methodology and corresponding increases in efficiency were reported by operators in 2018.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	Sri Lanka is well on track to meet its Article 5 clearance deadline of June 2028 and has set a highly ambitious goal of completing clearance of all mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) by end 2020. It did not, however, meet its national mine action strategy target for land release in 2018.
Average Score	7.4	Overall Programme Performance: GOOD

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Ministry of National Policies, Economic Affairs, Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, Vocational Training, Skills Development and Youth Affairs
- National Mine Action Centre (NMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH) and sub-contractor SHARP
- Sri Lankan Army (SLA) Humanitarian Demining Units

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

According to Sri Lanka's NMAC, as at 30 April 2019, 271 mined areas were believed to contain anti-personnel mines covering a total of just over 22.4km² with a further nine suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) that may contain anti-personnel mines covering just under 1.6km², for a total of 280 areas with a size of close to 24km².¹

However, NMAC also reported that a total of nearly 5.1km² of clearance was not reflected in these Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database figures, along with a further 209,600m² expected to be cancelled and over 2.5km² expected to be reduced through technical survey. On this basis, NMAC reported that the actual estimate of remaining contamination was closer to 16.4km².²

Sri Lanka was once extensively contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). Most remaining contamination is in the north, the focus of three decades of armed conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which ended in May 2009. Much progress in land release has occurred in the last decade however, with estimates of total contamination falling sharply: from 506km² at the end of 2010, to 98km² at the end of 2012, to nearly 68.4km² in 2015, and down to close to 16.4km² as at April 2019. The Northern province is still by far the most affected, as set out in Table 1.³

Table 1: Mined area and ERW contamination (at end 2018)⁴

Province	District	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHAs and CHAs	Total area (m ²)
Northern	Jaffna	16	1,635,450	1	182,783	17	1,818,233
	Kilinochchi	77	9,541,362	0	0	77	9,541,362
	Mullaitivu	94	7,911,557	5	649,220	99	8,560,777
	Vavuniya	18	1,303,850	1	667,057	19	1,970,907
	Mannar	53	1,626,788	2	76,177	55	1,702,965
Subtotals		258	22,019,007	9	1,575,237	267	23,594,244
Eastern	Trincomalee	7	170,922	0	0	7	170,922
	Ampara	1	12,686	0	0	1	12,686
	Batticaloa	1	8,294	0	0	1	8,294
Subtotals		9	191,902	0	0	9	191,902
North Central	Anuradhapura	4	216,524	0	0	4	216,524
Subtotals		4	216,524	0	0	4	216,524
Totals		271	22,427,433	9	1,575,237	280	24,002,670

While the progress achieved in land release in the past decade is remarkable, NMAC reported that just over a further 2.4km² of newly confirmed hazardous area was added to the database in 2018 as a result of mine action operations in 2018.⁵ Operators reported continuing to confirm new hazardous areas during demining operations, with MAG alone confirming 40 new hazardous areas with a size of nearly 0.7km² in four districts during the year.⁶

MAG informed Mine Action Review that the CHA reported in Batticaloa district was identified after clearance of the district was completed in 2017.⁷

In total, in April 2019, Sri Lanka reported that since demining operations began in 2002, Sri Lanka has been able to declare 4,616 areas totalling over 1,280km² free from the threat of mines, with the destruction of more than 737,000 anti-personnel mines and over 1,400,000 other explosive items, including anti-vehicle mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO).⁸

Non-technical survey which began in June 2015 was completed in February 2017, with cancellation of 42km² of SHA, reducing total contamination from more than 68km² to close to 26km².⁹ In another milestone achievement, Batticaloa district in Eastern province was declared free of the threat of mines in June 2017, the first of Sri Lanka's mine-affected provinces to do so.¹⁰ As at August 2019, clearance of two other districts, Puttalam, Polonnaruwa, was also reportedly complete.

Most remaining contamination is located in Sri Lanka's five northern districts. Both sides made extensive use of mines, including belts of P4 Mk I and Mk II blast anti-personnel mines laid by the SLA, and long defensive lines with a mixture of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) laid by the LTTE.¹¹ Indian Peacekeeping Forces also used mines during their presence from July 1987 to January 1990.¹²

The SLA used both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, with all use said to have been recorded.¹³ Operators have encountered a wide range of LTTE devices, including anti-personnel mines with anti-tilt and anti-lift mechanisms. Tripwire-activated Claymore-type mines and, to a lesser extent, anti-vehicle mines, were also used by the LTTE, along with a number of forms of improvised devices to act as fragmentation mines, bar mines, electrical and magnetically initiated explosive devices, and mines connected to detonating cord to mortar and artillery shells.¹⁴

Aside from mines, Sri Lanka remains contaminated with a wide range of ERW, including unexploded air-dropped bombs, artillery shells and missiles, mortar bombs, hand-held anti-tank projectiles, and rifle and hand grenades. Large caches of abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) also exist, particularly in the north.¹⁵ These are being cleared at the same time as the remaining minefields.¹⁶

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs became the lead agency for mine action in 2015 as chair of the interministerial National Steering Committee for Mine Action (NSCMA). In 2019, the Ministry's name had changed to the Ministry of National Policies, Economic Affairs, Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, Vocational Training, Skills Development, and Youth Affairs. The Ministry's Secretary serves as the Director of the NMAC. The NMAC has responsibilities for priority setting, information management, quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC), coordination with demining organisations and cooperation partners, and establishing policy and standards.¹⁷

Clearance operations are coordinated, tasked, and quality managed by a Regional Mine Action Office (RMAO) in Kilinochchi, working in consultation with District Steering Committees for Mine Action. The Committees are chaired by government agents heading district authorities.¹⁸

The Government of Sri Lanka created a national budget line for mine action in 2015.¹⁹ According to Sri Lanka's initial Article 7 transparency report, the government of Sri Lanka has committed 758,534,964 rupees (approx. US\$4.45 million) each year in 2018–20 to cover the operational costs of the SLA Humanitarian Demining Units and the Navy Humanitarian Demining Unit's survey and clearance activities, with an additional 20 million rupees (US\$118,497) a year to cover the administrative costs of the NMAC.²⁰

GENDER

Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy for 2016–20 contains a specific section on gender and diversity, which it emphasises are cross-cutting issues for the planning, implementation, and monitoring of all mine action initiatives. The strategy pledges to ensure that all mine action activities, from survey and clearance to victim assistance, are conducted in a targeted manner to ensure the equal participation of all age and gender groups, and that all data is collected is disaggregated by sex and age. It further recognises that mine action in Sri Lanka should be tied to the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality and the empowerment of women, noting that the safe-guarding of non-discriminatory employment opportunities and the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women has been a particularly successful aspect of Sri Lanka's national mine action programme.²¹

In 2019, Ms. Sasi Jalatheepan was appointed Deputy Director of the NMAC, promoted from within the government Ministry which oversees the NMAC. She is the first woman to hold this position in Sri Lanka.

National operator DASH considers gender equality and employment of women important to its programme, with 25% of its staff Sri Lankan female employees, 80% of whom are widows, single mothers, and/or breadwinners for their families. Together with its subcontractor, SHARP, both have sought to progressively increase the number of women employed in operational positions, recognising the positive impact employment has on women and their families' well-being.²²

International operators The HALO Trust and MAG confirmed that each organisation has gender policies in place, with a focus on achieving equal access to employment, gender-balanced survey and clearance teams, gender-focused community liaison outreach, disaggregated data collection, and a gender focus to be employed during pre- and post-clearance assessments.²³ Both organisations reported increasing efforts to encourage women to apply for operational, as well as managerial positions, and positive trends in the increasing number of women employed in their respective programmes as a result.²⁴

The HALO Trust reported that more than 40% of its staff in Sri Lanka were women and that it was making special efforts to employ women war widows and women who are the sole breadwinners of their families. It reported its deployment structure was designed to allow demining teams to be deployed daily from bases in Kilinochchi, Jaffna, and Jeyapuram, in order to allow female staff to return to their homes at the end of each working day, rather than being based in remote camps for lengthy periods of time. This ensured that women who had dependants at home were able to provide for their families while maintaining their daily home lives. HALO Trust also reported specific efforts to encourage women's employment through advertising maternity leave policies.²⁵

MAG reported actively encouraging women to take up traditionally male-oriented roles within its programme, including operationally as deminers, mechanical operators, site supervisors, or team leaders. It stated that overcoming barriers which inhibited participation by women, girls, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and other marginalised groups was an essential focus for its programme operations in order to ensure that programme delivery is inclusive, both in terms of internal staff composition and external programme outreach. As such, it reported that internal training and awareness-raising ensures that staff working with communities recognise the importance of gender and diversity and have an understanding of tools and approaches to enable inclusive participation.²⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Sri Lanka's national IMSMA database has undergone substantial and continuing improvements since the installation of an updated version in 2015 and a subsequent process of data entry and ground verification.²⁷ Since that time, operators have reported that significant efforts have been exerted by all stakeholders to correct erroneous data entered into the IMSMA database and to update it on the basis of re-survey, leading to a more accurate representation of remaining contamination.²⁸

In 2019, The HALO Trust reported it was submitting reports every two weeks to NMAC and that a review of IMSMA data was usually held on a quarterly basis.²⁹ It reported that a number of training sessions were held in 2018, including a follow-up Geographic Information System (GIS) training delivered by HALO Trust staff for NMAC, the RMAO, and the SLA Humanitarian Demining Units, with a focus on developing new skills using Esri ArcGIS online software for the creation of maps and operational dashboards. It had budgeted for

further information management capacity development initiatives in 2019, with a focus on recording and display of clearance data during ongoing tasks and training in the use of a prediction tool, developed by HALO, to assist the NMAC with end-state planning.³⁰

MAG reported that the number of meetings held to update the IMSMA database increased in 2018, with weekly meetings frequently held with the RMAO to ensure that database entries and newly identified SHAs were recorded accurately. A transition to the use of IMSMA Core software with assistance from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) is also planned for 2020.³¹

In compliance with its APMBBC obligations, Sri Lanka submitted an initial Article 7 transparency report, which appears to cover the period from 2002 up until August 2018, and a subsequent annual updated report with information current as at April 2019.³² Both reports reflect considerable progress in the quality of reporting, although challenges remain.

PLANNING AND TASKING

At the request of the NMAC, Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy for 2016–20 was reviewed in April 2018 in a multi-stakeholder workshop facilitated by the GICHD, and in consultation with operators and the SLA. The reviewed strategy was officially re-launched at an event in Colombo in March 2019, attended by representatives of all mine action stakeholders, government officials, civil society, and international donor governments.

As stated, the strategy sets the goal of clearing all mines by end 2020, and contains the following strategic objectives:

1. The remaining mine/ERW problem is addressed using the most appropriate methodologies and tools.
2. Mine/ERW safe behaviour among women, girls, boys and men is promoted.
3. The needs of mine/ ERW victims are determined and met and victims are integrated into the society.
4. Sri Lanka complies with its international convention obligations.
5. Long-term residual contamination is effectively managed with appropriate and sustainable national capacities.
6. Sri Lanka mine action sector can access good quality information for its strategic and operational decision-making.³³

The initial strategy set a target of the release of 6.5km² of contamination by clearance and technical survey per year.³⁴ This target increased however to 9km² released through clearance and technical survey per year in the revised version of the strategy published in September 2018 (but only finalised in 2019).³⁵ The revised strategy states that "completion of clearance at the end of 2020 will only be possible if considerably more funding is made available, allowing all five operators to expand to their maximum capacity".³⁶

The strategy commits the government of Sri Lanka to ensure that relevant plans are in place to ensure effective management of residual contamination.³⁷ It sets out that the NMAC will lead efforts to plan for a transitional phase, a process which will involve the SLA, relevant government ministries, and civil society, noting that post-completion roles and responsibilities for management of residual contamination must be clarified, transparent, and communicated to all relevant stakeholders. It also commits the government and mine action operators to develop strategies for the demobilisation of deminers as completion approaches, in order to enable them vocational training and other employment prospects.³⁸

Sri Lanka's mine action programme has a well-developed prioritisation system. The primary priority is the clearance of land for resettlement of displaced persons, where it is essential that areas used for livelihoods are cleared simultaneously. According to the NMAC, despite marking of contaminated areas and sustained risk education, returnees are likely to enter contaminated areas, especially agricultural areas, to meet their basic livelihood needs. As such, socio-economic pressures and livelihood activities are vital considerations in the prioritisation process in relation to resettlement plans.³⁹

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

There is no national mine action legislation in Sri Lanka, based on available information. According to The HALO Trust and MAG, a review of Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) was carried out in May 2017 with the input of all demining operators, and support from the GICHD. Input on suggested changes was subsequently provided by all stakeholders in the second quarter of 2018 and a follow-up workshop was held in April 2018, facilitated by the GICHD, to discuss proposed revisions. As at August 2018, however, the subsequent expected revised version of the NMAS had yet to be made public and the previous version remained in place.⁴⁰

The HALO Trust reported increased land release output in 2018 due to a number of improvements in methodology and standing operating procedures (SoPs). HALO Trust said these included more deminers carrying out raking, which HALO Trust referred to as "REDS" or "Rapid Excavation and Detection System", and a corresponding decrease in the number of deminers using full manual excavation. The REDS method, HALO stated, had a higher clearance rate of nine to twelve square metres per deminer per day, compared to seven to nine square metres per deminer doing full manual excavation methods.⁴¹

The number of teams using the REDS method increased from 16 at the start of the year to 25 by December 2018. Improvements to the REDS methodology were also made during the year, expanding the technique's application from a 1.2-metre-wide demining lane to a 3-metre-wide lane. The rationale for the change was that a deminer working over a wide lane would result in more efficient use of time and energy, and, as such, the increase to 3-metre-wide lanes was expanded to all REDS teams in June, following trials carried out in May.⁴²

The HALO Trust also reported an increase in mechanical clearance outputs from 2017 to 2018 following research and development in ground preparation and spatial management. It reported a 70% increase in mechanical clearance rates where a PrimeTech 300D tiller and "earth bunds" to facilitate simultaneous deployment of machines and manual demining are used.⁴³ The tiller is a remote-controlled armoured machine, designed to withstand any detonations. The PrimeTech tills (ploughs) the soil first, then an excavation machine moves the tilled soil into a cleared area where it is spread out for manual inspection by raking. Tilled soil can be excavated and manually inspected much faster than non-tilled soil.⁴⁴

According to the NMAC, external QA and QC were conducted in 2018 as in previous years.⁴⁵ The HALO Trust and MAG confirmed that NMAC continued QA/QC in 2018, with completed areas sampled during post-clearance inspection prior to handover to local communities.⁴⁶ Final QA checks of post-clearance inspection had been occurring within one month of HALO Trust's submission of completion reports, the organisation said, and approval of minefield execution plans often occurred within the same day of submission.⁴⁷

OPERATORS

In 2018, demining continued to be conducted by the SLA; a national NGO, DASH and its subcontractor national organisation SHARP; and the two international NGOs, The HALO Trust and MAG.

The HALO Trust reported that, on average, HALO employed 683 operations personnel per month in 2018, a slight increase from 654 operations personnel per month in 2017.⁴⁸ With predicted increased donor funding, HALO planned to recruit and deploy an additional eight manual teams and five mechanical teams in 2019, resulting in a workforce of more than 800 staff.

MAG's capacity increased in 2018 to 18 manual clearance teams, up from 15 in 2017, and nine mechanical teams, an addition of one from the previous year, as a result of increased funding. Highly encouragingly, MAG reported that it was increasing its capacity from 18 manual clearance teams to 36 in 2019 as a result of increased funding, and that, as a consequence, its capacity was set to double in a very short time.⁴⁹

According to the NMAC, in 2018, the SLA's demining unit deployed a total of 380 personnel in demining operations, which was a slight decrease from the 418 employed in 2017. DASH's demining personnel remained at 365 in 2018, but with a decrease in the number of demining staff deployed by its subcontractor, SHARP, which fell by more than half to 50.⁵⁰

OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2018, The HALO Trust reported that as at December 2018, a total of nine mechanical assets were deployed in operations, including five front-end loaders, one tracked Caterpillar, one JCB excavator, one Prime Tech tiller, and one Beach Tech machine. This increase in capacity compared to previous years was enabled by greater donor funding and more use of machines to clear mine lines in the Muhamalai minefield. The HALO Trust planned to purchase several additional mechanical assets during 2019.⁵¹

According to the NMAC, the SLA reportedly deployed seven mechanical assets and eleven mine detection dogs in 2018.⁵² MAG reported deploying nine mechanical teams, including excavators, mini-excavators, and front-end loaders for vegetation clearance and ground preparation to facilitate clearance.⁵³

DEMINER SAFETY

According to NMAC, a total of six persons were involved in demining accidents in 2018: four injured in separate incidents in Trincomalee, Kilinochchi, and Jaffna districts, and two deminers killed in an incident in Mullaitivu district. NMAC informed Mine Action Review that as per Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards, investigations were conducted shortly after each incident and lessons learned were shared as part of awareness raising efforts by NMAC with the organisations concerned.⁵⁴

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2018

A total of nearly 4.8km² of anti-personnel mined area was reported released in 2018: more than 3.46km² through clearance, reduction of nearly 1.3km² through technical survey, and close to 0.01km² cancelled through non-technical survey.⁵⁵

SURVEY IN 2018

A total of 1.3km² was reportedly released through survey in 2018: 7,590m² cancelled through non-technical survey in 2018, along with almost 1.3km² reduced through technical survey.⁵⁶ This compared with 2017, when a total of close to 2.5km² was released through survey (0.96km² cancelled and 1.54km² reduced).⁵⁷

According to the NMAC, a continued decrease in survey output was a result of the re-survey which was completed in early 2017. As a result, there were no area tasks cancelled through survey in 2018, and partial cancellations within tasks rarely happened during the year, it said.⁵⁸ MAG reported that a greater accuracy in defining new SHAs through non-technical survey also contributed to lesser cancellation and area reduction during the year.⁵⁹ The HALO Trust did not report any cancellation through non-technical survey in 2018. Three tasks were identified for cancellation but due to restricted access caused by flooding, cancellation was postponed until 2019.⁶⁰

The HALO Trust also reported that a small increase in area reduced through technical survey in 2018 of just over 72,100m² was due to the nature of the tasks worked on in 2018, which included more SLA tasks where distinct and

clean minelaying patterns were more likely to occur, thereby increasing opportunities for reduction through technical survey.⁶¹ HALO Trust also reported identifying and surveying nine new tasks in 2018 with a total size of 193,776m².⁶² MAG also reported identifying 40 CHAs in 2018, with a total size of 743,695m² in Mannar, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya.⁶³

MAG reported a decrease in the amount of area reduced through technical survey in 2018, as the clearance to technical survey ratio shifted from 45:55 to 60:40 during the year. Additionally, the programme worked predominantly on newer, more accurate SHAs identified in the re-survey in 2017.⁶⁴

Table 2: Cancellation of mined area through non-technical survey in 2018⁶⁵

Province	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Mannar	MAG	6,359
Trincomalee	MAG	1,231
Total		7,590

Table 3: Reduction of mined area through technical survey in 2018⁶⁶

District	Operator	Area reduced (m ²)
Anuradhapura	Sri Lanka Army	45,025
Jaffna	Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony	2,440
	HALO Trust	205,467
Kilinochchi	Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony	129,417
	HALO Trust	44,163
	SHARP	67,260
Mannar	MAG	411,294
Mullaitivu	Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony	100,473
	HALO Trust	11,006
	MAG	116,410
	Sri Lanka Army	30,929
Puttalam	Sri Lanka Army	472
Trincomalee	MAG	54,373
	Sri Lanka Army	2,780
Vavuniya	Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony	74,761
Total		1,296,270

CLEARANCE IN 2018

More than 3.46km² of mined area was reportedly cleared in 2018, with a total of 31,323 anti-personnel mines, and 85 anti-vehicle mines destroyed.⁶⁷ This compared with 2017, when more than 3.2km² of mined area was reportedly cleared.⁶⁸

Table 4: Mine clearance in 2018⁶⁹

District	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Ampara	Sri Lanka Army	1	13,530	72	0	0
Anuradhapura	Sri Lanka Army	1	26,037	3	0	3
Jaffna	DASH	1	22,165	987	0	10
	HALO Trust	7	89,729	145	1	168
	Sri Lanka Army	2	45,558	72	0	276
Kilinochchi	DASH	11	280,809	2,198	41	927
	HALO Trust	14	1,506,703	9,138	31	2,214
	SHARP	5	215,934	3,432	12	1,570
	Sri Lanka Army	4	90,384	2,052	0	51
Mannar	MAG	31	519,916	2,458	0	152
Mullaitivu	DASH	11	108,855	4,672	0	3,342
	HALO Trust	4	117,202	191	0	7
	MAG	6	80,099	769	0	4
	Sri Lanka Army	5	137,809	1,938	0	75
Polonnaruwa	Sri Lanka Army	1	5,825	2	0	0
Puttalam	Sri Lanka Army	1	17,761	815	0	0
Trincomalee	MAG	8	113,103	600	0	9
	Sri Lanka Army	1	27,123	1,441	0	2
Vavuniya	DASH	3	45,972	338	0	16
Totals		117	3,464,514	31,323	85	8,826

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

The HALO Trust reported an increase of just over 410,400m² of anti-personnel mine clearance in 2018 compared with the previous year, which it attributed to an increase in the average number of teams deployed, from 61 to 65, with an increase in donor funding, along with a number of improvements in land release methodology and standard operating procedures that resulted in increased efficiency (see section on land release methodology above).⁷⁰ The number of anti-personnel mines destroyed by HALO Trust during clearance also increased significantly, from nearly 6,600 in 2017 to almost 9,500 in 2018.⁷¹

MAG also reported increased clearance output in 2018, by a smaller margin of just over 80,400m², which it said was due to the introduction of an additional mechanical asset for ground preparation and vegetation removal and three additional mine action teams. The number of anti-personnel mines MAG reported clearing more than doubled, however, from just over 1,700 in 2017 to over 3,800 in 2018.⁷²

In addition, the HALO Trust reported 299 anti-personnel mines were destroyed during explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks in 2018, along with 2 anti-vehicle mines, and 69 items of UXO.⁷³

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

**Table 5: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance (2014–18)**

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2018	3.46
2017	3.25
2016	2.35
2015	3.52
2014	3.75
Total	16.33

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Sri Lanka is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 June 2028. It should complete clearance far in advance of this deadline, at the latest by the end of 2021.

The HALO Trust and MAG have both reported that meeting the end-2020 goal is an ambitious target which will require additional funding and capacity.⁷⁴ While there were a number of positive developments towards this goal during the year, a significant set-back was that the anticipated increase in capacity of the SLA demining units did not materialise in 2018 as was hoped. NMAC additionally also continued to be under-resourced.⁷⁵

MAG had hoped to complete clearance of all remaining tasks in Trincomalee by mid-2018, enabling the Government of Sri Lanka to declare Sri Lanka's second mine-affected district after Batticaloa as free of mines. However, it reported that nine CHAs with a total size of over 182,000m² had been newly identified in Trincomalee in 2018–19, and that as at August 2019, clearance was ongoing and expected to continue into 2020.⁷⁶

The HALO Trust reported that, in coordination with NMAC and its RMAO, all accessible minefields were expected to be cleared in Jaffna district by the end of 2019, a highly significant achievement given the level of contamination. The HALO Trust stated that while it did not have permission as at August 2019 to conduct clearance inside the High Security Zone, it was continuing to pursue a collaboration with the SLA to support further handover of cleared areas to local communities. At the same time, it was continuing to focus operations on the Muhamalai minefield, along with other tasks in southern Kilinochchi district and northern Mullaitivu district.⁷⁷

It also reported that with an expected increase in donor funding, HALO can complete its allocated clearance tasks by the end of 2020. However, it noted that HALO will likely need to absorb tasks from other organisations to compensate for shortfalls and that key discussions on this issue will be required across the mine action sector.⁷⁸

MAG cautioned that its community liaison teams alone had confirmed an additional 21 hazardous areas with a size of over 486,900m² in the first seven months of 2019, in addition to what was identified in 2018. As a result, MAG's teams would need to work at a fully increased capacity until 2021 to meet the current allocations, it said. If funding support is stepped up, however, the timeframe could be reduced. Without this increase, reaching the 2020 national goal will not be likely, MAG said.⁷⁹

At the same time, the re-launch of the National Mine Action Strategy in March 2019 and the government of Sri Lanka's renewed commitment to becoming mine free by 2020, has attracted new attention from the international donor community and operators reported receiving increased funding in 2019.⁸⁰

- 1 Email from Sasi Jalatheepan, Deputy Director, NMAC, 11 August 2019; and Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 9. The Article 7 report states that the amount of suspected hazardous area remaining was 1,392,454m², but still reports total contamination as 24,002,670m², which is consistent with Sri Lanka's reporting to Mine Action Review that the size of the remaining amount of SHA was in fact 1,575,237m². The Article 7 report contains a number of other inconsistencies and mathematical errors.
- 2 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 11. There are discrepancies and inconsistencies in the figures reported in the Article 7 report on the projections for cleared area not included in IMSMA; area to be cancelled; and area to be reduced versus the total estimate of remaining contamination based on these projections.
- 3 Emails from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, Assistant Director Operations, Quality Management, and Planning, Chairman Accreditation Committee, NMAC, 8 and 9 October 2018.
- 4 Emails from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019 and Beth Lomas, MAG, 22 August 2019; and Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 9.
- 5 Email from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019.
- 6 Email from Beth Lomas, Programme Support Coordinator, South and South-east Asia, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 7 Email from Beth Lomas, MAG, 22 August 2019.
- 8 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 5.
- 9 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 27 September 2017.
- 10 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018.
- 11 Interviews with demining operators, Colombo, 29 March–2 April 2010; and with Maj. Pradeep Gamage, Officer-in-Charge, North Jaffna Humanitarian Demining Unit (HDU), Jaffna, 3 April 2007.
- 12 Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs, "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.
- 13 Ibid.; and interview with Rob Syfret, Operations Manager, HALO Trust, in Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.
- 14 Email from Valon Kumnova, HALO Trust, 11 April 2014; and "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.
- 15 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.
- 16 Email from Matthew Hovell, Regional Director, HALO Trust, 30 September 2018.
- 17 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 12.
- 18 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 9.
- 19 Ibid., p. 22.
- 20 Initial Article 7 Report, submitted in 2018, p. 13; and Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 12.
- 21 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 6.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Emails from Belinda Vause, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 26 Email from Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 27 36 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018.
- 28 Emails from Bartholomew Digby, HALO Trust, 5 March 2018; Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018 and 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.
- 29 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Email from Asa Massleberg, GICHD, 5 September 2019.
- 32 Neither report specifies the date submitted or precise reporting period.
- 33 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 11.
- 34 Ibid., p. 13.
- 35 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 11.
- 36 Ibid., p. 4.
- 37 Ibid., p. 1.
- 38 Ibid., p. 17.
- 39 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 3.
- 40 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 41 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 The "bund" system, HALO Trust reported, involves the creation of a soil mound, or "bund", using mechanical assets to create a natural barrier within a mechanical task to separate two areas for work, which decreases the safety distance required by the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and allows for simultaneous mechanical clearance and raking. Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 44 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 45 Email from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019.
- 46 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 47 Email from Bartholomew Digby, HALO Trust, 5 March 2018.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Email from Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 50 Email from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019.
- 51 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 52 Email from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019.
- 53 Email from Beth Lomas, MAG, 22 August 2019.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Emails from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 27 September 2018 and 8 October 2018; Bartholomew Digby, HALO Trust, 5 March 2018; and Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018.
- 56 Emails from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 57 Emails from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 27 September 2018 and 8 October; Bartholomew Digby, HALO Trust, 5 March 2018; and Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018.
- 58 Email from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019.
- 59 Email from Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 60 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Email from Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Emails from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July and 22 August 2019.
- 66 Emails from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July and 22 August 2019.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Emails from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 27 September 2018 and 8 October 2018; Bartholomew Digby, HALO Trust, 5 March 2018; and Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018.
- 69 Emails from Sasi Jalatheepan, NMAC, 11 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July and 22 August 2019; and Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 70 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Email from Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 73 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 74 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 75 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 76 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 22 August 2019.
- 77 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 Email from Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.
- 80 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.