

10 March 2011

To: Members of the IMAS Review Board

IMAS News 2011

The following is an update on some IMAS activities, for your information.

1. Next Review Board Meeting

The next IMAS Review Board (RB) meeting is scheduled to be held at the GICHD in Geneva on Friday 18 March from 13:00 to 17:00 hrs, following the UNMAS National Directors meeting, which is taking place from 14 -17 March 2011.

2. IMAS Steering Group Meeting

An IMAS Steering Group (SG) meeting will also take place ahead of the IMAS Review Board meeting at the GICHD on 18 March 2011 from 09:00 to 10:30 hrs. The RB members will be briefed on decisions made at the SG meeting.

3. UNMAS/GICHD independent evaluation of IMAS

In the 2009 meeting, the IMAS RB requested that an independent evaluation of the IMAS be conducted. Such an evaluation should provide clear feedback as to how IMAS have been perceived in the field. It should also indicate areas that need to be further improved and strengthened, including the need for the new IMAS, training and support services, and improvement of publications. The evaluation report will subsequently serve as the basis on which the IMAS future strategy will be developed. The IMAS Steering Group, in its last meeting in March 2010, agreed to this approach and consequently endorsed the decision to conduct the evaluation.

This evaluation is scheduled to take place around the Intersessional meeting of the Standing Committees of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, from 20 to 23 June 2011, as many people and organisations will be present at this meeting in Geneva. Members of the RB will be interviewed by the evaluation team around this time.

4. Overview of IMAS

Currently, 41 endorsed IMAS are published on the IMAS website. In 2010, a new IMAS 12.10 mine/ERW risk education was approved and replaced seven former MRE IMAS; 07.11, 07.31, 07.41, 08.50, 12.10, 12.20 and 14.20. Former MRE IMAS are now stored in the archived page of the IMAS website.

A request for an IMAS on information management was submitted and approved by the RB in 2010. This IMAS is the final stage of drafting. Once approved by the user focus group, it will be submitted to the RB for approval in April 2011.

In addition, the GICHD will assist in the development of any proposed new IMAS in 2011 that are agreed to be needed and approved by the IMAS Review Board (according to the new procedures endorsed in 2010)

5. Overview of TNMA

Currently, 15 TNMA are published on the IMAS website. A request for a new TNMA on well-clearance, based on experience in Sri Lanka, was not supported by members of the RB in 2010. The GICHD will assist in the development of any proposed new TNMA in 2011 that are agreed to be needed and approved by the IMAS Review Board (according to the new procedures endorsed in 2010)

6. IMAS Review and Amendments

- IMAS and Cluster Munitions

To ensure that IMAS include issues in relation to cluster munitions (unexploded submunitions), a review of the IMAS was carried out in consultation with the relevant staff members of the GICHD and UNMAS. As a result, minor amendments were made to all IMAS. The IMAS that pertained to clearance and stockpile destruction were amended slightly more. Amended versions of the IMAS were circulated to the RB for approval in Feb 2010 and published in April 2010.

IMAS relating to stockpile destruction (07.42, 11.10, 11.20 and 11.30) will be reviewed further, and may be removed or restructured, subject to the approval of the RB, once the UN IATG are available later in 2011. See Section 9 below for more information on UN IATG.

- Other review of specific IMAS

IMAS 01.10 application of IMAS, 09.30 EOD and 10.30 worksite safety were also amended/updated and approved by the RB in 2010.

The amended IMAS 01.10, in particular, included two new Annexes; Annex B on IMAS management structure, which includes the Terms of Reference for the IMAS RB, and Annex C on the proposal and justification to amend an existing IMAS/TNMA, as well as develop a new one.

7. Review Board Membership

There are currently 30 seats on the IMAS RB - 27 full members and three observers. Membership of the RB was reviewed in accordance with the decision of the last RB meeting. As a result, several members of the board retired, and potential new members were invited in 2010. The retired members included Mr. Alistair Craib (UK), Mr. Manfredo Capozza (Italy), Mr. Mohammad Breikat (Jordan), Mr. Heng Ratana (Cambodia), Mr. Radosav Zikovic (B&H - STOPMINE), Mr. Bob Doheny (ITEP), and Mr. Johan Sohlberg (SWEDEC).

New members invited in 2010 include Mr. Prum Sophamonkol (Cambodia), Mr. Abd Almonem Giha (Sudan), Mr. Jurkuch Barach (South Sudan), Mr. Siraj Barzani (Iraq), Pablo Parra (Colombia), and Mr Magnus Bengtsson (MSB – Sweden).

Meanwhile, some organisations on the RB replaced their representative in 2010. Mr Rober Gannon was replaced by Mr Dan Bowen (RONCO), Mr. Nick Guest was replaced by Mr Jesse James (MAG), Mr. Bill Howell was replaced by Philip Houliat (HI), and Havard Bach (former GICHD) is now positioned as a Subject Specialist member (APOPO).

There are currently two vacancies for potential new members on the RB, one for a Donor representative, and one for a demining training school/centre representative.

8. CEN Workshop Agreements (CWA)

There are seven CEN Workshop Agreements (CWA) published in relation to humanitarian mine action on the IMAS website. Among them, the CWA 15044:2009 test and evaluation of demining machines was reviewed and amended by the original workshop members in 2009. The new version, along with lessons learned, was published in 2010. The CWA 15756:2007 test and evaluation of Personal Protective Equipment remains withdrawn. Other CWAs remain valid.

In Jan 2011, CEN formally notified the GICHD/UNMAS that the ownership rights for these CWA have been transferred to UNMAS/GICHD, on behalf of the mine action community. As such, these documents will be re-labelled as *Test and Evaluation Protocols for Mine Action*, while the origin of the document will be kept as CWA. They will be reviewed and amended, when needed, as part of the IMAS/TNMA through the IMAS RB in the future. The CWA page on the website will also be re-named as *Test & Evaluation Protocols* in 2011.

9. International Ammunition Technical Guidelines

The UN General Assembly has mandated the production of *International Ammunition Technical Guidelines* (IATG). UNMAS has a seat on the Review Board for these guidelines. The IATG are being produced and will be completed in 2011 instead of 2010, as initially anticipated. These will cover, among other things, the issues related to the demilitarisation/destruction of stockpiles of ammunition, which will include cluster munitions and all other ammunition types. These guidelines could be a substitute for the four IMAS related to stockpile destruction (07.42, 11.10, 11.20, and 11.30). Hence, a review of the relevant IMAS will be required when the guidelines are available.

10. IMAS Website

The IMAS website (www.mineactionstandards.org) was continually updated throughout 2010. New, amended, and translated IMAS, as well as other relevant documents, were published on a regular basis as and when they were available. E-mail messages of “what’s new” were sent to all registered individuals on a regular basis. Revised national standards of Afghanistan, Jordan, and Azerbaijan were published. IMAS-related questions and queries were responded to within one business day. On average, three queries per week were sent to UNMAS/GICHD. Information about the IMAS RB, such as the IMAS framework, the minutes from the meetings, work plans and other relevant documents were made available for information.

In October 2010, the IMAS website was transferred from James Madison University, who had maintained it under a sub-contract from the GICHD. As a result, the website was completely redesigned but the domain name remained the same, ie, www.mineactionstandards.org. The new design offers a more professional look, easier navigation, faster loading time, and showcases new functions. It is simple and easy to find what you are looking for. Since Nov 2010, the IMAS website has been managed in-house by the GICHD.

In addition, the website statistics were reviewed on a quarterly basis in order to see the trend of visits to the website. A comparison of the first three quarters of 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 shows an overall increase in the number of visitors each year. Between 2010 and 2007, there was a 123 per cent increase, and a 32 per cent increase on 2009. See details in the table below:

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
2007	3203	3085	3656	3797	3748	3498	3207	3716	3630	31540
2008	3087	3226	3431	3803	4554	5579	5594	4709	5805	39788
2009	4592	5410	6017	5812	5598	6082	7075	7290	7759	55635
2010	8835	9244	10842	8468	8386	6779	6879	6996	7315	73644
Total	10882	11721	13104	13412	13900	15159	15876	15715	17194	126963

11. Translation of IMAS

Efforts continued to translate the IMAS into other languages and make them available for the mine action community, just like in previous years.

In 2010, the translation of 41 IMAS to French was completed, and they were also published. In addition, five of the 15 TNMA were also translated and published, and work on the remaining ten is ongoing. The Military Humanitarian Demining School in Angers, France and CPADD in Benin, in conjunction with the GICHD, have been translating these documents.

As well as IMAS 01.10, IMAS 04.10, and IMAS 09.50, in 2010, the Organization of American States (OAS) completed translating into Spanish three land release IMAS; 08.20, 08.21 and 08.22. These IMAS are now published on the website. Work on translation of a few more IMAS into Spanish is in progress.

A complete set of IMAS (2006) in Russian and IMAS (2009) in Armenian is also available on the IMAS website. Despite continued contact with potential donors and translating bodies/authorities in Arabic, Farsi, Chinese and Russian-speaking countries, there has been no tangible progress to report, and the efforts will continue in 2011.

12. IMAS Publications

The 2010 IMAS CD ROM was produced in April 2010 and distributed to mine action programmes and mine action organisations. Another IMAS CD ROM (edition 2011) is planned to be issued in March 2011. The following publications can be viewed and ordered through the IMAS websites:

- a) A series of best practice guides to MRE IMAS
- b) A guide to IMAS 2010 edition (book)
- c) IMAS CD issue No-6/ 2010 that will be replaced by IMAS CD edition 7/2011

13. National Standards

The GICHD has supported a number of mine action programmes, either in the development, and/or revision of their national mine action standards in 2010. These countries included Afghanistan, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Mozambique, Iraq, and Azerbaijan. The National Standards of 11 countries, including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Jordan, Lao PDR, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Senegal, are published on the IMAS website, as examples of NMAS.

That's all for the 2011 edition of IMAS News. I look forward to meeting you in Geneva during the UNMAS meeting from 14 to 17 March, or at the IMAS RB Meeting on Friday 18 March 2011.

Best regards,

Faiz Paktian
Secretary of the IMAS Review Board

Attachment - IMAS RB members list as at March 2011