# MINUTES OF THE
# IMAS REVIEW BOARD MEETING MARCH 2021

Date:               Thursday, 04th March 2021
Time:               09:00 – 11:45 CET / 15:00 -17:45 CEST / 01:00-04:00 AEST (3 hours)
Location:           Held remotely (MS Teams)
Meeting Chair:      Ms. Abigail Hartley, UNMAS
Meeting Secretary:  Mr. Rory Logan, GICHD

## IMAS Action Points

| Action Point | Responsible | Suggested deadline |
|---|---|---|
| Distribute guiding questions for RB members to take into account when considering suggested amendments to IMAS 01.10 related to the RB and TWGs. | Secretary | 12th March |
| Provide written feedback on the RB and TWG sections of IMAS 01.10. | Members | 26th March |
| Review and align new IMAS and existing TNMA on Management of Human Remains for re-submission. | ICRC | 24th May |
| Circulate updated version of IMAS 13.10 to be considered via an electronic vote. | Secretary | 19th March |
| Provide feedback on IMAS 13.10 | Members | 16th April |
| Vote electronically on IMAS 13.10 | Members | 03rd May |
| Publish TNMA ARE to IMAS website | Secretary | April |
| Review TNMA ARE | Members | Spring 2022 |
| Publish TNMA KPI to IMAS website | Secretary | April |
| Continue review of T&EP 09.30 and 09.31 for update at the next meeting? | TWG | May |
| Continue development of 2 x T&EP on ADS | TWG | September |
| Consider suggestions for updated workplan to be discussed at the next meeting | All members | May |
| Develop updated RB and TWG guidance for IMAS 01.10, circulate updated draft in time for review and adoption at the next meeting | Drafting committee | May |
| Propose existing IMAS to be updated and included in the next iteration of the IMAS workplan | Members | May |

## Detailed meeting minutes
## Introduction, welcoming new members, approval of minutes

The Chair of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) Review Board (RB), Ms. Abigail Hartley, opened the meeting and welcomed all members, observers and guests. The Chair noted that this is the first of two meetings planned in 2021, the next one is planned for the margins of the NDM-UN in May.

The following new members were welcomed to the Board:
- Mr. Stephen Bryant (UNDP/member) – replacing Mr. Steinar Essen;
- Mr. Charles Frisby (NPA/member) – replacing Mr. Hans Risser;
- Mr. Frederic Mercury (Demining School/member) – replacing Mr. Bernard Thomas;
- Mr. Shafiullah Ahmadzai (DMAC/member) – replacing Mr. Fazel Rahmen;

- Mr. Michael Heiman (APOPO/observer) – replacing Mr. Havard Bach;
- Mr. Siraj Barzani (IKMAA) stood down from the Board in August 2020; and
- Mr. Nico Bosman (UNMAS) – will be taking over from Mr. Richard Boulter at this meeting and is joining as a voting member.

The minutes from the IMAS RB meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were formally accepted and archived. They can be found on the link below:

https://www.mineactionstandards.org/fileadmin/MAS/review-board/Meeting_Minutes/20200310_Minutes_IMAS_Review_Board_Meeting_Feb_2020_FINAL.pdf

## Overview of IMAS endorsed by IACG-MA since last meeting

The Chair noted that the following standards were approved by the Steering Group and then endorsed by the IACG-MA since the last RB meeting:

- IMAS 07.31 - Accreditation and operational testing of Animal Detection Systems and handlers;
- IMAS 09.41 - Operational procedures for Animal Detection Systems;
- IMAS 10.40 – Medical support to demining operations;
- IMAS 10.60 – Investigation and reporting of accidents and incidents; and
- IMAS 12.10 – Explosive Ordnance Risk Education.

IMAS 01.10 – Guide for the application and development of IMAS has also been updated. New guidance relating to the IMAS Steering Group, which has already been endorsed by the IACG-MA is now included in the document, which will be further developed in 2021 (see next agenda item).

## IMAS Governance Evaluation – ongoing updates to IMAS 01.10

Mr. Richard Boulter (UNMAS) provided an overview of the independent evaluation of the governance of IMAS. The evaluation was conducted by EY in 2019, and is being managed by the Steering Group. The evaluation found that IMAS has been a success, is widely used and well respected. It did note however, that the process through which IMAS is governed is not adequately documented. The final report, which was shared with RB members in January 2020, made a number of recommendations relating mainly to the Steering Group, as well as the RB and its associated Technical Working Groups (TWG).

Mr. Boulter informed the Board that the Steering Group established a drafting committee to work on updates to IMAS 01.10. This committee has already addressed those recommendations concerning the Steering Group itself, through updates to IMAS 01.10 that were endorsed by the IACG-MA principals in December 2020. The committee has been asked to move on to updating the sections which relate to the RB and associated Technical Working Groups (TWG) in consultation with RB members.

The Chair noted that the intention was to complete additional edits in time for endorsement at the next IACG-MA meeting in June. Members were invited to provide specific feedback, during the ensuing discussion, the following issues were raised:

<span style="color:red">Review Board Membership</span>
- The current list of members and observers is not in line with IMAS 01.10. Additionally, organisations have not rotated as envisaged in IMAS 01.10. It is not possible however, for the entire Board to rotate at the same time.
- There is a need to refine and properly define the role of members and observers, and to make a determination around permanent vs rotating positions.

- The qualifications for each of these categories may also need to be revised, and the level of technical expertise required might be affected by the formalisation of TWGs.
- In some membership categories organisations not currently represented on the RB have asked to join, in other categories it can be difficult to fill allocated places if an organisation leaves.
- It might be possible for organisations to rotate between full membership and observer status in some categories.
- Some organisations have specifically requested an 'observer' seat rather than membership status as a result of their mandate.
- The ISU APMBC questioned the decision to invite it to rotate with ISUs for the CCM and CCW.

## Gender balance of the RB

- The drafting committee asked members for input and advice on how to improve gender parity on the Review Board.
- This is an important recommendation made during the governance evaluation, the committee requested specific suggestions which can then be implemented as individual members rotate.

## Technical Working Groups (TWGs)

- TWGs have become increasingly important in the review and development of IMAS in recent years.
- There is a requirement to clearly outline the Terms of Reference for both TWG focal points, and the TWGs themselves.
- A TWG focal point does not necessarily need to be a member of the RB, as organisations should have the flexibility to appoint the most relevant technical staff to take the lead.
- A TWG focal point has a facilitator role to moderate and build consensus. As such they should not be the person charged with actually drafting new material. This would avoid the situation where an individual is in charge of moderating discussion over their own work.
- Decisions over who to invite to join TWGs have often been taken within the groups themselves, a process which has worked well in the past.

## IMAS publication

- Members agreed to discontinue the practice of publishing IMAS in draft form immediately after RB approval. In the future IMAS will be published only after endorsement by the IACG-MA.

It was agreed that further elaboration was required on several issues. The Chair therefore instructed the Secretary to circulate a short list of guiding questions and asked members to respond to these in writing within two (2) weeks. The drafting committee will then reconvene and begin developing the new text **(Action Point).**

## IMAS guidance on Management of Human Remains – ICRC

In May 2019 the Steering Group provided a mandate for the Board to develop an IMAS or TNMA on the topic of Human Remains found during mine action activities. Following the submission of a draft IMAS, which was not supported by all members, the Board was asked in June 2020 to consider whether said guidance should be contained in an IMAS or TNMA.

Mr. Erik Tollefsen (ICRC) provided an overview of the discussion over Human Remains to date and presented the case for developing the guidance as an IMAS rather than a TNMA. It was noted that:

- A TNMA on the topic already exists and has been available on the IMAS website since 2007.
- The proposal to develop an IMAS chapter was made by ICRC following requests from mine action operators active in Iraq following the re-taking of Mosul by the Iraqi Government.

- ICRC has removed the notion of donor responsibilities from earlier drafts. There is no suggestion that mine action funding could be used for forensic/other activities. If this is still unclear, ICRC could consider revising the text again.

During the subsequent discussion members noted that there had been some concerns over the inclusion of references to NMAA/inter-ministerial cooperation or the 'national judicial authority' which may go beyond the scope of mine action. It was further noted that the existing TNMA on Human Remains is broader than the draft IMAS, and might be more useful from an operator's point of view. Generally, guidance is structured the other way round. There may be value in combining or aligning the two documents. ICRC noted that the TNMA pre-dates the new draft by more than a decade, and also cautioned against developing an IMAS which becomes too much like an SoP.

The decision was taken to ask ICRC to review and align both the draft IMAS and existing TNMA, and then resubmit both documents in parallel for the Board`s consideration (**Action Point**).

## Update on IMAS 13.10 Victim Assistance

The Secretary, Mr. Rory Logan, provided the Board with an update regarding IMAS 13.10 Victim Assistance. Following the approval and publication of a draft version in 2020, the Steering Group received substantive feedback from Harvard Law School Project on Disability (HPOD). The Steering Group then asked the Chair of the RB, with support from the Secretariat, to address any concerns which are deemed relevant. The draft was also removed from the IMAS website.

An updated document has been sent to HPOD for comment, and the Chair is currently awaiting feedback. The Secretary noted that HI has also submitted updates to the document for consideration. In the coming weeks, the Board will receive an updated version that will clearly show the reader which changes were requested by which organisation.

HI noted that removing this standard from the IMAS website has caused issues operationally and requested consideration via an electronic vote before the next meeting in May. The Secretary proposed that the HPOD focal point be invited to join the next review round as an external expert. Both proposals were agreed by consensus (**Action Point**).

## Consideration and approval of TNMA – All Reasonable Effort

Ms. Tammy Hall (GICHD) introduced a TNMA on All Reasonable Effort (ARE) . The document was developed by the GICHD with input from other members and external stakeholders. Ms. Hall noted that the document had been developed based on requests from National Authorities for more guidance on ARE. The TNMA aims to better enable Land Release decisions through enhancing a common understanding of key decision making processes, thereby supporting States to meet convention obligations.  The note links the concept of 'reasonableness' to that of evidence, and covers the importance of framing concepts such as liability.  The draft TNMA essentially  outlines the notion that ARE is achieved through the implementation of the IMAS framework.

Serval members voiced support for the TNMA. The HALO Trust noted that the section on Land Release could be further expanded to improve the utility of the document and offered to support updates immediately ahead of an adoption at the next meeting in May. The ISU APMBC requested that one of the footnotes be updated to reflect a document from the APMBC Article 5 Committee that outlines States Parties understanding of meeting convention obligations.

Following brief discussion, the TNMA was adopted by consensus, with a commitment to review it again after 12 months (**Action Point**). It will be published on the IMAS website and a review added to the agenda for the RB meeting in 2022.

## Consideration and approval of TNMA – Key Performance Indicators for Land Release and Stockpile Destruction

Mr. Roly Evans (GICHD) introduced the TNMA on Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The GICHD received a mandate to develop the document in September 2019 and it was developed by a TWG which worked up to December 2020. The TNMA is mostly focussed on Land Release and it places an emphasis on high quality data collection. The TWG spent significant time discussing 'common counting' rules and 'context capture', which TWG members now feel are adequately covered. The TNMA also defines the term 'performance' which is not currently included in the IMAS glossary.

The document received broad support from members and following brief discussion the TNMA was adopted by consensus, and will be published on the IMAS website (**Action Point**).

## Update from TWG on EOD and IEDD Competencies

Mr. Roly Evans (GICHD) provided an update on progress made by the TWG reviewing Test and Evaluation Protocols (T&EP) 09.30 - Explosive Ordnance Disposal and T&EP 09.31 Improvised Explosive Device Disposal.

- T&EP 09.31 – requires fairly minor changes – Eighteen (18) competencies at IEDD Level 3 and fourteen (14) at IEDD Level 2. A further two (2) competencies were removed, seven (7) tagged for inclusion in T&EP 09.30 and twenty three (23) re-worded. This will be reviewed again once T&EP 09.30 is completed.
- The TWG is still debating the scope of the revision for T&EP 09.30. A second meeting is planned for 05th March 2021 to continue this debate. The timescale for finalising and submitting the revision of  T&EP 09.30 very much depends on the final decision on this matter.

Members suggested that the TWG should give consideration to expanding the number of categories for EOD qualification. This would better reflect practices in the field where the context of the EOD tasks varies significantly. It was also proposed that the TWG invite NMAAs to join.

## Update from TWG on ADS

Mr. Stanislav Damjanovic (GICHD) provided an update on progress made by the TWG charged with developing two new T&EP to provide additional guidance on Animal Detection Systems (ADS). Two (2) T&EP are being developed on: Competencies for ADS trainers and handlers, and Setting up ADS Testing Areas. The TWG held its first meeting on 02nd March, first drafts will be developed by 01st June and the Group hopes to finalise the process by 15th September 2021.

## Secretariat Update

The Secretary provided an overview on progress to date based on the approved IMAS workplan. Those items that remain on the workplan were all discussed earlier in the meeting and new items have been parked while the governance review is ongoing. As a consequence, the workplan is nearly complete. The following additional items are outstanding or have been proposed/parked:

- Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Mine Action;
- TNMA 12.10/01 IED RE – terminology vs substantive update; and
- Minor/formatting amendments across the series.

The Secretary provided an analysis of on-line traffic over the past twelve (12) months. The updated IMAS website has been visited by over 22,000 users since November 2019, from 188 different countries. Upgraded website analytics afford the ability to better understand which documents are viewed the most often, which might provide food for thought when developing the next workplan. An analysis by the Secretariat indicates that five (5) of the top fifteen (15) viewed standards are not listed

on the current workplan and have not been formally reviewed in line with the provisions currently set out in IMAS 01.10. Members were asked to consider which existing IMAS might be considered for review in the next iteration of the IMAS workplan[1] **(Action Point)**.

## Any Other Business

- Mr. Rory Logan informed the Board that he will be stepping down as Secretary to the IMAS RB and Steering Group to take on a new role at the GICHD. The GICHD will select a new Secretary via an internal recruitment process and the incumbent will be in position in time for the next RB meeting. The Chair and other members thanked Mr. Logan for his service on the RB over the past three (3) years.
- The Chair also thanked Ms. Belén Pappolla (UNMAS) for her support throughout the meeting managing MS Teams settings.

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[1] The GICHD noted it will consider proposing updates to IMAS 04.10, IMAS 06.10, IMAS 08.40, IMAS 09.30 and TNMA 12.10/01, at the meeting in May.