

Question:

Does the Defence have any plans to for remediation/ to clean up the contamination that is off the Williamstown RAAF base?

Response:

Defence continues to work towards the effective monitoring and management of PFAS contamination on and in the vicinity of RAAF Base Williamstown in consultation with the NSW Government, including the NSW EPA. Currently, remediation and management activities at RAAF Base Williamstown are primarily focused on known source areas to reduce the amount of PFAS leaving the base into the surrounding environment.

These include:

- the Lake Cochran water treatment plant
- the Moors Drain water treatment plant
- drain maintenance activities.

The Lake Cochran and Moors Drain water treatment plants filter PFAS from water flowing out of Lake Cochran and Moors Drain. The plants will assist to reduce PFAS contamination leaving RAAF Base Williamstown through surface water.

Defence has engaged industry experts to conduct drain maintenance activities at the base to remove PFAS-impacted soil from within the drainage network and improve the operation of the drains. As part of the maintenance activities, sediment from drains is being excavated and disposed of at a licensed landfill facility. If higher levels are found in any of these drains the sediment will be stockpiled for subsequent treatment in a secure area to ensure that PFAS does not leach from the sediment into the environment.

In addition, in consultation with the Port Stephens Council, Defence has commissioned a regional drainage study to analyse the stormwater system downstream of the base. The study includes Dawson's Drain, Fullerton Cove, Moor's Drain and Tilligerry Creek catchments. This will develop a clear understanding of the capacity and operation of the drainage network and propose practical measures to improve the system.

Defence continues to engage with industry experts both nationally and internationally to identify the best PFAS remediation and management options, including for PFAS impacted groundwater and soil.