

**Response provided to journalist  
11 December 2017**

**Question**

For the following sites, I would like to know what the maximum recorded levels (per microgram) of PFOS, PFOA and PFHxS in soil, surface water and/or groundwater:

- RAAF Base Pearce
- Gingin Satellite Airfield
- RAAF Base Learmonth
- Harold E Holt Naval Communication Station A & B
- HMAS Stirling in Garden Island.

**Response**

Defence has commenced a detailed environmental investigation into the nature and extent of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at RAAF Base Pearce; RAAF Base Learmonth; Harold E Holt Naval Communication Station, Areas A & B; Gingin Satellite Airfield; and HMAS Stirling.

These investigations are being conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure (NEPM) framework.

Four of these investigations are currently in the Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) stage. These sites are: RAAF Base Pearce; RAAF Base Learmonth; Harold E Holt Naval Communication Station, Areas A & B; and HMAS Stirling.

The DSI involves the sampling of soil, sediment, surface water, groundwater, plants and animals on and near each of the respective bases, to further assess the nature and extent of PFAS contamination in the Investigation Area.

The investigation at Gingin Satellite Airfield is still in the Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) stage.

The PSI involves the historical review of legacy firefighting use and storage to identify where and when legacy firefighting foam was used (sources), how PFAS moves in the environment (migration pathways) and people, animals and the environment that may be exposed to PFAS (receptors). Once the PSI stage is completed, a DSI will commence as part of the investigation at Gingin.

All sampling results will be published in a DSI Report once sampling concludes and the results are analysed. Findings from the DSI stage will inform the need for a Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment (HHERA) to be conducted. A HHERA is currently underway for the RAAF Base Pearce investigation site.

Once finalised, the DSI reports will be given to relevant Federal and State Authorities and uploaded to the Defence PFAS website. Individual results will not be published independent of the relevant report.

Preliminary findings from the Western Australian investigation sites are available at: <http://www.defence.gov.au/Environment/PFAS/Publications/Default.asp>