

**Response Provided to Journalist
14 August 2017**

Questions:

This week, environmental consultants engaged by the Defence Force updated Playford Council about contamination testing at the base. Are you able to provide any information about what will be presented?

How many sites have been tested on and off the Edinburgh RAAF base?

What are the results of these tests? How many sites have been confirmed with contamination?

When is testing expected to be finished?

Will the Defence Department host another public meeting to update the public? If so, when and where will this be?

Why did the Defence Department request for the meeting with Playford Council to be closed?

Response to all:

In November 2016, Defence commenced a detailed environmental investigation into the nature and extent of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), on and in the vicinity of RAAF Base Edinburgh. The investigation is being conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure (NEPM) framework - a nationally agreed approach to investigating contaminated sites - and is expected to be completed in mid-2018.

As part of the first stage of the investigation, the Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI), previous studies and environmental investigations have been reviewed by the expert consultant to build up a picture of historical use, storage, disposal and management of Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) and the potential impacts of PFAS. The information gathered within the PSI was used to inform the sampling program for the second stage of the investigation, the Detailed Site Investigation (DSI).

Commencing in April 2017, the DSI includes the sampling of soil, groundwater, surface water and sediment on and off RAAF Base Edinburgh. It is anticipated that approximately 800 samples will be taken as part of the DSI works. Testing is expected to be completed in November 2017, but if deemed necessary further testing may be undertaken. Results to date range from 'positive' at identified source areas on RAAF Base Edinburgh, down to nil detects at locations off base. A positive result is not necessarily indicative of any risk to the public as it depends on the location of the result and whether there is a pathway for people to be exposed.

A primary pathway for exposure is through the consumption of contaminated groundwater. Through the investigation Defence has confirmed that the majority of

properties in the vicinity of the Base are connected to town water and we currently understand that there are no residents in this area drinking groundwater.

All sampling results will be published in the DSI, which is expected to be completed in early 2018. Findings from the DSI will inform the need for a Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment (HHERA). If required, the HHERA will evaluate potential risks of elevated PFAS concentrations to the human population and ecology, and outline strategies to mitigate risks. Defence anticipates a recommendation regarding whether a HHERA is required will be provided by the environmental consultants in late 2017.

Defence is committed to keeping the community informed about the progress of the investigation. Community consultation events have been held on 01 November 2016 and 23 March 2017. The next community consultation event is planned for late October or early November 2017 and will update the community on the initial results of the DSI and the next stages of the investigation.

On 8 August 2017 Defence and its Lead Consultant for this Investigation met with the Playford Council to provide the Council with an update on the PFAS investigations at RAAF Base Edinburgh. Following the discussions with Council, Defence is now preparing a newsletter to update the community on the current progress of the investigation ahead of the next formal community consultation event.