



To: IMAS Review Board

11 November 2005

**IMAS REVIEW BOARD**  
**MINUTES OF REVIEW BOARD MEETING 23 SEPTEMBER 2005**

**1. Introduction**

The IMAS Review Board met in the GICHD Lake Conference Room on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September from 09.30 until 16.30 hrs.

**2. Attendance**

The following attended the meeting:

Noel Mulliner – UNMAS chairman  
JJ van der Merwe – UNOPS  
Mohammad Younus – UNDP  
Rueben McCarthy – UNICEF  
Alistair Craib – UK, DFID  
Detlef Schroder – Germany, MFA  
Bob Doheny – ITEP  
Stuart Harris – USA, DOS  
Sam Sotha – CMAA,  
Davour Laura – CROMAC  
David Hewitson - ELS  
Cameron Imber – HALO Trust  
Johan Sohlberg – Specialist  
Geir Bjorsvik – NPA  
Vincent Muylkens – Belgium Military Representative  
Jan-Ole Robertz – Specialist,  
Havard Bach – Specialist  
Andy Smith – Specialist  
Ben Lark – Observer ICRC  
Phil Bean – GICHD, IMAS Review Board Secretary

Apologies

Eric Lauritzen – Denmark  
Murf McCloy – USA

**3. Agenda discussion points**

### 3.1 Item 1 - Introduction and welcome

Noel Mulliner welcomed those attending. He then opened the meeting with a short revision of the Review Board responsibilities and continued by explaining and confirming the meeting agenda.

### 3.2 Item 2 – Minutes of the last meeting

Phil Bean distributed copies of the minutes of the last meeting (19 March 2004), he drew the Review Boards attention to the summary of actions at Annex B and then provided a report on progress:

#### **Summary of Actions from the 2004 meeting.**

- Amend TOR for the SG and RB to reflect amendment authorities, action UNMAS. – **action completed**
- Produce new IMAS framework matrix, action GICHD, **action completed.**
- Amend IMAS, action GICHD, **action completed.**
- Keep RB briefed on outreach progress, action GICHD, **action completed.**
- Review support requirements for threat analysis and subsequent QA processes, action UNMAS / GICHD, **action on going.**
- Improve methods for external IMAS critique, action UNMAS / GICHD, **action on going.**
- Develop 6 Series IMAS in line with training review, action UNMAS / GICHD. **Refer to agenda item 5 of 2005 Review Board meeting.**
- Prepare IMAS 07.20 for circulation, action GICHD, **action completed.**
- Prepare IMAS 09.50/50 for circulation, action GICHD, **action on going refer to agenda item 5 of 2005 meeting.**
- Review IMAS 08 Series, action GICHD, **action completed rewrite in progress.**
- Reference CEN Workshop Agreements within IMAS, action GICHD, **action completed.**
- Arrange meeting Jan-Ole Robertz / UNMAS, action UNMAS, **action completed.**
- Progress new board member nominations, action UNMAS, **action completed.**
- Review IMAS Development budgets, action GICHD, **action completed.**
- Produce revised IMAS Review work plan, action UNMAS/GICHD, **action completed.**

The 2004 minutes were formally accepted as being an accurate record of the previous meeting.

### 3.3 Item 3 – Secretaries report to the Review Board

Phil Bean summarised the 2004/05 IMAS review process and introduced a number of topics that would need to be considered in the future, noting:

- That all IMAS had been amended since the previous meeting, with revised versions now being available on the standards website and on a new issue of an IMAS CD (issue 3, 2005). The Review Board had formally reviewed 13 IMAS which had substantive amendments. An amendment process had now been established and implemented.

- That outreach activity remained necessary both to help national programmes adapt and apply IMAS, but also to enable ‘technical advisors’ to be aware of the application and scope of the standards which in turn would assist them in carrying out their advisory support roles.
- That IMAS has to be reviewed and adapted to cater for emerging needs and sector development taking into account new topics or terminology such as ERW and risk based approaches to operational decision making.
- That although IMAS are designed for many different audiences they must primarily keep their grounding in the realities of practical application by countries with mine / ERW problems.
- In terms of outreach; significant support had been provided e.g. to countries like Afghanistan by assisting the preparation of first draft national standards, by briefings and presentations at meetings and on courses, by the production of IMAS CD’s, and through maintenance of the [www.mineactionstandards.org](http://www.mineactionstandards.org) website etc. A GICHD publication a Guide to IMAS was being updated for distribution as an edition 2. The standards website was being upgraded to include a feature that enables users to ‘sign on’ to an automatic notification of changes.

### **Comment/ Action.**

Andy Smith commented that during the electronic email review process whilst every member saw the original work for review, the comments were generally just referred back to Chairman and Secretary and were not always visible to other Review Board members which stifled debate and involvement.

**Action. All.** The point was agreed and in future reviewed comments should be distributed to the entire Review Board membership.

### **3.4 Item 4 – Topics for review**

From the previous email review process two specific points could not be resolved by correspondence and were brought forward to this meeting for resolution, these being:

- From IMAS 10.20 Safety and Occupational Health – demining work-site safety, an issue around the default 25m safety distances between personnel.
- From IMAS 09.20 Inspection of cleared land: guidelines for the use of sampling procedures – an issue of when and where to apply QC sampling.

Both topics were discussed enthusiastically; a summary of the discussion scope and the resulting conclusions and actions follows.

**IMAS 10.20** - The argument centred around the point that programmes generally followed the 25m default safety distance provided in the IMAS for AP blast mines. This was not always considered appropriate and had a penalty of limiting efficiency by limiting the number of personnel able to work on a site. Some felt that the current IMAS did not provide sufficient guidance or flexibility for programmes, despite the optional use of the default tables through the use of the word ‘should’ in the Annex C.

Within the Review Board were members who argued strongly for the retention of the tables as they were and others who argued for their removal with the responsibility for setting distance being left to demining organisations.

The discussion covered issues of:

- needing an auditable technical objective process for risk and hazard assessments,
- duty of care from different levels and perspectives,
- programmes which adopt one safety distance as a standard regardless of type of mines,
- the variation of circumstances which prevented setting just one national standard,
- that responsibility should be devolved to organisations carrying out demining,
- that responsibility should be controlled by a national authority and national standards,
- that the reference formulae within the current version of IMAS were not appropriate for making assessment for changes from the default tables,
- that rarely were qualified EOD staff available,
- that despite some programmes and organisations having adopted reduced safety distances, documented decision making justifications were not always available (e.g. within Sri Lanka, generally, where mine threats could be identified covering just small explosive content mines, or within CMAC where safety distances had apparently been reduced to 10m (interestingly, as an inconsistency with CMAA national standards).
- that default tables were useful for non specialists but the mine action community was 'specialist' and therefore did not need them,
- that so called empirical data or subjective opinion was used as a basis for decision making and this should not be the case,
- that the DDAS did not indicate a justification for such a default distance and seemed to suggest a reduction in distance was feasible in some circumstances,
- that objective trials data covering a variety of mine types and measuring blast and fragmentation hazards was not readily available,
- that within the Review Board was a diverse range of understanding of applications of risk and threat assessment and in the interpretation of 'where responsibility rested'.

From the above it can be seen that the process of achieving consensus was challenging, but the following was agreed:

- that reference to formulae within IMAS to establish safety distances for individual mines was not applicable,
- that the IMAS should be amended to describe the process of risk assessment, including the consideration of variable factors,
- that ITEP should be approached to see what appropriate trial information was available,
- that if an amendment was subsequently agreed, based on explanation of the risk and hazard assessment process (taking into account any trial data), then the provision of default distances could be removed.

It is noted that IMAS 10.20, as it is written, enables National Authorities and demining organisations to make their own judgements, the issue under debate relates to the provision of information to enhance this local decision making process.

**Action. 1. GICHD to redraft relevant paragraphs of the IMAS for consideration as an amendment.**

**Action. 2. GICHD to request ITEP to research what trial information may be available to assist in the process or act as proof of formulae application.**

## **IMAS 09.20**

The concern of some of the Review Board members was that the process of QC by post clearance sampling as illustrated by IMAS 09.20, was not understood, was not considered necessary, and was generally not applied. Others thought that the IMAS was clear, was necessary and could be applied sensibly with adequate scope for reduction once confidence in an organisation was established. Through discussion it was recognised that part of the concern was connected to inadequate QA/QC resources or misunderstanding in the application of the IMAS which in turn imposed delay in handing sites over to communities. The discussion included:

- recognition of similarities to the previous topic and the need to have accountability within organisations through a structured and documented decision and risk management process,
- that QC was necessary to establish confidence particularly if a QA process had been inadequate,
- that with good accreditation and QA processes the need for resource heavy QC could be reduced,
- that with regular and consultative external QA monitoring then by agreement the lot size presented for inspection could be reduced and be better targeted to areas known to have contained hazards, (recognising that smaller lot sizes generally led to larger sample sizes as a percentage of the overall area of the lot presented),
- that some board members questioned the validity of the maths in the sampling model, but the balance of opinion was that the example was based on sound ISO principles,
- that the difficulties rested more with ‘application’ of the IMAS rather than the document itself,
- that liability issues, both for national authorities accepting clear land and for organisations clearing land were difficult, and that application of the QC process as described in 09.20 was useful in terms of providing confidence and evidence of best practice,
- some board members doubted whether QC had found missed mines or non conformities, other members provided examples when this had happened,
- It was felt that the wording in IMAS on action to take in the event of a non conformity was not explicit enough,
- An example of wording from the draft Afghan national standards was provided as a means for national application which was commensurate with the integrity of QA/QC principles.

**Action. 1. Jan-Ole Robertz offered, and has since provided the secretary with alternative wording to be considered in the IMAS.**

**Action. 2. UNMAS / GICHD should design support / training assistance to enable practical application of the standard.**

#### **Item 5 – IMAS Framework**

The time taken to discuss the previous agenda item had been lengthy and this agenda item was reduced to a short briefing and discussion. The Secretary briefed the meeting on the status of new IMAS and IMAS to be amended.

- IMAS 02.10 / 02.11 Programme and Project management; following the PM/CTA meeting this now needed another revised draft,
- IMAS 05.10 Information Management had been drafted and provided a location to embed IMSMA and LIS;
- that UNICEF would produce a second edition of IMAS 07.31 Accreditation of MRE organisations and operations;
- that IMAS 09.50 Mechanical demining was shortly to be distributed for review;
- that a draft of a new IMAS 10.70 Environmental, health & safety – Preservation of the environment had been produced;
- that a revised draft for IMAS 14.10 Guide for the evaluation of mine action programmes had been produced;
- that a TNMA on how to deal with human remains was being researched in conjunction with ICRC;
- that as a consequence of IMAS 05.10, then IMAS 08.10 General mine action assessment should be revised.
- That Cranfield Mine Action had submitted a paper to UNMAS proposing that standards should be considered for quality management and performance indicators, (under consideration by UNMAS),
- IMAS 6 Series Training, - The need for Training IMAS was discussed in the IMAS Steering group. **Discussion subsequently concluded with agreement that there was no immediate need for Training IMAS, and that covering this requirement in the Management of Mine Action IMAS could be considered a viable option.**

In addition,

- UNICEF announced the intention to produce an IMAS on landmine injuries and surveillance
- Vincent Muylkens reminded the meeting that the range of IMAS covering EOD activities needed to be expanded if it was to be useful, particularly with focus on ERW and where a residual EOD capacity was needed.

**Action. 1. GICHD would circulate revised drafts as they became available.**

**Action. 2. That Review Board members were welcome to propose amendments or new IMAS drafts but for coordination the circulation of these should be passed at the outset through the Review Board Secretary.**

**Action. 3. That GICHD would liaise with Vincent Muylkens over the scope of expanding the EOD standards.**

#### **Item 6 - CEN WG126**

Jan-Ole Robertz briefed the meeting on the role and workings of CEN WG126 and introduced the current and proposed workshop agreements that supported the standards process. (Presentation attached).

- Completed activities:
  - CWA 14747:2003 (CW 07) Metal Detectors – testing and evaluation.
  - CWA 15044:2004 (CW 12) Mechanical Equipment for HMA: testing and evaluation methods.
  - CWA 13: EOD Competency Standards.
  
- Future activities:
  - Project no.2 , characterisation of soils for electromagnetic sensors- testing and evaluation.
  - Project no.4, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for HMA operators.
  - Project no.11, Post Mechanical Clearance requirements, ( requirements for follow up activities after mechanical clearance).
  - Project no.12, evaluation of methods of Quality Control (sampling) after mechanical demining.

#### **Item 7 – Technical Survey Study / Risk management**

Havard Bach briefed the meeting on the proposed GICHHD study on technical survey which would include topics relating to release of land, terminology and risk management.

#### **Item 8 – DDAS – role of the Review Board in analysis, IMAS 10.60 (Reporting and investigation of incidents) and IMAS 10.30 (PPE).**

Noel Mulliner briefed the meeting about recent mechanisms to highlight the need for programmes and organisations to provide copies of incident investigation reports to UNMAS / GICHHD for inclusion in the Data Base of Demining Accidents (DDAS), (UNMAS letters to Programmes and NGOs and a briefing in the recent UNMAS PM/CTA meeting). He informed the Review Board that they may be called upon to help with the analysis of trends from incidents. Review Board members were encouraged to help with the process of obtaining incident reports and advocating thorough and transparent incident investigation and reporting. (c.f. IMAS 10.60 Reporting and investigation of demining incidents).

The discussion then moved on to IMAS 10.30 Personal Protective Equipment and a proposed amendment from Andy Smith which had been previously circulated to the Review Board.

In summary, whilst acknowledging the benefits of full face visors the proposed amendment continued to recommend the use of full visors but allowed, as a minimum, eye protection only. This was an attempt to enable more comfortable, working conditions for deminers, wider adherence to the IMAS, and generally safer working practices.

Andy Smith provided examples of problems with full face visors in terms of visual distortion, discomfort, scratching, degradation through UV light etc. which

had led to numerous instances where visors were worn incorrectly negating their potential protection benefit and in some cases enhancing injury. He explained the value in terms of eye protection that could be achieved by wearing a lighter smaller and more comfortable closer fitting visor which was more likely to be used correctly.

The discussion covered a number of points:

- David Hewitson drew consistent parallels with the earlier agenda topics noting the need for individual organisations to carry out risk assessments, to audit and justify decisions and to take responsibility for deciding what was appropriate, be that PPE, safety distances, clearance quality etc.
- Gier Bjorsvik informed the meeting that NPA had discussed this issue and that they would agree that wearing a short visor for eye protection was a good idea and that they support the proposed amendment.
- Cameron Imber informed the meeting that HALO would not endorse such an amendment and would continue to advocate the correct use of full face protection.
- A discussion on insurance opinions and risk management ensued.
- JJ van der Merwe highlighted that a recognised and suitable test standard for PPE was still needed and reference was made to the planned CEN CWA on this topic.
- Bob Doheny added the need to define what we wanted the equipment to actually stop or protect against.

It was decided that a decision to amend the IMAS should not be taken with the information that was currently available.

**Action. 1. GICHD to consult with the insurance industry to question the impact of different levels of protection.**

**Action. 2. GICHD to discuss implications of change with ‘risk’ specialists.**

**Action. 3. UNMAS / GICHD to instigate the wider field community response to the proposed amendment.**

**Action. 4. GICHD to examine how to provide assistance to enhance the ability of organisations to make informed decisions.**

**Action. 5. GICHD to request ITEP for a review of existing T&E data.**

**Action. 6. GICHD and UNMAS to conduct a review of commercial PPE alternatives and to provide clear briefings to industry on the requirements.**

## **Item 9 – Composition of the Review Board**

Due to a shortage of time this item was deferred to be dealt with by email. Noel Mulliner informed the meeting that some members had to be replaced either through them leaving or due to the Steering Group policy of rotation of members.

As an after note: Vincent Muylkens clarified his representation to the Review Board as a Representative of the Belgium Defence, and although he is the Belgium Head of Delegation at the NATO EOD WG, he cannot formally represent them.

**Action. – UNMAS**

**Item 10 – Review Board work plan 2005/2006**

Again due to a shortage of time this item will revert to an email exchange.

**Action. – GICHD to circulate and progress the new work plan**

**Item 11 – Any other business**

- Havard Bach encouraged the fast progression of the issues relating to IMAS 09.20.

The date of the next IMAS Review Board meeting would be planned to coincide with the 2006 UNMAS Programme Managers and CTA meeting.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 16.30hrs

Philip Bean  
IMAS Review Board Secretary

Enclosures:

1. CEN WG 126 presentation
2. Proposed work plan for 2005 /06