

Response provided to journalist  
19 December 2016

**Questions:**

1. What clean-up works is the Department currently conducting at Oakey right now?
2. What are the potential outcomes from the exercise?
3. What sort of methods is the Department using to clean, including the use of further chemicals?
4. How long is the clean-up operation expected to take?
5. Does the Department have any further comments regarding this issue?

**Response to all:**

Defence is commencing drain maintenance activities at Oakey this month and at Williamtown in early 2017. Approximately 200mm of sediment from almost four kilometres of drains within the Army Aviation Centre in Oakey and two kilometres of drains at Williamtown will be excavated and stockpiled for subsequent treatment.

Defence continues to work closely with Port Stephens Council and Toowoomba Regional Council to progress remediation of offsite drainage systems.

In early 2017, Defence will engage a contractor to excavate and where necessary, demolish the former fire training areas and other source areas at both RAAF Base Williamtown and Army Aviation Centre in Oakey.

All stockpiled material will be secured in an appropriate area with all necessary bunding and covers to ensure that contamination does not leach from the sediment.

Defence continues to trial a range of soil remediation technologies, a number of which have demonstrated the potential for full-scale implementation. Defence will engage with state regulators on their viability in early 2017.

As well as the water treatment plants already operational at Williamtown, Defence will install a trial ground-water treatment plant at Army Aviation Centre in Oakey by the middle of next year.

Further information regarding the environmental investigation at Army Aviation Centre Oakey can be found at:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/ID/Oakey/Default.asp>