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Post-clearance documentation

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Foreword

International standards for humanitarian mine clearance programmes were first proposed by working groups at an international technical conference in Denmark, in July 1996. Criteria were prescribed for all aspects of mine clearance, standards were recommended and a new universal definition of 'clearance' was agreed. In late 1996, the principles proposed in Denmark were developed by a UN-led working group and the International Standards for Humanitarian Mine Clearance Operations were developed. A first edition was issued by the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in March 1997.

The scope of these original standards has since been expanded to include the other components of mine action and to reflect changes to operational procedures, practices and norms. The standards were re-developed and renamed as International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

The United Nations has a general responsibility for enabling and encouraging the effective management of mine action programmes, including the development and maintenance of standards. UNMAS, therefore, is the office within the United Nations responsible for the development and maintenance of IMAS. IMAS are produced with the assistance of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

The work of preparing, reviewing and revising IMAS is conducted by technical committees, with the support of international, governmental and non-governmental organisations. The latest version of each standard, together with information on the work of the technical committees, can be found at <http://www.mineactionstandards.org/>. Individual IMAS are reviewed at least every three years to reflect developing mine action norms and practices and to incorporate changes to international regulations and requirements.

Introduction

Once land has been released or cleared of mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), (including unexploded sub-munitions), there is usually an urgent need to make it available for productive use without delay. In some cases the local population will follow-up and occupy land immediately following clearance in order to confirm ownership by re-establishing historic land rights. And at the end of a project, the demining organisation will be keen to re-deploy its demining teams to new sites in accordance with the national priorities.

Despite the pressure to move on, there are some important issues that must be addressed and tasks that must be completed before the land can be considered formally 'cleared' and available for use. In particular, all post-clearance inspections should be completed and any corrective action carried out; permanent survey markers including turning points and intermediate points should be emplaced and accurately recorded for future reference; and all necessary information such as monitoring and inspection reports should be collated and made available for the formal handover. The demining organisation or its nominated community liaison representative shall ensure that details of all demining activities in the area and the implications for the men, women and children are provided to the mine affected community.

The formal handover of cleared land is most important. The procedure and documentation required for the handover aim to clarify the ownership of any residual risk, and to determine the legal responsibilities and accountability of the donor, the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) and demining organisation(s) following handover.

This standard provides guidance on the procedural requirements for the handover of cleared land.

Post-clearance documentation

1. Scope

This standard provides guidance on the procedural requirements for the handover of cleared land, and details responsibilities and obligations.

2. References

A list of normative references is given in Annex A. Normative references are important documents to which reference is made in this standard and which form part of the provisions of this standard.

3. Terms, definitions and abbreviations

A complete glossary of all the terms, definitions and abbreviations used in the IMAS series of standards is given in IMAS 04.10.

In the IMAS series of standards, the words 'shall', 'should' and 'may' are used to indicate the intended degree of compliance. This use is consistent with the language used in ISO standards and guidelines:

- a) 'shall' is used to indicate requirements, methods or specifications that are to be applied in order to conform to the standard;
- b) 'should' is used to indicate the preferred requirements, methods or specifications; and
- c) 'may' is used to indicate a possible method or course of action.

The term 'National Mine Action Authority (NMAA)' refers to the government entity, often an inter-ministerial committee, in a mine-affected country charged with the responsibility for the regulation, management and coordination of mine action.

Note: In the absence of a NMAA, it may be necessary and appropriate for the UN, or some other recognised international body, to assume some or all of the responsibilities, and fulfil some or all the functions, of a MAC or, less frequently, an NMAA.

4. Requirements

4.1. Clearance confirmation

The documentation that is made available for handover shall provide sufficient evidence that the clearance requirement has been met. Clearance is achieved and demonstrated in two stages. Stage 1 involves the monitoring of the demining organisation's management systems and operational procedures before and during the clearance process. Stage 2 involves the inspection of cleared land by sampling. IMAS 07.40 provides guidance on the monitoring requirements and IMAS 09.20 provides guidance on the procedures to be adopted for post-clearance inspections.

Reports produced during the monitoring and post-clearance inspections, together with follow-up inspections to confirm that any corrective action has been successfully completed, should be included in the handover documentation.

4.2. Survey marking

During a technical survey, the perimeter of the defined hazardous areas (DHA) should be indicated with survey markers, as defined in IMAS 08.22.

Further information obtained during clearance should indicate the actual location of each mine and ERW. It may then be necessary to re-define the perimeter of the area, and to re-position the permanent survey markers to show the actual area cleared. Buried metal objects should be used as permanent markers.

The new positions should be accurately surveyed, and the coordinates of the turning points and intermediate points should be recorded for future reference. Areas that have been addressed and released through non-technical survey and technical survey should also be recorded.

4.3. Hazard marking

Land that has not been cleared prior to handover for whatever reason, or cannot be confirmed as cleared, should be clearly marked with permanent, effective hazard marking systems. Ideally, such areas should use physical barriers such as robust fencing to reduce the risk of unintentional entry into the remaining hazardous area(s).

IMAS 08.40 provides guidance on hazard marking.

4.4. Residual risk and liability

This is a complex legal issue that should be explored with the NMAA during the contract negotiation stage. In general, for humanitarian operations no residual risk should lay with the demining organisation after the NMAA has formally accepted the cleared land. The handover of the cleared land shall be the mitigation of liability point for the demining organisation.

For contract work in support of privately financed commercial development the contract may insist that some degree of residual risk lies with the demining organisation; it is then up to the demining organisation as to whether they wish to accept such a contract.

4.5. Documentation

4.5.1. Completion report and handover certificate

Information should be collected and recorded in a systematic manner during the clearance operation. Whenever possible, use should be made of standard and proven information management systems and GIS, such as IMSMA. Guidance on the use of IMSMA for compiling a completion report and handover certificate is given in Annex B.

The completion report should include at least the following information:

- a) hazard area and task identification numbers;
- b) clearance requirements – specified area and specified depth;
- c) a copy of the technical survey report (if available);
- d) details of the clearance organisation, including references to its accreditation;
- e) a summary of the procedures and equipment used to clear the area;
- f) Quality Assurance (QA), with details on the body which conducted the monitoring, the methods used and reports provided;
- g) post-clearance inspection reports, with details on the body which conducted the inspections, the methods used and reports provided;
- h) details of the cleared area(s): coordinates of the turning points and intermediate points, and a list of the mines and ERW located and destroyed during clearance;

- i) details of areas addressed and released through non-technical survey and technical survey;
- j) details of any incidents and accidents which occurred during clearance;
- k) a formal recognition from the mine affected community of community involvement and acknowledgement of the final status of the land.

Note: The demining organisation should brief the local community and the proposed beneficiary of the cleared land on the task when it is complete and has been formally handed over to the NMAA. Such a briefing should include a subjective confidence demonstration and an explanation of the residual risk for men, women and children.

- l) a comparison with known minefield records; and
- m) a formal declaration that indicates that the land has been cleared over the specified area to the specified depth. (Legal advice should be sought as to the detailed wording of this declaration in each mine-affected country, however an example that is currently used is at Annex C).

The NMAA should be custodian of all completion reports, handover certificates and supporting information.

4.5.2. Post Project Review (PPR)

Wherever possible, demining organisations should conduct a formal PPR, (on the contract, not individual tasks), to identify lessons-learned during the planning, preparation and clearance phases of the operation. The PPR should include a report on the suitability of the equipment, procedures, training and support. Issues of concern should be identified and prioritised, and solutions proposed. The requirement for PPRs should be included in clearance contracts by donors and national authorities. PPRs should be distributed to NMAA, to the United Nations (UNMAS, UNDP and UNOPS), and to donors or sponsors. Where PPRs highlight shortcomings in established equipment or procedures, particularly issues involving safety, they should be more widely distributed.

5. Responsibilities and obligations

5.1. National Mine Action Authority (NMAA)

The NMAA shall:

- a) prepare and publish standards and provide guidance for the documentation required for handover;
- b) following handover, maintain documentation and act as custodian of all completion reports, handover certificates and supporting information; and
- c) make available documentation to authorities, organisations and the local population as required. Post-clearance documentation should be held in perpetuity in a national records archive.

5.2. Demining organisation

The demining organisation shall apply the national standards for the handover of cleared land, including the collection and collation of the information detailed in clause 4.5 above.

In the absence of a NMAA, the demining organisations should assist the host nation, during the establishment of a NMAA, in framing national standards for the handover of cleared land.

Annex A (Normative) References

The following normative documents contain provisions, which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this part of the standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this part of the standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid ISO or EN:

- a) IMAS 04.10 Glossary of terms and definitions;
- b) IMAS 07.40 Monitoring of demining organisations;
- c) IMAS 08.22 Technical survey;
- d) IMAS 08.40 Hazard marking;
- e) IMAS 09.10 Clearance requirements; and
- f) IMAS 09.20 The inspection of cleared land: guidelines to the use of sampling procedures.

The latest version/edition of these references should be used. GICHD hold copies of all references used in this standard. A register of the latest version/edition of the IMAS standards, guides and references is maintained by GICHD, and can be read on the IMAS website (<http://www.mineactionstandards.org/>). NMAA, employers and other interested bodies and organisations should obtain copies before commencing mine action programmes.

Annex B (Informative) Guidance on the use of IMSMA for post-clearance documentation

IMSMA (Information Management System for Mine Action) - is the United Nation's preferred information system for the management of critical data in UN-supported field programmes and is commonly used in many other programmes. IMSMA provides users with support for data collection, data storage, reporting, information analysis and project management activities. Its primary use is by the staff of MACs at national and regional level, however the system is also deployed in support of the implementers of mine action projects and demining organizations at all levels.

Clearance activities - can be documented in IMSMA in a variety of ways and national forms can be created in accordance with the national requirements. Progress reports referenced to a hazardous area can be used to record areas released or cleared, or devices removed that are not part of a formal clearance task. Clearance reports can be entered and referenced to the same areas. These would typically be used to record a formal clearance task. Progress reports referenced to the clearance task can be entered on a periodic basis. Post Clearance Documentation Reports are provided to meet the requirement to document the completion of a clearance activity. The Task tool can be used to assist the Operations Manager in organizing mine action activities.

Clearance confirmation - progress reports associated to clearance are an important element of the documentation process, which help to establish that effective procedures were in place during Stage 1 of the clearance confirmation.

Survey marking - the final perimeter of the cleared area is stored in the Post Clearance Documentation Report.

Hazard marking - uncleared areas can be documented in Progress reports and/or in Completion reports.

Documentation - all reports entered into the IMSMA that relate to a given task should be included in the final documentation. The IMSMA task tool is a convenient means to select the various reports that are relevant to a task. The task tool allows the manager to store information regarding a task that has been assigned to an implementing agency, and organize all of the relevant IMSMA reports.

Annex C (Informative)

Example handover certificate and formal declaration

LOCATION	
1. Map name:	8. Location of Cleared Area. (Description and GRID / UTM). <i>(Include map and diagram of cleared area)</i>
2. Edition:	
3. Sheet Number:	
4. Scale:	
5. Series:	
6. Local name:	
7. Clearance depth:	
DETAILS OF CLEARANCE OPERATIONS	
9. Number and Type of Mine / ERW Cleared:	10. Final Disposal Method of Recovered Mines / ERW
11. Methods and Technology Used:	12. Is Area Metal Free?
12. Quality Assurance Methodology:	
13. Minefield Serial Number:	14. Date of completion and hand over.
HANDED OVER ON BEHALF OF DEMINING ORGANISATION	ACCEPTANCE BY NATIONAL MINE ACTION AUTHORITY
15. Representative name and position.	16. National Mine Action Authority Representative name and position.
DECLARATION BY SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEMINING ORGANISATION	
I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the area specified in this Completion Certificate has been cleared of all mine and ERW hazards to the depth specified in this Completion Certificate.	I certify that, as of this date, the area specified in this Completion Certificate is assessed to be clear of all known mine/ERW hazards to the depth specified in this certificate in accordance with the National Mine Action Standards.
17. Signature of Demining Organisation Representative.	18. National Mine Action Authority Stamp.
ACCEPTANCE BY NATIONAL MINE ACTION AUTHORITY	
I accept responsibility for this area on behalf of the people of I understand that the specified area has been cleared of mines and ERW hazards to the depth specified in this Completion Certificate. I have also been briefed as to any potential residual risk.	19. Signature of the National Mine Action Authority Representative.

