

Question

I'm just after an update on where the investigation into the PFAS contamination at Forest Hill is at.

According to previous reports, the investigation should be completed by now.

Response

In May 2017, Defence commenced a detailed environmental investigation to understand the nature and extent of per and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) on, and surrounding, RAAF Base Wagga.

The Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) is currently underway and the project will continue until the end of 2018. The DSI involves on-base and off-base sampling, including the sampling of properties and environmental features surrounding RAAF Base Wagga such as the Murrumbidgee River. The DSI report is due to be finalised and presented to the community in the second quarter of 2018.

Based on the initial findings of the DSI, it has been determined a Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment will be conducted to assess the potential exposure risks to people and the environment. The understanding of these potential risks will assist in developing mitigation strategies to minimise exposure and impacts upon the community and environment. The investigation is currently undertaking numerical ground water modelling which will inform the risk assessments.

Once finalised, all findings from the detailed environmental investigation will be reported to the relevant government agencies, regulatory bodies and the local community.

Further information on the Wagga investigation is available at:

<http://www.defence.gov.au/environment/pfas/Wagga/>