

Questions:

I understand the second phased, the more comprehensive study of possible groundwater contamination in the Katherine/Tindal RAAF Base area is soon to begin.

Has it begun?

It will still take a year?

What will people see?

Will there be a public meeting before it begins?

I understand we have been promoted "up the list" of areas to be investigated. Is this true?

What is the name of the company doing the investigation?

Response to all:

Planning for the detailed environmental investigation at RAAF Base Tindal is well advanced and Defence expects to be in contract with a Lead Consultant and Site Auditor by late February 2017. The investigation will be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Contaminated Sites) Measure (NEPM) framework and is expected to take approximately 12 months to complete.

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
- A Detailed Site Investigation, followed by a Human Health Risk Assessment and Ecological Risk Assessment, if the investigation determines it is 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 appoint a PFAS Regional Representative, and the Department of Human Services will appoint a Community Liaison Officer for RAAF Base Tindal.
- Defence will continue to provide alternative drinking water to eligible residents.
- Throughout the course of the detailed environmental investigation, Defence may conduct short and medium term remediation activities, such as cleaning of drains and removal of source areas (such as former Fire Training Areas).

Defence is committed to engaging with the local community throughout this investigation and will provide further information, including a community briefing, prior to its commencement. The next community information session will occur shortly after the Lead Consultant has been appointed.