

Response provided to journalist
22 June 2018

Question:

Seeking update on management activities at Williamtown.

Response:

Defence continues to implement a range of management actions on RAAF Base Williamtown as part of its National PFAS Investigation and Management Program. Defence is working with industry experts both nationally and internationally, to identify the best management and remedial options to reduce the movement of, and potential exposure to PFAS where possible.

The following PFAS response management activities are currently underway:

- **On-base Drain works**

There has been approximately 2.7kms of drains excavated to assist water flowing through the Base and reduce the risk of contaminated sediment leaving the Base. The waste-product of these works was disposed of in accordance with EPA guidelines.

- **Water Treatment Plants**

There are currently three plants installed reducing the concentration of PFAS in water leaving the Base:

- o **Lake Cochran Water Treatment Plant:** To date, this plant has treated 377 Million Litres of water. The operation of this plant has been extended to March 2019. For more information, visit:

www.defence.gov.au/Environment/PFAS/Williamtown/LakeCochran.asp

- o **Moors Drain Water Treatment Plant:** This plant has treated a total of 54 Million Litres of water leaving the Base, with upgrades made to improve the efficiency and flow-rate of the plant. Operations at the Moors Drain Plant have been extended until January 2020. For more information visit:

www.defence.gov.au/Environment/PFAS/Williamtown/Moorsdrainwtp.asp

- o **Former Firefighting Training Area Water Treatment Plant:** The plant is fully installed and is now in a commissioning phase which will continue through July and August. With full flow operations expected to be achieved in September 2018.

- **Town Water Connections**

As part of a long-term and precautionary measure for the supply of drinking water, Defence has funded Hunter Water to provide property owners in the Williamtown Management Area access to the Hunter Water Supply Network, under the Williamtown Water Reticulation Project.

The Project has included the installation of new water mains infrastructure and plumbing connections from the water mains to private properties, for domestic use. Approximately 350 properties are expected to be connected under the Project and when all connections have been established, eligible residents will have access to high quality drinking water.

- **Regional Drainage Study**

Defence has initiated a Regional Drainage Study appointing local experts, Umwelt, in October 2017. The Regional Drainage Study will assess and model the drainage network surrounding the Base including the Dawson's Drain/Fullerton Cove and the Moor's Drain/Tilligerry Creek catchments.

The model of the drainage network will provide an up to date understanding of the capacity and function of the drainage. Defence is consulting with Port Stephen Council and will engage with key members of the local community in regard to the outcomes of this assessment.

In addition to the management activities currently underway, the outcomes of the detailed environmental investigation are being used to develop a PFAS Management Area Plan (PMAP) for the management of PFAS contamination moving forward.

The PMAP will further guide Defence's actions to manage known sources of contamination, migration, as well as the identified exposure risks to the community or environment.

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