



LMAS 09.10

CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

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Note:

This document is current at the date shown on this page. The Local Mine Action Standards (LMAS) are subject to regular revision, so users should ensure that they are using the latest version of each document in the standards. The most recent versions of LMAS are available with SMACO office of Rabouni.

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Foreword

Critical safety, control and quality elements of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) have been retained in the Local Mine Action Standards (LMAS), so ensuring that they maintain the principles agreed in IMAS guidelines.

The work of preparing, reviewing and revising LMAS is conducted by a technical committee with the support of international, governmental and non-governmental organisations in Western Sahara, East of Berm (EoB).

In the LMAS, the following words are used to indicate the intended degree of compliance and are to be reflected in Mine Action Organisation Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):

'Shall', 'will' and 'must' are used to indicate requirements, methods or specifications that are to be applied in order to conform to the standard;

'Should' is used to indicate the preferred requirements, methods or specifications.

'May' is used to indicate a possible method or course of action.

In LMAS:

The term "Demining Organisation" refers to any organisation (government, NGO or commercial entity) responsible for implementing demining projects or tasks. Demining Organisations include headquarters and support elements.

The term "Mine Action Organisation" refers to any organisation (government, military, commercial or NGO/civil society) responsible for implementing mine action projects or tasks. The mine action organisation may be a prime contractor, subcontractor, consultant or agent.

For the purpose of the LMAS, the words "Demining Organisation" and "Mine Action Organisation" are interchangeable and used to describe the same body.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The target of humanitarian demining in Western Sahara (EoB) is the identification and removal (or destruction) of all mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) to a specified depth. When all hazards from a specified area are removed to a specified depth, this area can be called cleared.
- 1.2 Land Release is the process of applying all reasonable effort to identify, define, and remove all presence and suspicion of mines/ERW through non-technical survey, technical survey and/or clearance. The criteria for "all reasonable effort" shall be defined by the SMACO.
- 1.3 Technical survey may involve intervention into a suspect hazardous area using one or more demining assets, i.e. manual, dogs and mechanical.
- 1.4 Clearance is the last activity in this process and should ideally only be carried out in Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHA), which are normally established following a NonTechnical Survey.
- 1.5 If the conclusion of a survey is that a previously Suspected Hazardous Area does not contain a mine/ERW hazard then it should be declared as presenting "no known risk". Areas that present "no known risk" do not need to be cleared.

- 1.6 As well as the mine action staff having confidence, the people who will use the land must also be confident that the land is safe for their use. To build confidence among the endusers of the land it is important that Mine Action Organisation staff endeavour to communicate with the local community throughout the demining process, providing briefings and explanations with regards to the objectives, procedures and progress of operations. This should promote mutual awareness, particularly with regards to 'allreasonable effort' applied by the Mine Action Organisation and the 'tolerable risk' to the local community post demining. Community liaison is an integral part of the demining process.
- 1.7 There may be a requirement to conduct limited demining on areas of land where there is no evidence of mines or ERW, as 'confidence building' for end-users (i.e. in areas where there has been a military presence).
- 1.8 This standard presumes that Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC) procedures will be used during the work of the Mine Action organisation. The combined application of QA (before and during the demining procedures) with QC (conducted after the demining) will help to achieve an acceptable level of confidence that the land is safe for its intended use. The quality of demining activities undertaken must be acceptable to both SMACO, and to the end-users of the land.
- 1.9 This standard defines "clearance", and specifies the organisation, procedures and responsibilities that are necessary to give confidence that land released as having been "cleared" has been processed in an appropriate way.
- 1.10 Many demining activities do not involve "clearance". Achieving confidence that an area is free from mines and ERW should be conducted without applying full clearance processes whenever possible. (See LMAS 08.20, Land Release – Pending Amendment in accordance with IMAS 07.11 Land Release)

2. Detailed Definition of Clearance

- 2.1 Land has been "cleared" when the Mine Action organisation has conducted search and clearance procedures that ensure the location of all mine and ERW hazards in the specified area to a specified depth. All pertinent hazards (in accordance with the Implementation Plan) must have been removed or destroyed.
- 2.2 The area that needs to be cleared should be determined by a non-technical, technical survey, or from other reliable information.
- Note:** In humanitarian demining, the priorities for clearance are often determined by the impact on the individual community balanced against national infrastructure and economic priorities.
- 2.3 The required depth of clearance should be determined by a non-technical, technical survey, or other reliable procedure which makes known the depth of the mine and ERW hazards. Clearance procedures that are proven to reliably locate the anticipated hazards at or beneath the required depth must be used.
- 2.4 The way in which the land will be used is also relevant when deciding a minimum depth of clearance that will be safe for the end-users.
- 2.5 When there is no reliable information on the depth of the local mine and ERW hazards, the minimum depth of search must never be less than 13cm measured from the original ground surface. When hazards are known to be deeper, the minimum depth must be increased so that the hazards are found and removed *whatever the end-use of the land may be*. If this is not done, the land cannot be recorded as *cleared*.

- 2.6 The 13cm minimum depth of search shall be applied unless it is suspected or confirmed (i.e. by survey or clearance) that mines/ERW are deeper, in which case a risk assessment shall be conducted to determine the minimum required search / clearance depth.
- 2.7 In circumstances where it is suspected or confirmed that mines/ERW are at a depth of less than 13 cm, then it may be possible to reduce the search / clearance depth.
- 2.8 Search / clearance depths shall be detailed in Mine Action Organisation Implementation Plans for approval by the SMACO, and in Task Orders, as a record and to ensure clarity and accountability.
- 2.9 For additional details on clearance depth, see LMAS 10.20 Demining Worksite Safety. The depth of search required will vary from task to task. Reasons for this include:
- Mines and ERW may be known to be underneath collapsed buildings. Clearance in these areas may require the removal of all rubble to expose the original ground surface, and then searching beneath that.
 - In places subjected to artillery or mortar bombardment, the depth of search necessary may a metre or more.
 - In places where large bombs are known to have been used, the depth of search necessary to locate the bombs may be several metres.
 - Mines and ERW may be in sandy areas where the sand shifts over time. In these circumstances, the location of mines that were originally placed on the surface may require the use of deep search procedures.
- Note:** When the hazards in an area are known to be mines and ERW with a large metal content, the removal of all small metal parts during clearance may not be required. QA or QC should not rely solely on tests for metal contamination. QA or QC may rely on tests for metal contamination at or above the size of the smallest anticipated hazard.
- 2.10 Accurate coordinates of the area to be cleared and the required depth of clearance should be presented to the Mine Action Organisation by SMACO in a worksite task order. The task order may also indicate:
- Permanent marking to be placed.
 - Perimeter marking that may be required.
 - The demining procedures to be used.
 - Details of the QA and QC requirements.
- 2.11 Confidence in the location and removal of all mine and ERW hazards in the cleared area to the specified depth is ensured by:
- Using Mine Action Organisation(s) with Operational Accreditation for the procedures that will be used.
 - Using appropriate management practices.
 - QA and QC monitoring of the work.
- 2.12 The contractual arrangements should specify the area to be cleared, the clearance depth, and the requirements for monitoring and inspection. These should either be specified by SMACO or agreed with SMACO during the contractual arrangements.

For example:

- a. If the ground level may have changed since mines were originally placed the contractual arrangements must be written in a way that avoids misunderstanding over the required clearance depth.
- b. The required clearance depth may be adjusted as clearance work progresses. Any amendment reducing the clearance depth must be agreed between the SMACO and the Mine Action Organisation, and must be formally recorded. Amendments that increase the depth of search must be recorded and must be approved by the SMACO
- c. The contract should make provision for appropriate community liaison.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Local Mine Action Authority (SMACO)

Local Mine Action Authority (SMACO) should:

- a. Specify the area to be cleared and depth of clearance in contracts and agreements.
- b. Specify the standards and guidelines for QA and QC to be applied to demining contracts and agreements.
- c. Accredite Mine Action Organisations as fit to undertake demining using specified procedures.
- d. Ensure that QA and post-demining controls are applied.
- e. Provide for a system to monitor the work of the Mine Action Organisations.
- f. Maintain records showing the status of each known hazardous area.

3.2 Mine Action Organisations

Mine action organisation undertaking clearance must:

- a. Gain Operation Accreditation from SMACO for the procedures they will use;
- b. Apply the LMAS.
- c. Maintain and make available documentation of work conducted as required by the SMACO.
- d. Apply management practices and operational procedures which aim to process land to the requirements specified in the contract and agreement(s).
- e. Ensure that the mine affected community is fully aware of all demining activities in the area and the implications for the community.
- f. Submit a plan to the SMACO for approval, for implementation of demining tasks issued by the SMACO.

4. General References

- a. International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), in particular, 09.10 Clearance Requirements.
- b. LMAS 08.20, Land Release and 10.20 Demining Worksite Safety.