

**Standing Committee on Mine Clearance:
Land Release
Statement by Australia**

Australia thanks the Co-Chairs Canada and Peru, and the Coordinator for the Resource Utilisation Contact Group Norway for their efforts to normalise Land Release processes within the Convention.

Land Release is an important mechanism to increase the efficiency of clearance processes and is already well-employed in a number of affected states.

Land Release is particularly important for those affected states whose initial Landmine Impact Survey grossly overestimated the land requiring actual clearance.

The practice of Land Release must of course adhere to accepted standards and technical guidelines.

We welcome those standards set out by the GICHD in their publication *Land Release: a guide for mine and ERW affected countries*.

We are keen for the GICHD to continue to monitor the use of Land Release.

~~While~~ Australia supports efforts to legitimise Land Release within the Convention, including as a tool to fulfil Article 5 obligations. ^{But} this does not dilute states parties' responsibilities under the Convention.

The safety of people in mine affected areas must remain the focus of any clearance program.

And we also support the recommendations Norway has set out in Document SA.