

**Questions:**

Many Oakey residents have been asking us about what work a drilling rig is completing on Oakey Connection Road in Oakey. We have been told Defence is doing water boring to test the water for PFAS at specific levels in the table. Is this true?

**Response:**

Defence is finalising a detailed environmental investigation to better understand the extent and levels of per- and poly- fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) resulting from historical use of fire fighting foams on, and in the vicinity of Army Aviation Centre Oakey (AACO).

In 2016 Defence completed a detailed Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), including ground water modelling, a Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) and a Preliminary Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA).

Following the completion of these assessments it was identified that data gaps remained in some portions of the Investigation Area. As a result Defence is conducting further works to update and refine the 2016 assessment reports.

Defence commenced the additional works in January 2017 with sampling of surface water, groundwater, soil sediment and biota (plants and animals), and the works will continue through to approximately October 2017.

These works will also include the following activities:

- Research into the uptake of PFAS in fruit and vegetables;
- Research into the uptake of PFAS in chicken eggs;
- Seafood sampling and analysis;
- Additional surface water data collection and analysis;
- Additional groundwater data collection and analysis; and
- Additional sediment data collection and analysis.

Defence confirms that its environmental consultant is using the equipment (the drilling rig) to support the works.

This phase of the investigation will be completed and the reports published in late 2017. The reports will adopt the final 'health based guidance values' that have been developed by Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ).

Response provided to journalist  
7 April 2017

Defence has engaged an independent environmental consultant, to complete a Sensitivity Assessment as an addendum to the 2016 Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) for Oakey. The outcomes of this Sensitivity Assessment will inform ongoing environmental monitoring and future management decisions in relation to PFAS on, or in the vicinity of the base. Defence takes environmental investigations very seriously and is committed to implementing appropriate management responses based on the advice of independent experts in this field.

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

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

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