

Question:

I'm just chasing an update on the PFAS investigation at Tindal/ Katherine. How many households are receiving drinking water, whether any households have been supplied with rain water tanks, where testing is at and when the next community meeting is scheduled. Can you also please provide me with the same information in regards to Darwin.

Response:

Planning for the detailed environmental investigation at RAAF Base Tindal and RAAF Base Darwin 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.

Defence continues to be committed to engaging with the local community throughout these investigations. Dates for community walk-in sessions are currently being finalised for RAAF Base Tindal and RAAF Base Darwin and are anticipated for March 2017. Advertising of the arrangements for these community engagement sessions will be available through local print media and published online at the PFAS website.

Defence has adopted a precautionary approach and is providing alternative sources of drinking water to eligible residents located in close proximity to bases, currently undertaking and pending detailed environmental investigations, who do not have a town water connection, and rely on the use of a bore for 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. Defence may also provide drinking water to residents in other exceptional circumstances.

As of 8 February 2017, Defence is providing 51 properties in the vicinity of RAAF Base Tindal with alternative drinking water. There are no properties in the vicinity of RAAF Base Darwin receiving alternative drinking water.

The supply of rainwater tanks is considered on a case-by-case basis. Defence has not provided rainwater tanks to households in the Katherine or Darwin area. Further information regarding the investigations at RAAF Base Tindal and RAAF Base Darwin can be found at:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/ID/PFOSPFOA/DefenceSitesPending.asp>