

**Response provided to journalist
06 March 2019**

Question:

- 1) Just after the number of properties in Bullsbrook, WA, being supplied with bottled drinking water currently because of the PFAS issue?
- 2) Just in regards to our phone conversation, seeking the Minister's position regarding a letter sent by WA Water Minister Dave Kelly (<http://echonewspaper.com.au/no-answers-yet-to-pfas-mess/>) where he said:

“The state government has undertaken an initial high-level assessment of the practicability of extending the Bullsbrook town water supply scheme.

“This assessment, carried out by the Water Corporation, indicates connecting West Bullsbrook to scheme water is likely to be possible.

“To proceed further the state government requires a formal request from the Department of Defence to enable the Water Corporation to carry out planning, design and costing for a reticulation water supply scheme to West Bullsbrook.”

Mr Kelly says he has received no response yet, and I checked today and his office said that was still the case.

What is Minister Pyne's position?

Will a request be sent from the Department of Defence to Water Corporation to find out the cost?

Is the Federal Government intending to pay for the connection of scheme water to the impacted residents?

Residents say the investigation by DoD has been finalised, when will the results be made public?

Response:

The Australian Government is providing \$55.2 million over five years for a drinking water program, to remove exposure pathways to eligible community members identified through the Commonwealth's PFAS environmental investigations. The program includes property owners in the community surrounding RAAF Base Pearce.

As of 6 March 2019 Defence is providing bottled water to around 153 properties within the RAAF Base Pearce Investigation Area.

Following the release of the Human Health Risk Assessment in July 2018, Defence initiated a review of the supply of alternative water to properties surrounding RAAF Base Pearce. Defence has conducted re-sampling of private bores to help inform decisions in relation to an appropriate long-term arrangement for drinking water. Options could include returning to bore water or transitioning to a suitable long-term water supply such as the installation of rainwater tanks, drilling of new, deeper bores where water is not contaminated, point of entry filtration systems or local or remote community borefields.

In relation to a proposed extension of reticulated water to West Bullsbrook, Defence has been in discussions with representatives from Western Australia Water Corporation to understand any proposed plans to provide reticulated water to West Bullsbrook. Defence

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has been advised that an initial high-level assessment of the practicability of extending the current Bullsbrook town water supply to the West Bullsbrook area indicated that it is likely to be possible.

The PFAS environmental investigation at RAAF Base Pearce has been completed and the findings have been published on the Defence website. Defence is using the findings of the investigation to develop a PFAS Management Area Plan. This plan will inform the activities Defence will undertake to manage, monitor and reduce the risks of PFAS exposure on, and around, the Base.

On 15 November Defence held a community information session at Bullsbrook to present the findings of the investigation to the community. The next community engagement event is expected to be held in May 2019 to update residents on the PFAS Management Area Plan and the provision of alternative water. Any decision to provide reticulated water to West Bullsbrook will require cooperation from Federal, state and local governments.