

Questions:

I'm just reading the Department of Defence's latest documents released on the disclosure log, re 3M and PFAS foam usage guidelines. I note in 3M's advice to the Department of Defence it says –

Environmental/Toxicological Properties

3M™ Training Foam (Dep't Defence use) has undergone a programme of testing to assess the impact of foam on the natural environment. Data indicate that: This product is low in toxicity to tested aquatic organisms and completely biodegradable

It also says that;- *With minimum environmental impact, the foam is suitable for equipment familiarisation through cold training exercises.*

I was seeking comment as to what defence thinks of that advice, in hindsight.

Would this advice be a factor in the legal action Defence has mooted against Dupont/3M.

Answer to all:

As this question raises matters that may be considered by the Federal Court in the Williamstown and Oakey class actions, it would not be appropriate to respond at this time.

More broadly, Defence commenced phasing out the use of legacy fire fighting foams containing perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) as active ingredients once it became aware that these substances were emerging persistent organic pollutants.

Defence has been proactive in initiating an environmental program to investigate the nature and extent of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) including PFOS, PFOA and perfluorohexane sulfonate (PFHxS), on and in the vicinity of some of its bases.

In addition to environmental investigations Defence is undertaking PFAS management activities including providing alternative drinking water to eligible households, establishing water treatment plants, connecting households to town water and researching the uptake of PFAS in plants and animals.