

Question:

Would the Defence Department be able to provide an update on investigations into PFOS/PFOA contamination at the Townsville Airport.

Has the Department decided on a timeline as to when investigations will be completed.

Also has the Department received any requests for bores to be installed from residents.

Response:

Defence expects to be in contract with a Lead Consultant and Third Party Reviewer by March 2017 and will then commence the Detailed Environmental Investigation. The investigation will take approximately 12 months to complete in accordance with the National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Contaminated Sites) Measure (NEPM) framework.

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. There are currently no residents in the vicinity of RAAF Base Townsville who rely on bore water for domestic purposes and as a result Defence has not received any requests to provide alternative drinking water.

Defence continues to be committed to engaging with the local community throughout this investigation. Dates for community walk-in sessions are currently being finalised for RAAF Base Townsville 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.

Further information regarding the investigation at RAAF Base Townsville can be found at:

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