

Response provided to journalist  
05 September 2016

**Questions:**

What levels of contamination was found at the Edinburgh RAAF base during the preliminary investigation? And where was this contamination found (i.e. in groundwater, in soil etc?)

**Response to all:**

Defence undertakes periodic groundwater and surface water quality sampling at RAAF Edinburgh as part of an environmental monitoring program across the Defence base and facilities. This national program tests for a broad range of compounds including perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) within groundwater, sediment, soil and surface water. Sampling undertaken at RAAF Edinburgh in 2014 detected the presence of PFOS and PFOA.

In consultation with the SA EPA and the Council, a decision was made to remove RAAF Base Edinburgh from the preliminary sampling program and progress immediately to a detailed environmental investigation to determine the nature and extent of PFAS contamination on and in the vicinity of RAAF Base Edinburgh. Planning for the detailed environmental investigation has commenced and it is anticipated a contractor will be engaged and the detailed site investigation commenced by the end of 2016.

The detailed site investigation is anticipated to take approximately twelve months, subject to the initial report findings and whether further analysis is required. The detailed environmental investigation will include:

- Sampling soil, surface water and groundwater on and off the base to identify the potential for exposure to PFAS in the vicinity
- Reviewing the historical use, storage and management of legacy AFFF to identify sources
- Identifying pathways and receptors for the potential exposure to PFAS
- Community and stakeholder engagement, including a water-use survey
- An Environmental Site Assessment, followed by a Human Health Risk Assessment and Ecological Risk Assessment, if required. These assessments will identify the nature and extent of potential contamination, evaluate any potential risks to the population and ecology, and inform future action to mitigate risks.

Defence will engage with the community throughout the detailed site investigation, the next community engagement is expected by mid October 2016.