

**Response provided to journalist
10 August 2018**

Questions:

Regarding the Preliminary Site Investigation at Salt Ash Air Weapons Range:

- How many properties were given material in last week's letterbox drop?
- What exactly prompted the decision to start this investigation?
- How was PFAS used on site? For firefighting?

Response:

The Department of Defence has been proactive in initiating an environmental program to investigate and manage per- and poly- fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) on, and in the vicinity of, Defence sites as a result of the historical use of legacy firefighting foam.

After reviewing available information, Defence has engaged an environmental consultant, AECOM Australia Pty Ltd, to conduct a Preliminary Site Investigation on the Salt Ash Air Weapons Range. The Preliminary Site Investigation will involve reviewing the historical use, storage and disposal of legacy firefighting foam at the site - including how the legacy firefighting foam containing specific types of PFAS, perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), as active ingredients was used. The investigation will also involve on-site sampling of groundwater, surface water, soil and sediment and limited off-site sampling to assist in determining if further detailed investigations are required.

Sampling for the preliminary investigation is expected to commence in the third quarter of 2018 and the Preliminary Site Investigation Report is anticipated to be completed by the end of fourth quarter 2018.

A letterbox drop advising of the investigation at Salt Ash Air Weapons Range was conducted at the end of July to 300 nearby properties.