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Post-clearance documentation

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Foreword

In July 1996, international standards for humanitarian mine clearance programmes were proposed by working groups at a conference in Denmark. 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 into *International Standards for Humanitarian Mine Clearance Operations*. A first edition of these standards was issued by the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in March 1997.

This IMAS reflects changes to operational procedures, practices and norms that have occurred over the past three years. The scope of these standards has been expanded to include the other components of mine action, in particular those of mine risk education and victim assistance.

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 is the office within the United Nations Secretariat responsible for the development and maintenance of international mine action standards (IMAS).

The work of preparing, reviewing and revising these standards 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/>. IMAS will be 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 cleared of mines and UXO 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 requiring urgent clearance.

Despite the pressure to move on, there are some important issues which must be addressed and tasks which 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 the mine affected community is fully cognisant of all demining activities in the area and the implications for the 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 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 and definitions

A list of terms and definitions used in this standard is given in Annex B. A complete glossary of all the terms and definitions 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.
- c) 'may' is used to indicate a possible method or course of action.

The term 'national mine action authority/authorities' refers to the government department(s), organisation(s) or institution(s) in each mine-affected country charged with the regulation, management and co-ordination of mine action. In most cases the national mine action centre (MAC) or its equivalent will act as, or on behalf of, the 'national mine action authority'.

4 Requirements

4.1 Clearance confirmation

The documentation which 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 hazardous area(s) should be indicated with survey markers, as defined in IMAS 08.20.

Further information obtained during clearance should indicate the actual location of each mine and UXO. 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. See Clause 4.4 below.

4.3 Hazard marking

Land which has not been cleared prior to handover for whatever reason, or cannot be confirmed as cleared, should be clearly marked with permanent 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 national mine action authority during the contract negotiation stage. In general, for humanitarian operations no residual risk should lay with the demining organisation after the national mine action authority 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 C.

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 and licenses;
- e) a summary of the procedures and equipment used to clear the area;
- f) quality assurance, 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 UXO located and destroyed during clearance;
- i) details of reduced and cancelled area(s);
- 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. (See IMAS 07.41 Monitoring of MRRE organisations);

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 national mine action authority. Such a briefing should include a subjective confidence demonstration and an explanation of the residual risk.

- 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 D).

The national mine action authority should be custodian of all completion reports, handover certificates and supporting information.

4.5.2 Post project review

Wherever possible, demining organisations should conduct a formal post project review (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 national mine action authorities, 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

The national mine action authority 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 4.4 above.

In the absence of a national mine action authority or authorities, the demining organisations should assist the host nation, during the establishment of a national mine action authority, in framing national standards for the handover of cleared land.

Annex A **(Normative)** **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 07.40 Monitoring of demining organisations;
- b) IMAS 07.41 Monitoring of MRRE organisation;.
- c) IMAS 09.10 Clearance requirements; and
- d) IMAS 09.20 Post-clearance inspections and sampling.

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/>). National mine action authorities, employers and other interested bodies and organisations should obtain copies before commencing mine action programmes.

Annex B **(Normative)** **Terms and Definitions**

B.1.1 **area reduction**

the process through which an area indicated as contaminated (during a general survey) is reduced to a smaller area.

Note: Area reduction may involve some limited clearance, such as the opening of access routes and the destruction of mines and UXO which represent an immediate and unacceptable risk, but it will mainly be as a consequence of collecting more reliable information on the extent of the hazardous area. Usually it will be appropriate to mark the remaining hazardous area(s) with permanent or temporary marking systems.

B.1.2 **boundary lane**

a cleared lane around the perimeter of a hazard area.

B.1.3 **cancelled area**

an area previously recorded as a hazard(ous) area which subsequently is considered, as a result of actions other than clearance, not to represent a risk from mines and UXO.

Note: This change in status will be the result of more accurate and reliable information, and will normally only be authorised by the national mine action authorities, in accordance with national policy. The documentation of all cancelled areas shall be retained together with a detailed explanation of the reasons for the change in status.

B.1.4 **cleared area**

land shall be accepted as 'cleared' when the demining organisation has ensured the removal and/or destruction of all mine and UXO hazards from the specified area to the specified depth in accordance with its contractual obligations.

Note: IMAS 09.10 specifies the quality system (i.e. the organisation, procedures and responsibilities) necessary to determine that land has been cleared by the demining organisation in accordance with its contractual obligations.

Note: Cleared areas may include land cleared during the technical survey process, including boundary lanes and cleared lanes. Areas cleared for worksite administrative purposes, such as car parks, storage locations, and first aid posts need not be officially documented as cleared, unless national procedures so require.

B.1.5 **cleared lane**

safety lane

the generic term for any lane, other than a boundary lane, cleared by a survey or clearance team to the international standard for cleared land. This may include access lanes outside the hazard(ous) area or cross/verification lanes inside a hazard(ous) area.

B.1.6 **hazard (ous) area**

contaminated area

a generic term given to an area not in productive use due to the actual or perceived presence of mines, UXO or other explosive devices.

B.1.7
handover

the process by which the beneficiary (usually the national mine action authority) accepts responsibility for the cleared area. The term 'alienation' is sometimes used to describe a change of ownership of the land which accompanies the handover of a cleared area.

B.1.8
handover certificate

documentation used to record the handover of cleared land.

B.1.9
intermediate point

survey markers used between turning points that are more than 50m apart. Intermediate survey markers shall be made of permanent or semi-permanent material, and should be buried or driven into the ground.

B.1.10
monitoring

in the context of humanitarian demining, the term refers to the authorised observation by qualified personnel of sites, activities or processes without taking responsibility for that being observed. This is usually carried out to check conformity with undertakings, procedures or standard practice and often includes recording and reporting elements.

*in the context of mine risk education, the term refers to ...*the process of measuring or tracking what is happening. This includes:

- a) measuring progress in relation to an implementation plan for an intervention – programmes/projects/activities, strategies, policies and specific objectives.
- b) measuring change in a condition or set of conditions or lack thereof (e.g., changes in the situation of children and women or changes in the broader country context).
- c) *definition from UNICEF Policy and Programming Manual.*

B.1.11
quality assurance (QA)

all the planned and systematic activities implemented within the quality system, and demonstrated as needed, to provide adequate confidence that an entity (i.e. that which can be individually described and considered) will fulfil requirements for quality. (ISO 8402 definition)

Note: The purpose of quality assurance in humanitarian demining is to confirm that management practices and operational procedures for demining are appropriate, and will achieve the stated requirement in a safe, effective and efficient manner. Internal quality assurance will be conducted by demining organisations themselves, but external inspections by an external monitoring body should also be conducted. Monitoring should involve structured discussions with management and deminers, and formal inspections of SOPs, reports and records.

B.1.12
reduced area
see **area reduction**.

B.1.13
residual risk

in the context of humanitarian demining, the term refers to the risk remaining following the application of all reasonable efforts to remove and/or destroy all mine or UXO hazards from a specified area to a specified depth. [modified from ISO Guide 51:1999]

B.1.14
task identification number (ID)

a unique number used to designate a hazardous area. Task identification numbers shall be allocated by the national mine action authority.

B.1.15

tolerable risk

risk which is accepted in a given context based on current values of society [ISO Guide 51:1999(E)]

B.1.16

turning point

a fixed point on the ground which indicates a change in direction of the perimeter of the hazardous area. It shall be clearly marked and recorded. Buried metal objects should be used to mark all turning points for permanent future reference.

B.1.17

usable area

safe area

areas considered to have no risk or tolerable risk from mines and UXO.

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

IMSMA. The Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) is the United Nation's preferred information system for the management of critical data in UN-supported field programmes and at the UN headquarters in New York. IMSMA consists, essentially, of two modules: the Field Module (FM) and Global Module (GM). The FM provides for data collection, information analysis and project management. It is used by the staffs of mine action centres at national and regional level, and by the implementors of mine action projects - such as demining organisations. The GM refines and collates data from IMSMA FMs (and other field-based information systems) and provides the UN and others with accurate, aggregated information for the strategic management of mine action.

Clearance activities. Clearance activities can be documented in the IMSMA FM in a variety of ways. Progress reports referenced to minefields can be used to record areas cleared or devices removed that are not part of a formal clearance task. Clearance reports can be entered, again referenced to minefields. 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 – these reports may be referenced to a Dangerous Area, Clearance, Impact Assessment, or Minefield record. The Task tool can be used to assist the task manager in organizing the various FM reports that are applicable to a clearance.

Clearance confirmation. Progress reports associated to FM Clearances 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 FM 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 database that relate to a given task should be included in the final clearance documentation. The FM Task tool is a convenient means to select the various FM reports that are relevant to a clearance 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 D (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 / UXO Cleared:	10. Final Disposal Method of Recovered Mines / UXO:
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 Report has been cleared of all mine and UXO hazards to the depth specified in this Completion Report.	I certify that the area specified in this Completion Report has been independently assessed to be clear, to a confidence level of ___% ¹ , of all mine and UXO hazards to the depth specified in this Completion Report.
17. Signature of Demining Organisation Representative.	18. National Mine Action Authority Stamp.
ACCEPTANCE BY NATIONAL MINE ACTION AUTHORITY	
I accept responsibility of this area on behalf of the people of I understand that the specified area has been cleared of mines and munitions 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.

¹ This Confidence Level should be determined from IMAS 09.20.