



SRI LANKA

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE	For 2015	For 2014
Problem understood	8	7
Target date for completion of mine clearance	7	3
Targeted clearance	7	6
Efficient clearance	7	5
National funding of programme	5	5
Timely clearance	7	6
Land release system in place	7	5
National mine action standards	6	6
Reporting on progress	6	5
Improving performance	8	5
PERFORMANCE SCORE: AVERAGE BUT IMPROVING	6.8	5.3

PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

Sri Lanka's mine action programme performed well in 2015–16. Improved land release methodology and re-survey starting in May 2015 significantly reduced estimates of the size of remaining anti-personnel mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination. During the course of the year, a new national mine action strategy was adopted, which sets the date for completion of clearance by 2020. With the election of a new government in January 2015, it appears that there is renewed political commitment to mine action in Sri Lanka.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Sri Lanka should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Continued efforts should be made to implement efficient land release methodology and to more accurately define the size of remaining contamination.
- The quality of the national mine action database should be improved to enable effective planning and accurate reporting on land release.
- Greater resources should be allocated to the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) to enable it to increase its capacity and effectiveness, and to ensure sufficient resources for mine action activities.
- Sri Lanka should implement its resource mobilisation plan and seek increased funding to ensure mine action activities can meet the 2020 clearance target.

CONTAMINATION

Sri Lanka is extensively contaminated by mines and ERW. Most contamination is in the north, the focus of three decades of armed conflict between the government and the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE), which ended in May 2009. However, estimates of total contamination have fallen sharply: from 506km² at the end of 2010, to 98km² at the end of 2012, to nearly 78km² at the end of 2014, and down to 43.6km² as at 30 June 2016. NMAC's estimates of contamination across the ten affected districts across three provinces are set out in Table 1.¹

Table 1: Mine/ERW contamination as at 30 June 2016²

Province	District	Area (m ²)
Northern	Jaffna	4,468,855
	Kilinochchi	11,994,855
	Mullaitivu	18,198,667
	Vavuniya	3,623,868
	Mannar	4,279,588
Subtotal		42,565,459
Eastern	Trincomalee	346,733
	Batticaloa	323,490
	Ampara	9,917
Subtotal		680,140
North Central	Anuradhapura	344,437
Subtotal		344,437
Total		43,590,036

1 Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs, "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016-2020", May 2016; email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, Assistant Director of Operations, Quality Management, and Planning, and Chairman of Accreditation Committee, NMAC, 14 October 2016; and National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), "Annual Progress Report on Mine Action Year 2014", undated but 2015.

2 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.

However, actual contamination was thought to be less than 35km², considerably lower than the 43.6km² contained in the national database, in part due to survey results from Northern province that had not yet been submitted to NMAC.³

Most remaining contamination is located in Sri Lanka's five northern districts. Both sides made extensive use of mines, including belts of P4 MK1 blast anti-personnel mines laid by the Sri Lanka Army (SLA), and long defensive lines with a mixture of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) laid by the LTTE, defending approaches to the northern town of Kilinochchi.⁴ Indian Peacekeeping Forces also used landmines during their presence from July 1987 to January 1990.⁵

The SLA used both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, with all use said to have been recorded. Minefield records were handed over to the national mine action programme and entered into the national database after the conflict, which greatly facilitated clearance.⁶ Operators have encountered a wide range of LTTE devices, including anti-personnel mines with anti-tilt and anti-lift mechanisms, most of which it constructed itself, and often containing a larger explosive charge than the P4 MK1 mines (up to 140g compared to 30g). 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 IED to act as fragmentation mines, bar mines, electrical and magnetically initiated explosive devices, and mines connected to detonating cord to mortar and artillery shells.⁷

Sri Lanka remains contaminated with a wide range of ERW, including unexploded air-dropped bombs, artillery shells and missiles, mortar bombs, handheld anti-tank projectiles, and rifle and hand grenades. Large caches of abandoned explosive ordnance also exist, particularly in the north.⁸ During the first 10 months of 2015, a monthly average of 168 items of ERW was reported by civilians and communities.⁹ A total of eight mine/ERW victims were recorded in five incidents in 2015 by November, down from sixteen victims in a total of eleven incidents in 2014.¹⁰

Since early 2009, resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has been the focus of survey and clearance activities, including in Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, and Vavuniya districts in the north, and Trincomalee, Batticaloa, and Ampara districts in the east.¹¹ In 2015, NMAC confirmed that clearance continued to focus on high-priority areas for resettlement, agricultural land, irrigation tank areas, and other infrastructure and development initiatives, as well as of heavily mined areas such as around Kilinochchi and the Muhamalai Forward Defence Line.¹² In addition, in 2015, following MAG's re-survey of Mannar district, the Government of Sri Lanka granted MAG access to eastern districts of the Northern province for the first time since 2009; and following completion of re-survey, MAG deployed clearance teams in 2016, a significantly increase in the reach of humanitarian mine action in the country.¹³

3 Interviews with Ivica Stilin, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Vavuniya, 13 September 2016; and Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, Colombo, 15 September 2016.

4 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.

5 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.

6 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6; and interview with Rob Syfret, Operations Manager, HALO Trust, in Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.

7 Email from Valon Kumnova, HALO Trust, 11 April 2014; and "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.

8 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 19.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

12 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.

13 Email from Alistair Moir, Country Director, MAG, 20 October 2016.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Prison Reforms, 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), which sets policy and is mandated to “manage linkages within the government, mine action community and donors”.¹⁴ Its policies and decisions are implemented by the NMAC, set up in 2010¹⁵ to liaise with government ministries and development partners to determine mine action priorities; prepare a strategic plan; and set annual work plans to put it into effect. NMAC is also responsible for accrediting mine action operators, setting national standards, and acting as the secretariat of NSCMA.¹⁶

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.¹⁷

Under its new national mine action strategy for 2016–20 (see below), the Government of Sri Lanka intends to convene steering committee meetings for mine action up to twice per year at national level and at three regional levels, one for the East (Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara) and two for the North (Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu, and Vavuniya, Mannar, Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura, respectively).¹⁸

While NMAC’s activities were severely curtailed in early 2015 due to a suspension in funding while it awaited reassignment to a new government ministry following the January elections, it appears that issues were resolved during the year and there is renewed political commitment to mine action in Sri Lanka. The previous government had set a deadline of the end of 2014 for the withdrawal of international operators from the country, but agreed to extend the deadline until the end of 2016. In September 2016, NMAC reported that it fully expected international operators to continue operations until the completion of clearance in 2020 under the new 2016–20 mine action strategy.¹⁹

Strategic Planning

In 2015, a new national mine action strategy was drafted with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and in consultation with operators and the SLA. The strategy, which includes a completion plan for clearance by 2020 and is accompanied by a resource mobilisation plan, was formally endorsed by the Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Hindu Religious Affairs on 25 May 2016.²⁰

The strategy contains the following strategic objectives:

- The scope of the mine/ERW problem is identified, confirmed, and addressed using appropriate methodologies and resources.
- Mine/ERW safe behaviour among women, girls, boys and men is promoted.
- The needs of mine/ERW victims are determined and met and victims are integrated into society.
- Sri Lanka accedes to the APMBBC and complies with relevant obligations.
- Long-term residual contamination is effectively managed by appropriate and sustainable national capacities.
- The Sri Lanka mine action sector can access quality information for its strategic and operational decision-making.²¹

An external mid-term review of the strategy will be requested by NMAC in mid-2018 to evaluate progress and ensure its continued relevance.²²

14 “The National Strategy for Mine Action in Sri Lanka”, Ministry of Economic Development, September 2010, p. 9; email from Sri Mallikarachchi, Senior IMSMA Officer, NMAC, 13 October 2015. After Sri Lanka’s January 2015 Presidential elections and change of government, the Ministry of Economic Development, which formerly housed NMAC, was dismantled. A March 2015 Cabinet memorandum then assigned development activity, implemented by the former Ministry of Economic Development, to other relevant Ministries. This resulted in the responsibility of the National Mine Action Programme being assigned to the Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs. “Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020”, May 2016, p. 10.

15 The cabinet formally approved the creation of NMAC on 10 July 2010.

16 Email from Amanthi Wickramasinghe, Programme Officer – Peace and Recovery, UNDP, Colombo, 11 March 2011.

17 “Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020”, May 2016, p. 9. It states that: “Steering committees used to play an important role in providing guidance to the mine action programme and in promoting transparency and accountability. At the national level the Steering Committee fulfilled the role of a National Mine Action Authority. It used to convene key national stakeholders including the SLA and relevant Ministries, mine action NGOs and main development partners. At regional and district levels, steering committees were tasked to ensure priority-setting of survey, clearance and MRE activities”.

18 “Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020”, May 2016, p. 10.

19 Interview with Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, Colombo, 15 September 2016.

20 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.

21 “Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020”, May 2016, p. 11.

22 Ibid., p. 27.

Standards

NMAC reported that Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards continued to be in effect in 2015, and are in line with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).²³ Operators reported no changes to the national mine action standards since 2010.²⁴

Quality Management

NMAC stated that quality assurance (QA)/quality control (QC) and post-clearance inspection activities were conducted in accordance with Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards regularly in 2015. In September 2016, however, NMAC expressed concern about reductions in QA/QC staff capacity and identified a need for assistance in training new recruits.²⁵

HALO Trust and Mines Advisory Group (MAG), the two international demining organisations operating in Sri Lanka in 2015, confirmed that external QA/QC was conducted by NMAC on clearance tasks and areas sampled during post-clearance inspection and that internal quality management processes were followed during the year.²⁶

Information Management

In August 2015, an updated version of the software for the national Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database was installed. As of October 2015, NMAC reported that all data had been entered into the updated system and 95% had been validated by ground verification.²⁷

Operators

In 2015, demining was conducted by SLA; one national non-governmental organisation (NGO), Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH); and the two international NGOs, HALO Trust and MAG. A national organisation, SHARP, became operational from January 2016 after securing funding and inheriting equipment and staff from international NGO Danish Demining Group, which closed operations in Sri Lanka in 2014.²⁸

In 2015, HALO reduced staffing and capacity, due to a cut in funding following the previous government's announcement that all international demining organisations would have to leave the country by the end of 2015. Its demining personnel went down from 931 at the start of 2015 to 264 by the end of December and its mechanical assets reduced from a maximum of ten in 2014 to five at the end of 2015.²⁹ MAG more than doubled its capacity during 2015, initially deploying five manual clearance teams and six mechanical teams, which increased to a total of twelve manual clearance teams and seven mechanical teams by December.³⁰

NMAC reported that the SLA employed a total of 555 persons in demining operations, of whom 515 were deminers, along with 11 mechanical flails. DASH, and its subcontractor, SHARP, employed 274 deminers, and a total of 355 staff during the year and one mechanical asset.³¹

LAND RELEASE

According to NMAC, a total of close to 9.8km² was released through clearance and technical survey in 2015, compared with 5.8km² in 2014.³² Most of the claimed increase was ascribed to the work of the Sri Lankan army.

With the support of MAG and DASH, NMAC re-surveyed all mined and UXO-contaminated areas, which was a priority for land release operations in Sri Lanka in 2015.³³ Non-technical survey (NTS) activities commenced in 2015 and were due to be completed by the end of November 2016, by which time NMAC expected that a total of up to 35km² would have been cancelled.³⁴ In May–December 2015, 26.4km² of suspected hazardous area (SHA) had been cancelled.³⁵

NMAC has reported that, cumulatively, a total of 131km² was reduced or cleared between 2002 and September 2015.³⁶

Survey in 2015

NMAC's official data indicated that a total of 26.4km² was cancelled by NTS and a further 6.3km² reduced through technical survey during 2015.³⁷ This compares to release in 2014 of 0.5km² through survey by HALO and 2.68km² through NTS and technical survey by MAG.³⁸

23 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.

24 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 2 October 2016.

25 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016; and interview, Colombo, 15 September 2016.

26 Interviews with Ivica Stilin, MAG, Vavuniya, 13 September 2016; and Rob Syfret, HALO, Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.

27 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.

28 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 12.

29 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick, HALO Trust, 2 October 2016.

30 Email from Janani Thambaiah, Programme Officer, MAG, 29 September 2016.

31 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.

32 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 13.

33 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 20 October 2016; and interview with Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, Colombo, 15 September 2016.

34 Interview with Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, Colombo, 15 September 2016.

35 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 14 October 2016.

36 Ibid., 25 October 2016; and "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 8.

37 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 14 October 2016.

38 Emails from Damian O'Brien, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 18 August 2015; and Alistair Moir, MAG, 25 May 2015.

Table 2: Mined area survey in 2015³⁹

Operator	SHAs cancelled	Area cancelled (m ²)	Area reduced by TS (m ²)
DASH	14	799,155	0
MAG	106	25,607,818	37,844
HALO	0	0	329,854
SLA	0	0	5,945,013
Totals	120	26,406,973	6,312,711

Clearance in 2015

According to NMAC, more than 3.52km² of mined area was cleared in 2015, and a further 6km² of contaminated area was released through battle area clearance (BAC), with the combined destruction of 27,845 anti-personnel mines, 74 anti-vehicle mines, and 4,588 items of UXO.⁴⁰ In 2014, officials reported a total of 3.7km² cleared, 2km² released through BAC, and the destruction of 32,223 anti-personnel mines, 97 anti-vehicle mines, and 27,825 items of UXO.⁴¹

Table 3: Mine clearance in 2015⁴²

Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
DASH	29	560,151	5,819	28	363
MAG	2	341,789	7,422	0	1,370
HALO	18	1,260,867	7,710	46	1,554
SLA	8	1,363,138	6,894	0	1,301
Totals	57	3,525,945	27,845	74	4,588

AP = Anti-personnel AV = Anti-vehicle

HALO reported a decrease in its clearance output in 2015, which it said directly corresponded to the reduction in staffing and capacity.⁴³

MAG reported an increase in clearance in 2015, noting that improved land release methodology resulted in a surge in the number of mines it cleared.⁴⁴ MAG began implementing a combination of technical survey and clearance in 2015, whereas in 2014, it was only releasing land through clearance. It reported that in 2015, of its total output of land cleared or reduced, 59% was reduced by technical survey and 41% through clearance.⁴⁵

Deminer Safety

In 2015, one HALO Trust deminer sustained minor injuries to a hand and burns to the neck in a demining incident.⁴⁶ MAG reported no accidents involving demining personnel in 2015.⁴⁷

39 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 14 October 2016. HALO Trust reported cancelling four SHAs with a total size of 619,426m² through NTS and reducing 462,156m² through technical survey, and confirming a further ten SHAs with a size of 103,101m². MAG additionally reported confirming 55 SHAs with a total size of 5,020,368m² and reducing a total of 487,587m² through technical survey in 2015. Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick, HALO Trust, 18 October 2016; and Janani Thambaiah, MAG, 29 September and 10 October 2016.

40 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016. Demining organisations are not permitted to destroy mines found using explosives. The SLA collects mines recovered on a daily basis which it transports to an army facility for destruction. Interviews with Ivica Stilin, MAG, in Vavuniya, 13 September 2016; and Rob Syfret, HALO, in Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.

41 "Progress of National Mine Action Programme", Ministry of Economic Development, received by email from Sri Mallikarachchi on behalf of M. M. Nayeemudeen, Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Resettlement, 29 July 2015.

42 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 14 and 25 October 2016. HALO Trust reported clearing 33 areas with a total size of 1,000,407m² and destroying 11,390 anti-personnel mines, 63

anti-vehicle mines, and 1,452 items of UXO. It stated that it did not conduct BAC in 2015. MAG reported clearing six areas with a total size of 334,412m² and destroying 7,330 anti-personnel mines and 1,428 items of UXO. Likewise, it stated it did not carry out BAC in 2015. Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick, HALO Trust, 18 October 2016; and Janani Thambaiah, MAG, 29 September and 10 October 2016.

43 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick, HALO Trust, 2 October 2016.

44 Email from Janani Thambaiah, MAG, 29 September 2016.

45 Interview with Ivica Stilin, MAG, in Vavuniya, 13 September 2016. It was maintaining this ratio in 2016, though it expected the amount of clearance to rise in future years as tasks will have become smaller and better defined following survey.

46 In 2016, HALO informed Mine Action Review that three HALO Trust deminers (not two as reported previously in 2015) sustained injuries to their arms and hands in demining incidents in 2014, in both cases as a result of breaches of excavation SOPs. Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick, HALO, 2 October 2016; and Damian O'Brien, HALO, 18 August 2015.

47 Email from Janani Thambaiah, MAG, 29 September 2016.

ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

Sri Lanka is not a state party or signatory to the APMBC but nonetheless has obligations under international human rights law to protect life, which requires the clearance of mines as soon as possible.⁴⁸

Sri Lanka's new national mine action strategy for 2016–20 contains a specific strategic objective of accession to the APMBC and compliance with its obligations.⁴⁹ In December 2015, at the Fourteenth Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC, Sri Lanka made a statement publicly announcing its commitment to accede to the Convention for the first time. It stated that following the election of the new government in January 2015, "there is a paradigm shift in the policy of the government", which was "considering seriously" to accede to the APMBC "as a matter of priority", possibly within the course of 2016.⁵⁰

In the last five years, Sri Lanka has reported clearing more than 45km² of mined area, though clearance dropped significantly in 2013 following a steady decline in capacity following closure of the operations of the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) in 2013, and two Indian demining NGOs, Horizon and Sarvatra, in 2012 (see Table 4).

Table 4: Mine clearance in 2011–15

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2015	3.52
2014	3.75
2013	6.44
2012	15.58
2011	16.58
Total	45.87

According to Sri Lanka's new national mine action strategy, 6.5km² is expected to be reduced or cleared annually, with resources remaining at the same level as in 2015. As noted above, NMAC is expected to request an external mid-term review of the strategy in 2018 to evaluate progress and to adapt the strategy if necessary.⁵¹ In early 2016, a resource mobilisation action plan to accompany the new strategy was developed by the Government of Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the GICHD, specifying, among other things, activities, tasks, responsibilities and time-lines.⁵²

The government created a national budget line for mine action in 2015.⁵³ NMAC reported that during the year, funding for its operational costs and the SLA's demining unit had been provided by the government.⁵⁴ Positively, NMAC expected an increase in funding in 2016–17.⁵⁵ However, NMAC estimated that to address the remaining contamination, about double the 2015 budget would be needed annually to complete clearance by 2020. It was noted however that this estimate could change, depending on the re-survey results.⁵⁶

In September 2016, NMAC reaffirmed that Sri Lanka can complete its goal of clearance of all anti-personnel mine contamination by the end of 2020 if international and government commitment and funding significantly increase.⁵⁷ Likewise, MAG was confident that, with sufficient funding, Sri Lanka could be "mine impact free" by 2020, if not slightly earlier.⁵⁸

By the end of 2016, MAG expected to have completed re-survey of Ampara, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee districts in Eastern province, and Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts in Northern province, and to have consolidated the data. In September 2016, MAG estimated that as little as 68,000m² remained in eight tasks in Trincomalee, and that clearance of the Eastern province could be completed by 2017. As at September 2016, it had fourteen clearance teams and four NTS/community liaison teams, and eight machines. It did not expect changes to its survey and clearance capacity or funding in 2016.⁵⁹

48 Sri Lanka is a state party to the 1996 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 6 of which requires that states parties respect and protect the right to life.

49 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 11.

50 Statement of Sri Lanka, APMBC 14th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 1 December 2015.

51 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, pp. 13 and 27.

52 Ibid, p. 26.

53 Ibid, p. 22.

54 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016. NMAC reported the government also allowed all demining related equipment to be imported tax-free during the year.

55 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.

56 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 26.

57 Email from Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, 7 October 2016.

58 Interview with Ivica Stilin, MAG, Vavuniya, 13 September 2016.

59 Email from Janani Thambaiah, MAG, 29 September 2016.

HALO reported likewise that it did not expect significant changes in capacity in 2016, though there was a possibility of a slight increase in funding by the end of the year. It also indicated that its clearance outlook in Jaffna district could improve with the potential for a small amount of land previously controlled by the SLA to be released for re-survey by HALO.⁶⁰

Operators noted the importance of developing plans for expected reductions in capacity in line with progress towards completion of clearance by 2020, including job skills trainings and redundancy packages for demining staff.⁶¹ At the same time, Sri Lanka's new strategy highlights the need for a sustainable national capacity to manage residual mine and ERW contamination afterwards, supported by the national budget.⁶² In September 2016, NMAC and operators reported that while considerable resources had been spent to equip the SLA's demining unit — a potential source of residual capacity — it lacked the means to maintain or fully deploy all of its assets, and further resources were needed to ensure machines were in working order.⁶³

60 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick, HALO Trust, 2 October 2016.

61 Interviews with Ivica Stilin, MAG, Vavuniya, 13 September 2016; and Rob Syfret, HALO, Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016.

62 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 23.

63 Interviews with Ivica Stilin, MAG, Vavuniya, 13 September 2016; and Mahinda Bandara Wickramasingha, NMAC, Colombo, 15 September 2016.