

**Questions:**

PFAS chemicals have leaked from Tindal RAAF Base, the latest results show they are still leaking, and they will continue leaking for decades to come.

Is this statement correct?

At Williamstown, residents were told the chemicals would continue to be "an issue" until 2050.

Is this the case for Katherine?

What is our future timeline?

Is there going to be an intervention like Williamstown where the contaminated groundwater is intercepted, cleaned and pumped back in?

**Response to all:**

Defence is committed to responsible environmental management and being responsible members of the communities in which we operate. Defence continues to work towards the effective monitoring and management of PFAS contamination on and in the vicinity of affected sites across Australia.

Modeling conducted by the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority (NSW EPA) predicting contamination remaining up to 2050 in the Williamstown area was based on there being no further remediation and management actions undertaken. However, as per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), specifically perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), are emerging contaminants the knowledge regarding the ability to remove these chemicals from the environment is evolving resulting in Defence continuing to implement world-leading remediation and management activities at affected sites.

The geology of Katherine is very different to the geology of Williamstown and as a result, different management and remediation activities are likely to occur. As more information on the persistence of the chemicals becomes available, it will be factored into any management plans, in addition to the information that is obtained from the investigations.

Remediation and management activities that are currently occurring or are in development at Defence sites are primarily focused on known source areas to reduce the amount of PFAS leaving the sites and into the surrounding environment. These activities are guided by the investigations being conducted that provide a greater understanding of how PFAS is migrating off the sites in the specific environments. The final stage of the investigation process will be the development of a site specific management strategy. This may include the treatment of contaminated groundwater or removal of soil from the primary source areas. Defence anticipates holding a briefing of the management strategy for the Tindal Investigation to the community in mid-2018.

Defence is engaging with industry experts both nationally and internationally to identify the best PFAS remediation and management options that are available. Defence will continue to work with and support the Katherine community until a viable remediation strategy can be delivered.