

Response provided to journalist
21 March 2017

Question:

Is it possible to get a response to my questions below?

Is there an update on PFAS testing at the Wagga RAAF Base? When will more detailed testing begin? Who will carry out the testing? When is the next community consultation? Are there any households in the area receiving drinking water, if so how many?

Response:

Defence expects to be in contract with a lead consultant and site auditor by April 2017, which will allow the Detailed Environmental Investigation in and around RAAF Base Wagga. This comprehensive investigation will take approximately 12 months to complete as it will be carried out in accordance with the National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Contaminated Sites) Measure (NEPM) framework.

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 Wagga and are anticipated for March 2017. Advertising 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. As of 20 February 2017, there are no residents in the vicinity of RAAF Base Wagga receiving alternative drinking water.

Further information regarding the investigation at RAAF Base Wagga can be found on the PFAS website: <http://www.defence.gov.au/id/PFOSPFOA/DefenceSitesPending.asp>