

Questions:

The NT Government said it was asking Defence to provide voluntary blood testing of Katherine residents. This was not addressed last week. Is it happening? If so, when?

Rainwater tanks are being provided to some neighbours of Tindal. How many? Can we take pictures of it or can they be supplied? When?

The sessions were told more tests have been returned with positive PFAS readings in the Tindal area. Mr Grzeskowiak stated this. Can we have more information on these tests? Where were they? What were the results? How many tests taken?

Response:

The Department of Defence has not received a formal request from the Northern Territory (NT) Government asking for a voluntary blood testing program for Katherine residents. However, Defence understands the NT Government has made a request for the Federal Health Department to consider conducting voluntary blood testing.

The Australian Government, led by the Department of Health, has established a voluntary blood testing program for people that work or live, or have worked or lived, within the investigation areas at Williamtown and Oakey.

Questions regarding blood testing should be directed to the Department of Health.

Defence has adopted a precautionary approach and is providing alternative sources of drinking water to eligible residents located in close proximity to affected bases when a town water connection is not available, and there is a reliance 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. As at 18 April 2017, Defence is supplying 32 properties in the vicinity of RAAF Base Tindal with alternative drinking water.

Defence has not provided rainwater tanks to households in the Katherine area. Alternative drinking water has generally been provided in bottled water, or bulk water delivered to residents with existing rainwater tanks. At the Community Walk-in Session held on 12 April, Defence announced it will fund rainwater tanks for eligible residents as a longer term alternative.

Defence will be contacting residents already identified as eligible over the next two-three weeks to discuss the details of this offer. The choice to receive a rain water tank remains at the discretion of the resident.

Residents wishing to request an alternative drinking water supply can contact the RAAF Base Tindal hotline at:

Tindal Hotline Number: 1800 316 813

Email: PFAS.RAAFBaseTindal@coffey.com

Response provided to journalist
1 May 2017

Defence has conducted Residential Sampling within the Katherine area. These tests have been conducted at the requests of the residents to provide advice on levels of PFAS with the bore water on properties. While the results may be used to inform the detailed site investigation, it is primarily for advising residents. Defence has not been authorised by the residents to release the results.

Response provided to journalist
1 May 2017