

Questions:

I'm just enquiring about the ongoing investigations into the extent of PFAS on and around RAAF Base Amberley and Army Aviation Centre Oakey.

My understanding is that Defence is currently conducting further environmental investigations at Oakey base, until late 2017. Is there an update on where this is at, and when we might see the results of this? Will it be before Christmas?

Also, what is the latest with the investigations around Amberley, and when will we see any updated information on the contamination there?

Response:

Defence has been proactive in initiating an environmental program to investigate the nature and extent of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) on and in the vicinity of some Defence sites including Army Aviation Centre Oakey (AACO) and RAAF Base Amberley (Amberley).

Oakey

In 2012, Defence commenced a detailed environmental investigation into PFAS on and near AACO.

In 2016 Defence completed three assessments as part of the detailed environmental investigation:

- Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)
- Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA); and
- Preliminary Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA).

Since the completion of the 2016 assessments, further works have been conducted to address data gaps regarding the extent of contamination in some areas, and uncertainties within the human health and ecological risk assessments. Defence is updating and refining the ESA, HHRA and ERA released in 2016. The updated reports are going through a detailed audit and review process.

The 2017 ESA and HHRA reports will be presented to the Oakey community on Wednesday 6 December 2017 between 5:30pm–7:00pm at the Oakey Cultural Centre. The Community Information Session will be followed by two Community Walk-in Sessions on Thursday 7 December 2017 at the Oakey RSL that will provide the local community with an opportunity to ask questions, one-on-one with Defence and other relevant government departments about the report findings. The sessions are between 9:00am–12:00pm and 2:00pm–6:00pm. Community members are welcome to visit anytime during the two sessions. Details of the community events will be advertised on the [Oakey PFAS website](#) and in local media closer to the date.

The updated ERA is expected to be finalised in early 2018.

Defence is also undertaking a range of management activities at Oakey. These include:

- maintenance of open drains on the Base to remove PFAS contaminated soil and reduce the PFAS migration in surface water off-Base
- water treatment plant to treat contaminated groundwater beneath the Base
- town water connections to 43 properties; these previously relied on tanks or bores for drinking water that are affected by PFAS
- planning works to remove PFAS affected soil at and near the former Fire Training Area to reduce further PFAS migration from this source.

Amberley

In March 2017, Defence commenced a detailed environmental investigation on and near RAAF Base Amberley.

The investigation's first stage has been completed. This involved the historical review of legacy firefighting foam use and storage, how PFAS moves in the environment, people, animals, as well as the environment that may be exposed to PFAS.

This information was used to develop a Sampling and Analysis Quality Plan (SAQP) which details the location, nature and extent of sampling activities to take place as part of the second stage of the environmental investigation, the Detailed Site Investigation (DSI).

Sampling and testing for the DSI will involve the collection of soil, sediment, surface water and groundwater on and off the base. Sampling at RAAF Base Amberley has commenced, with off-base sampling activity to commence soon.

Defence is committed to keeping the community informed of the progress of the PFAS environmental investigations. Defence will hold a community walk-in session at Leichardt One Mile Community Centre, 1 Denman Street, Leichardt on 28 November 2017 to update the community on the PFAS investigation at Amberley. Details of this investigation are available on the [Amberley PFAS website](#).