

Response provided to journalist
18 November 2016

Questions:

How many people has Defence contacted within the vicinity of RAAF Base Townsville regarding concerns for their water?

What was the advice to them about bore water or other water use?

How many people have requested Defence provide drinking or water for other use?

Response to all:

Defence has adopted a precautionary approach and will provide alternative sources of drinking water to eligible residents located in close proximity to RAAF Base Townsville who do not have a town water connection, and who rely on the use of a bore for drinking water.

Defence understands that Garbutt residents are on town water and therefore the risk to local residents is minimal. No one has contacted the base at this time to request drinking water.

Defence will also provide water to residents if drinking water is sourced from a rainwater tank that contains, or has contained, bore water in the past.

Residents are welcome to contact Defence's PFAS national hotline on 1800 365 414 to discuss eligibility for water assistance and possible management strategies.

Each household's drinking water requirements will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine the most appropriate water supply arrangements that Defence may be able to provide.

Defence will be holding two Community Walk-In Sessions on the 29th November for RAAF Base Townsville. The purpose of these sessions is to provide local residents and business owners with an opportunity to discuss the planned environmental investigation into per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) on and in the vicinity of, RAAF Base Townsville. The sessions will be held at Seagulls Resort, 74 The Esplanade, Belgian Gardens, Townsville. The sessions will be held at 1-3pm and 5-7pm.

Defence remains committed to being open and transparent with local communities during the investigations. Once further information regarding the detailed environmental investigations are available, Defence will provide this information to the local and state authorities and will engage with the local community at the earliest opportunity.

Further information about the pending investigations can be found at:
<http://www.defence.gov.au/ID/PFOSPFOA/DefenceSitesPending.asp>