

**Questions:**

I understand trucks are currently taking soil from the Oakey aviation base to be disposed of. I have some questions:

- How much soil is being taken off the base?
- What is its level of contamination?
- To what site is it being taken?
- How is the soil being disposed of or decontaminated?
- What measures is defence taking to ensure the PFAS chemicals aren't spreading during this process?

**Response:**

Defence is working continuously towards the effective monitoring and management of PFAS contamination on, and in the vicinity of, Army Aviation Centre Oakey. In addition, Defence continues to engage with industry experts both nationally and internationally to identify the best management and remedial options for PFAS throughout Australia.

Drain maintenance activities to remove sediment from on-base drains at Army Aviation Centre Oakey commenced at the end of 2016 after Spotless were appointed to deliver the drain clean-out works.

Spotless have now completed the first stage of the works. This involved survey works and identification of underground services on the base to confirm the scope of works and ensure the activities do not disrupt underground services such as plumbing and electricity.

Since completion of the survey works, Defence has identified a suitable location on the Base to store the excavated sediment. Several options were considered before determining the most suitable location that meets environmental requirements and aligns with Base operational needs.

Now that a suitable location for the excavated sediment has been identified, the drain excavation works are anticipated to commence in June 2017. Approximately 200mm of sediment from approximately 2.4km of drains within the base will be excavated and stockpiled for subsequent treatment following identification of a suitable technology. Once the dates for the commencement of excavations are confirmed, Defence will be in contact to advise a suitable time for filming.

The stockpiled material will be secured in an appropriate area with all necessary bunding and covers to ensure contamination does not leach from the sediment.

Response provided to journalist  
2 June 2017

Separate to the remedial activities for PFAS at Oakey, soil has been removed off-base for a construction project being conducted on behalf of the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF). The Project involves the refurbishment and extension of existing RSAF helicopter training facilities. The works are required to support an agreement between the Republic of Singapore and Australia.

Between 16 February and 11 May 2017, approximately 18,000m<sup>3</sup> of soil has been removed off-site to the REMONDIS Swanbank landfill facility under approval conditions of the Department of Queensland Environmental and Heritage Protection permits and in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act.

Prior to removal, the soil was tested and found to be below the residential soil level criteria for PFAS. As per standard procedure, a remediation action plan was developed and then reviewed before works commenced. The criteria for PFAS in soil has not changed since the plan was developed in November 2016. The majority of soil has now been removed, however it is anticipated that up to another 1,000m<sup>3</sup> of soil will be required to be removed once civil works are complete. The project is expected to be completed in late 2017.

Further information on PFAS management and remedial activities at Oakey can be found at:

[http://www.defence.gov.au/ID/Oakey/\\_master/docs/PFASManagementAndRemedialActivitiesAtArmyAviationCentreOakey2017Factsheet.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/ID/Oakey/_master/docs/PFASManagementAndRemedialActivitiesAtArmyAviationCentreOakey2017Factsheet.pdf)

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