

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 FEBRUARY 2025
ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION:

NATIONAL ESTIMATE

0.5 KM²

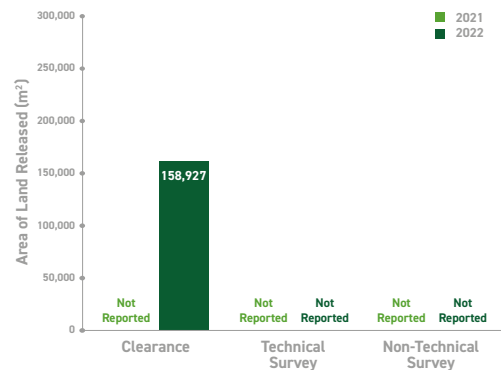
AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2022

158,927 M²

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2022

NOT REPORTED

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **HIGH**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Oman still plans to complete release of all areas ahead of its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline of 1 February 2025. Oman reported having cleared 158,927m² of anti-personnel (AP) mined area in 2022 but it is not known whether any AP mines were found in the process.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Oman should ensure it submits and makes publicly available its Article 7 reports covering 2021 and 2022.
- Oman should ensure it conducts land release operations according to international standards, applying non-technical survey (NTS) and technical survey (TS) to confirm contamination prior to clearance whenever possible.
- Oman should integrate a gender and diversity plan in its mine action programme.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2022)	Score (2021)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	7	Oman does not have any confirmed mined areas, but does have suspected contamination resulting from mine use during the 1960s and 1970s. Oman has reported earlier clearance of most of the mined areas but is now “re-clearing” certain areas to make sure they are free of AP mines.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	8	8	All clearance is conducted by the Executive Operational Unit of the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Oman does not have a mine action centre but its mine action programme is fully nationally owned.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	2	2	Oman’s statements on mine action make no reference to the issue of gender and diversity. In 2022, women were not represented in Oman’s mine action programme.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	6	Oman does not have an integrated database for mine action data but relies instead on monthly reports shared by the demining army engineers. This data is then mapped and recorded digitally and on paper by the Executive Operational Unit. As at September 2023, no APMBC Article 7 report covering 2021 or 2022 had yet been published on the UNODA website for the report.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	6	In its most recent Article 7 transparency report submitted in 2021 (covering 2020), Oman included a work plan to release all remaining suspected mined areas before its 2025 Article 5 deadline. According to the plan, clearance is expected to conclude by April 2024, leaving a buffer of nine months to accommodate delays due to adverse weather or unexpected events.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	4	4	The standards to which Oman conducts its land release are not known, nor is their compliance to the international mine action standards (IMAS). It is also not known if Oman conducts evidence-based TS and/or NTS prior to clearance to target its clearance effectively.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	7	7	As at the end of 2020, Oman had completed 68% of the total area identified for re-clearance and was on track to complete re-clearance by its February 2025 Article 5 deadline. In 2022, Oman released 80% of its 2022 target as set by the work plan that Oman featured in its Article 7 report (covering 2020).
Average Score	5.7	5.8	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Royal Army of Oman (RAO)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- None

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Oman is suspected to be contaminated by anti-personnel (AP) mines, though the precise location and extent of any residual threat is not known. In its initial Article 7 report, submitted in 2015, Oman declared that no areas in the Sultanate were confirmed as mined, but reported “many” suspected mined areas in the south, particularly in the Dhofar region.¹ In a statement to the APMBC Intersessional Meetings in Geneva in June 2018, and in its Article 7 reports submitted in 2020 and 2021, Oman repeated that there were no confirmed mined areas and no record of any mine casualties for more than 20 years, but referenced the previously mentioned suspected mined areas requiring “re-search”/re-clearance in order to confirm they were free of AP mines.²

1 Initial Article 7 Report, 2015, pp. 4–5.

2 Statement of Oman, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 7–8 June 2018; and Article 7 Reports (covering 2018 and 2019, respectively).

According to Oman's 2015 report, during the mid 1960s to mid 1970s, the presence of rebel movements in Dhofar led to "vast" areas being affected by AP and anti-vehicle (AV) mines. There was small-scale use of mines by militants without maps or records of where mines were laid. Government forces reported clearing an area of contamination they had laid immediately following the end of military actions in 1976 and the Armed Sultan's Engineering Unit Forces initiated clearance of the areas suspected to have been mined by the militants.³

Oman has acknowledged that it is impossible to be certain that the areas were fully cleared and therefore re-clearing certain areas is required to ensure no AP mines remain.⁴ This is for three reasons: the size of the region (about 99,000km²); the lack of maps or marking; and the terrain (which includes mountains and valleys), with many mined areas located

on steep slopes. In addition, rain over the years may have scattered any residual mines.⁵ In 2001, it had been reported that the Royal Army of Oman had mapped seven zones of suspected mined areas based on historical records of battlefield areas, unit positions, and mine incident reports.⁶

As at the end of 2020, Oman reported a total area of 0.5km² across seven suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) as potentially contaminated with AP mines and had set out on a plan to re-clear them between February 2021 and April 2024.⁷ As at September 2022, the amount of mined area as at the end of 2022 was not publicly reported by Oman. It is not clear whether areas Oman describes as "potentially contaminated" can be technically considered as SHAs as per the definition understood by the mine action sector.

Table 1: AP mined area by area (at end 2020)⁸

Area	SHAs	Area (m ²)
East of Doukah valley	1	52,800
Line of Demafend	1	145,200
Tadhou Wadi Bouthaina	1	52,800
Sarfeit, Seik valley	1	105,600
Ain Gharnout, Afeit, Aswad valley	1	52,800
Tawi Atir	1	52,800
Thent valley	1	52,800
Totals	7	514,800

Oman is contaminated with AP and AV mines, and unexploded ordnance (UXO) as a result of the 1964–75 conflict in Dhofar region between the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf (PFLOG) and the Royal army of Oman (RAO). The RAO, with its allies Jordan, Iran, and the United Kingdom (UK) used landmines during the conflict.⁹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Oman's mine action programme is fully nationally owned.¹⁰ Clearance is performed by the Executive Operational Unit of the national Army engineers.¹¹ Oman reports its national clearance plan was elaborated in consultation with the administrative regional units.¹²

Oman stated in June 2018 that it began implementing a national programme in 2017 and was planning to set up a national mine action centre and would then appeal for supply of equipment but it did not specify when this would occur.¹³ As at 2023, however, Oman had no plans to establish a mine action centre, stating that its existing national capacities could meet the demand and maintain the ongoing clearance operations without need for a coordinating body.¹⁴

3 Initial Article 7 Report, submitted in 2015.

4 Article 7 Reports submitted in 2015, in 2020 (covering 2019), and in 2021 (covering 2020).

5 Initial Article 7 Report, 2015, pp. 4–5.

6 "Humanitarian Demining", *Journal of Mine Action*, 2001, p. 49.

7 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), p. 14.

8 Ibid.

9 "Humanitarian Demining", *Journal of Mine Action*, 2001, p. 49. See also: Arabian Gulf Digital Archives, "Military Operations in Dhofar State in Oman", 1 January 1973, pp. 92–100, at: <https://bit.ly/47yRwH9>.

10 Email from Oman Ministry of Defence (MoD), 23 June 2021.

11 Article 7 Report (covering 2018).

12 Article 7 Report (covering 2017), p. 2.

13 Statement of Oman, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 7–8 June 2018.

14 Email from Oman MoD, 23 June 2021.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Oman is not thought to have an environmental management plan specific to mine action, but the Ministry of Defence (MoD) reported in April 2022 that its clearance operations follow certain environmental standards that aim to preserve the ecosystems, including open pastures, and protect water sources and wildlife.¹⁵

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Oman reports that its national programmes, including that of mine action, follow clear guidelines that consider the needs of diverse groups, including those of different genders.¹⁶ Women, however, did not occupy supervisory, administrative, or operational positions in Oman's mine action programme in 2022.¹⁷ Women have, though, been permitted to serve in the Oman Army for a decade.¹⁸

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Oman does not have a national information management database, but the Executive Operational Unit generates monthly operational reports. Maps of the cleared areas are then produced and retained both digitally and on paper.¹⁹

Oman's most recent publicly available Article 7 report was submitted in 2021 (covering 2020), and contained disaggregated data on contamination and clearance, and an updated work plan. As at September 2023, no Article 7 report covering in 2021 or 2022 were publicly available on the UNODA website.

PLANNING AND TASKING

In its Article 7 report submitted in February 2021, Oman provided a work plan that foresees the release of all remaining suspected mined area before its Article 5 deadline in 2025.²⁰ According to the compilation of data provided in the annual Article 7 reports for 2018–20, Oman has implemented 68% of its planned mine re-clearance and expected to complete land release by April 2024, leaving a buffer of nine months ahead of its February 2025 deadline.²¹

Table 2: Land release work plan (2021–25)²²

Year	Regions	Area (m ²)
2021	Wadi Douka, Rakhout state	52,800
2022	Rakhout state, Wadi Bouthaina, Sarfit	198,000
2023	Sarfit (Wadi Siq), Ain Gharnout, Tawa Atir	211,200
2024	South of Wadi Thent + buffer time	52,800
2025		0
Total		514,800

15 Email from Oman MoD, 3 April 2022.

16 Email from Oman MoD, 23 June 2021.

17 Email from Oman MoD, 12 April 2023.

18 "Women officers set to join army in Oman", *Khaleej Times*, 21 December 2011, at: <http://bit.ly/3dYcDaH>.

19 Emails from Oman MoD, 23 June 2021 and 3 April 2022.

20 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), p. 14.

21 Article 7 Report (covering 2020).

22 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Annex 3, p. 1.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Oman reports the following standards are applied during clearance: pre-clearance field survey based on maps and available records; determination and provision of administrative and medical requirements; implementation of operational safety measures; and preservation of wildlife and the environment.²³ It is not clear whether these standards are documented and acted upon as national mine action standards (NMAS), as the term is generally understood in mine action, or to which extent they accord with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). Oman reported that mined areas were earlier cleared "in accordance with the resources available".²⁴

In 2020, as in the previous three years, no AP mines were discovered during re-clearance. Oman said the absence of AP mines "confirms the areas had previously been cleared".²⁵ It is not known whether the land release conducted in 2021-22 resulted in the discovery and destruction of any AP mines. Oman says its current operational procedures are efficient, follow the established work plan, and that they are reviewed and updated regularly.²⁶

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The Executive Operational Unit of Oman's army engineers is solely responsible for mine/explosive remnants of war (ERW) clearance.²⁷ At the end of 2022, the Unit comprised 85 personnel of various ranks and specialities.²⁸ This is a slight increase on the previous year where the Unit comprised 83 personnel.²⁹

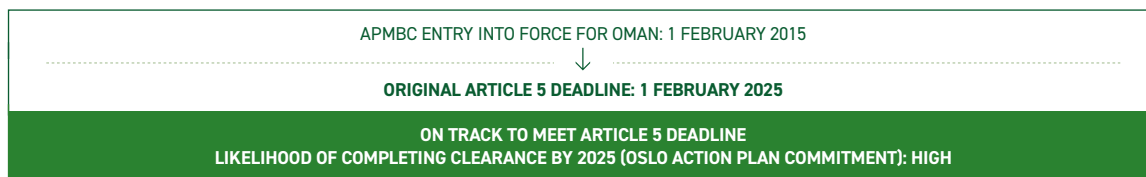
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2022

In 2022, Oman released a total of 158,927m² of AP mined area, according to information provided to Mine Action Review. The area released constitutes 80% of the 198,000m² that Oman aimed to "re-clear" in 2022 (145,200m² in Rakhout and 52,800m² in Wadi Bouthaina).³⁰ It is not known if the land release has resulted in the discovery of any AP mines, or whether Oman's work plan has been updated since its release in 2021.

Clearance output in 2022 was a significant decrease compared to area cleared two years before (2020), when Oman re-cleared 225,100m² of AP mined area in the south-western Dhofar region.³¹ Land release outputs for 2021 were not reported to Mine Action Review.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



23 Email from Oman MoD, 23 June 2021.

24 Article 7 Report (covering 2018).

25 Article 7 Report (covering 2019).

26 Email from Oman MoD, 23 June 2021.

27 Email from Oman MoD, 23 June 2021.

28 Email from Oman MoD, 12 April 2023.

29 Email from Oman MoD, 3 April 2022.

30 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Annex 3, p. 1.

31 Ibid., pp. 8-13.

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Oman is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 February 2025. It is thought to be on track to do so.

In its Article 7 report submitted in 2021 (covering 2020), Oman presented a plan to complete clearance of remaining suspected mined areas by its Article 5 deadline.³² According to the compilation of data provided in the regular Article 7 reports covering 2018–20, Oman expected to complete release of all mined areas by April 2024.³³

Oman has cited the challenges it faces in locating and clearing mines in large and remote areas of desert in addition to the tropical cyclones that hit the south of the country in 2018.³⁴

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Oman's mine action programme is fully nationally owned and the Executive Operational Unit has the capacity to address any previously unknown mined areas discovered following completion (i.e. residual contamination).³⁵

32 Ibid., p. 14.

33 Ibid.

34 Statement of Oman, Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 29 November 2018.

35 Email from Oman MoD, 23 June 2021.