



LMAS 01.10

THE APPLICATION OF LOCAL MINE ACTION STANDARDS

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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.

Introduction

- 1.1 The Saharawi Mine Action Coordination Office (SMACO) is responsible to undertake the co-ordination of mine action activities including the establishment of national Mine Action Standards, Accreditation and Monitoring of the various Mine Action Organisations.
- 1.2 This document defines the role of LMAS, and establishes the guiding principles for their proper and appropriate use by national entities, international organisations, donors and organisations involved with the planning and implementation of mine action activities at all levels in Western Sahara, East of the Berm (EoB).
- 1.3 A list of references is given in some of the standards. References are important documents to which reference is made in the standard and which form part of the provisions of the LMAS.
- 1.4 The aim of the LMAS is to provide Mine Action Organisations working in Western Sahara, (EoB) with a reference for the conduct of safe, efficient and effective mine action operations. It has been produced using experiences gained locally and incorporates lessons and best practices learned in other theatres worldwide.

- 1.5 This LMAS is not intended to replace or replicate Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) nor does it absolve Mine Action Organisations from the responsibility to produce their own SOPs. Conversely, these standards are intended to be used as an aid in developing SOPs, by detailing the minimum requirements and accepted methods for conducting mine action.
- 1.6 It is understood that there may be variations in procedures and methods of operation between different Mine Action Organisations. The LMAS provides an example of practices accepted by the SMACO and a basis for comparison during the Accreditation process. Mine Action Organisations that do not conform to the minimum requirements outlined in this document shall not be accredited by the SMACO to work in Western Sahara, EoB.
- 1.7 The SMACO is responsible to undertake the co-ordination of mine action activities including the establishment of national standards for mine action, accreditation and monitoring of the various Mine Action Organisations.

2. Policy and Standards

- 2.1 Western Sahara EoB Mine Action policy defines the purpose and goals. The purposes and goals are principles of action that are then articulated into standards giving guidelines and rules of action which govern the way in which Western Sahara (EoB) achieves its mine action goals, with responsibility to produce effective standards. Western Sahara's (EoB) mine action policy evolves in response to strategic direction and field experience and is also influenced by the way that resources are applied.
- 2.2 LMAS follow the ISO definition of a standard which reads: "A standard is a documented agreement containing technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines, or definitions of characteristics to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose".
- 2.3 LMAS aim to improve safety and efficiency in mine action by promoting the preferred guidance and rules at all levels. For this to be effective, these standards require performance that is measurable, achievable and verifiable.
- 2.4 LMAS are not SOPs. "Standard operating procedures" (SOPs) are instructions which define the preferred or currently established procedures for conducting an operational procedure or activity in detail. Their purpose is to establish recognisable and measurable degrees of discipline and uniformity, and so improve operational effectiveness and safety. SOPs should reflect local requirements and circumstances.
- 2.5 Each organisation conducting mine action activity in Western Sahara (EoB) must have operationally Accredited SOPs. The procedures, tools and equipment described in these SOPs may vary but must not compromise safety or quality in any way that compromises the humanitarian principles governing mine action in Western Sahara (EoB) and detailed in the LMAS.
- 2.6 To achieve this, each organisation working in mine action must submit SOPs for Operational Accreditation to the Saharawi Mine Action Coordination Operations Officer.

The SMACO shall assess the SOPs and may require revisions to be made before Operational Accreditation can be granted. (See LMAS 07.30 Accreditation of Mine Action Organisations).

3. Mine Action

- 3.1 Mine action refers to “those activities which aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) including unexploded submunitions”.
- 3.2 Mine action is not just about demining; it is also about people and societies, and how they are affected by landmine and ERW contamination. The objective of mine action is to reduce the risk from landmines and ERW to a level where people can live safely; in which economic, social and health development can occur free from the constraints imposed by landmine and ERW contamination, and in which the victims’ different needs can be addressed. Mine action comprises five complementary groups of activities:
- a. Mine Risk Education (MRE)
 - b. Humanitarian demining, i.e. mine and ERW survey, mapping, marking and clearance.
 - c. Victim assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration.
 - d. Stockpile destruction.
 - e. Advocacy against the use of anti-personnel mines (APM).
- 3.3 A number of other enabling activities are required to support these five components of mine action, including: assessment and planning, the mobilisation and prioritisation of resources, information management, human skills development and management training, quality management, and the application of effective, appropriate and safe equipment

4. Guiding Principles

- 4.1 The preparation and application of LMAS are shaped by four guiding principles:
- a. The right of the Western Sahara Authorities, East of Berm (EoB) to apply national standards to its national programme.
 - b. LMAS should protect those most at risk.
 - c. LMAS should be part of a national capacity able to maintain and apply appropriate standards for mine action.
 - d. LMAS should, whenever appropriate, be consistent with other international norms and standards.

5. National Responsibilities

- 5.1 The primary responsibility for Western Sahara mine action lies with the Western Sahara Authorities, EOB. The Local Mine Action Authority (SMACO) is appointed by the Western Sahara (EoB) government to develop and oversee the implementation of mine action policy, including the regulation, management and coordination of the national mine action programme.

6. Humanitarian Imperative

6.1 Landmines and ERW are a humanitarian concern and should be addressed from the humanitarian perspective. These standards respect fundamental humanitarian principles of impartiality and humanity. Humanitarian mine action should be concerned to give support to those who are most vulnerable, and must be conducted in a manner that does not expose staff to unnecessary risk.

7. Safety and Residual Risk

7.1 IMAS describes “safe” as “the absence of risk” however normally the term “tolerable risk” is more appropriate and accurate.

7.2 Safety is achieved by reducing risk to a tolerable level, which is defined in this LMAS as “tolerable risk”. There can be no absolute safety; some residual risk will always remain.

7.3 When deminers use procedures that are inherently safe and wear PPE to protect them against unforeseen accidents, the remaining risk constitutes a tolerable risk.

7.4 When land is cleared of all mines and ERW to a specified depth, there is a chance that other mines and ERW remain beneath that depth. That represents the tolerable risk for cleared land.

7.5 When procedures are used that do not clear 100% of all mines and ERW in an area but which raise confidence that there are no mines and ERW present in that area, some risk that the assessment is incorrect remains. That risk represents the tolerable risk for land released without full clearance procedures being conducted. That land must be recorded as having “no known risk” (or similar), however must not be recorded as having been “cleared”.

7.6 In the context of humanitarian demining, even when land has been processed using the optimum equipment and procedures and no mines and ERW are left to the agreed depth that land cannot be guaranteed to be safe and there remains a “tolerable risk”. It can therefore only be confidently stated to be free from any reason to believe that hazards remain. This does not mean that the attempt to clear all mines and ERW is failing, only that a small uncertainty always remains.

7.7 Those responsible for the management and implementation of mine action activities must aim to reduce the risk posed by mines and ERW, to a tolerable level.

8. Other International Standards

8.1 LMAS are written to be consistent with other international standards. Precedent and norms already exist at international level, mainly through the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO).

9. The Application of LMAS

9.1 The LMAS have been developed to assist the achievement of the Western Sahara (EoB) mine action policies. Adherence to these standards is a requirement for mine action operators in Western Sahara (EoB).

9.2 Where adherence to the LMAS is specified in a contract or legal agreement, there is a requirement to comply with the LMAS that may attract other penalties than those applied otherwise.

10. Quality and Risk Management

10.1 LMAS have been developed in line with the recommendations and processes contained within IMAS, which are in accordance with the ISO Quality Management systems (ISO 9001:2000) and the ISO Risk Management system (ISO Guide 51).

10.2 Elements of these systems are contained within the LMAS, so making the LMAS themselves an integrated risk and quality management system that will be expanded over time.

11. Legal Requirements

11.1 All agreements or contracts to work in mine action in any capacity, whether commercial or Non-Government Organisation (NGO), that are submitted after the date of LMAS issue must make reference to compliance with the LMAS as a requirement of that contract or agreement.

11.2 Aspects of LMAS reflect Western Sahara (EoB) national law and others may be included in future legislation. Regardless of whether aspects of the LMAS relate to separate legislation, all organisations applying the LMAS and submitting SOPs for Operational Accreditation to SMACO must work within the constraints of the LMAS. Failure to do so risks the organisation losing Operational Accreditation and so losing any legal right to conduct mine action activities in Western Sahara (EoB).

11.3 Failure to comply with the requirements of LMAS will usually result in an immediate suspension of Operational Accreditation pending correction of the problem. The existence of commercial or other contractual obligations that the Mine Action Organisation may have must not be permitted to influence any suspension of Operational Accreditation.

11.4 Any Mine Action Organisation that has its Operational Accreditation suspended for a failure to comply with LMAS may be required to pay the costs involved in any field inspection that is necessary before the suspension can be removed.

11.5 Any Mine Action Organisation that is found to be persistently in breach of LMAS should have its Operational Accreditation cancelled and its work curtailed until it can satisfy the authorities that a new Operational Accreditation should be granted.

12. Continual Review of LMAS

12.1 The LMAS are subject to continuous review. The Edition number should be the same for all standards and the number should only be adjusted when there have been significant amendments to the LMAS.

- 12.2 When there is a revision to individual standards the Edition number should remain the same however the date should be changed to reflect the month the standard is approved for release.
- 12.3 Amendments to the LMAS shall be detailed in 01.10/1 Amendments, and at the end of each standard.
- 12.4 Any mine action contract or agreement must refer to the Edition number of the LMAS in effect when the contract or agreement is signed. The requirements of that Edition must be applied for the duration of that contract or agreement.
- 12.5 The SMACO shall inform Mine Action Organisations of any amendments to the LMAS. It is the Mine Action Organisations responsibility to ensure that they adhere to these changes which may require them to amend SOPs and submitting them for approval to the SMACO.

13. LMAS Review Board

- 13.1 The LMAS are reviewed by technical specialists.
- 13.2 Suggestion for review may be made by any stakeholder active in mine action in Western Sahara (EoB) and should be submitted in writing to the SMACO.

14. Responsibilities

14.1 Local Mine Action Authority (SMACO)

14.1.1 SMACO is responsible for:

- a. The co-ordination or planning of all humanitarian mine action activities in Western Sahara (EoB);
- b. The maintenance of mine action records and databases;
- c. Coordinating or conducting Accreditation of Mine Action Organisations;
- d. Coordinating or conducting the Quality Assurance and Quality Control of Mine Action Organisations.
- e. Controlling or conducting the investigation of mine action accidents and incidents.
- f. Providing technical advice and training to Mine Action Organisations.

14.1.2 SMACO should ensure that the general conditions which enable the effective management of national mine action projects pertain in Western Sahara (EoB). SMACO is ultimately responsible for developing and managing an effective mine action programme within Western Sahara (EoB).

14.1.3 SMACO is mandated to establish and maintain LMAS and other regulations and procedures for the management of mine action operations. SMACO must be aware of amendments to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) when they occur and ensure that the relevant LMAS is examined to see whether similar amendments are desirable.

14.1.4 SMACO may also engage in other activities at the direction of the Western Sahara Authorities, EoB.

14.1.5 It may be agreed for a different organisation such as the United Mission in Western Sahara Mine Action Coordination Centre (MACC) to support the SMACO with its responsibilities.

14.2 Mine Action Organisations

14.2.1 NGOs, commercial companies and other organisations involved in mine action shall establish SOPs, instructions and drills which enable mine action projects to be conducted effectively, efficiently and safely.

14.2.2 Mine Action SOPs shall be submitted to the SMACO for Operational Accreditation prior to signing contracts or agreements committing them to conduct mine action work. SOPs shall be based on the LMAS .

14.3 Donors

14.3.1 Whether mine action is funded by the Authorities of Western Sahara, EoB, other governments, regional organisations, independent donors or commercial interests, the funding agencies have a responsibility for ensuring that the projects they are funding are managed effectively and in accordance with LMAS .

14.3.2 When writing contract documents, the parties must ensure that the Mine Action Organisations selected to carry out such contracts are competent and that their SOPs are likely to meet Western Sahara Operational Accreditation requirements.

14.3.3 Funders, or their agents, are also partly responsible for ensuring that the LMAS and its guidelines for quality management are applied, including conducting internal monitoring and the quality control of processed land before it is offered to the SMACO for release.

15. General References

a. International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), in particular, 01.10 Guide for the Application of International Mine Action Standards.