

Response provided to Journalist
30 August 2018

Question

Wondering if Defence would like to comment on Port Stephens Council's submission to the PFAS Inquiry which is on public record (joint foreign affairs defence and trade inquiry), particularly to:

"the community significant concern, frustration and anger in relation to the management of the issue"

Response

Defence has learnt from its experiences since commencing investigations into PFAS at RAAF Base Williamtown, both in terms of investigating PFAS as an emerging contaminant of concern and the way in which Defence communicates with the local community.

This is a result of community feedback, greater research into PFAS, the development of national guidance, and improvements in technology and industry capabilities for investigating and managing PFAS contamination.

Defence acknowledges that people who live in the Williamtown Management Area will be feeling concern, frustration and anger about PFAS contamination. RAAF Base Williamtown, and the people who work there, are a part of the Williamtown community and, as a member of the community, Defence is committed to being open and transparent about the environmental investigation and the implementation of management and remediation activities.