

**Response provided to journalist
19 October 2018**

Questions:

I'm seeking an update on the PFAS Kapooka investigation and how many if any tests have been conducted off base and on base and the results.

Also, what was the outcome of the water use surveys for both Forest Hill and Kapooka Defence bases and has it led to changed behaviours among residents and landowners, and or farmers?

Also seeking to find out how many if any residents around the two Wagga base(s) have opted to seek drinking water offered?

What is Defence doing to stop ongoing pfas contamination of the Forest Hill Sewerage treatment works?

Response:

In August 2018, the Department of Defence commenced a detailed environmental investigation to better understand the nature and extent of per- and poly- fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination, on and around, Blamey Barracks (Kapooka).

As at 18 October 2018, Defence received 75 responses to the water-use survey submitted by residents in the vicinity of Blamey Barracks, and 151 wateruse surveys from residents in the vicinity of RAAF Base Wagga. The results indicated no reliance on bore water for drinking purposes. No alternative drinking water is being provided to residents living in proximity to either base. The collection of water-use surveys is still ongoing.

A specialist environmental consultant is currently in the process of developing a Conceptual Site Model, Sampling Analysis and Quality Plan to inform the PFAS investigation at Blamey Barracks, with a comprehensive sampling program expected to commence in the fourth quarter of 2018. The results will be shared with the public and published in the Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) report.

Testing as part of the RAAF Base Wagga investigation has not detected PFAS at Riverina Water County Council drinking water extraction points, at East Wagga borefield and the Murrumbidgee River.

Defence continues to work with Council regarding the detection of PFAS at Forest Hill Sewerage Treatment Plant, and has recently initiated further investigation of the on-base sewerage network to identify the source of PFAS entering the Sewerage Treatment Plant. This investigation will inform recommended management actions to reduce the movement of PFAS from RAAF Base Wagga. The management actions will be outlined in the PFAS Management Area Plan (PMAP) for RAAF Base Wagga, expected to be finalised in the first quarter of 2019.

Defence will continue to engage with the community at key investigation milestones and when reports are published.

**Response provided to journalist
19 October 2018**

A copy of the water use survey is available on Defence website at
www.defence.gov.au/environment/pfas/Kapooka/WaterUseSurvey.asp

Defence encourages all residents in the vicinity of Blamey Barracks Kapooka to review and complete the survey.