



## RAAF Base Wagga Investigation Community Newsletter

PFAS Investigation and Management Program

### Investigation update

Defence is undertaking an environmental investigation to better understand the nature and extent of per- and poly- fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination on and around RAAF Base Wagga.

The sampling and analysis for the Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) has been completed and the Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment is underway.

Defence held a community walk-in session in June 2018 to present the findings of the DSI and discuss the next steps in the investigation. Thank you to everyone who attended the session.

This community newsletter provides an update on the status and next steps for the environmental investigation.

For more information on the investigation, including the DSI report, visit:

[www.defence.gov.au/environment/pfas/wagga/](http://www.defence.gov.au/environment/pfas/wagga/)

### Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment (HHERA)

As part of the investigation, a HHERA is being conducted to further investigate and assess potential PFAS exposure risks for people, plants and animals. Additional sampling and analysis is being done to further assess the risk of PFAS exposure where the DSI sampling found PFAS concentrations above guidance values and a potential for human or ecological exposure was identified.

The HHERA will also consider potential future risks of exposure via groundwater. A groundwater model will be developed to better understand the movement of PFAS in groundwater in the area. The model will allow us to predict future movement of PFAS in groundwater and estimate the time it might take for PFAS to move from one point to another.

The groundwater model will help us refine our understanding of the extent of groundwater contamination and assess whether water supply bores could be impacted in the future.

The following targeted sampling is underway to assess potential PFAS exposure risks in support of the HHERA:

- Testing effluent at the Forest Hill Sewage Treatment Plant (STP).
- Sampling of yabbies in the farm dams surrounding the Base.
- Sampling fish at the Murray Cod Hatchery.
- Sampling aquatic biota (including fish and yabbies) in the Murrumbidgee River.
- Sampling aquatic biota in Marshalls Creek and Kyeamba Creek to assess potential ecological risks.

A test pumping program has been undertaken on the Riverina Water supply bores at East Wagga. The pumps were cycled on and off at each bore while groundwater level measurements were undertaken in the bores and in surrounding monitoring bores. The data will be used in the groundwater model being developed to assess potential PFAS movement from the Gumly Gumly Wetland towards the East Wagga borefield.



*Water sampling in the Murrumbidgee River*





Forest Hill Sewage Treatment Plant



Riverina Water County Council Supply Bore

### PFAS Management Area Plan

As part of the investigation process, a PFAS Management Area Plan (PMAP) is also developed. A PMAP sets out actions for risks identified through the environmental investigation that require management.

The best management and remediation options are determined by site-specific factors, including hydrogeology, the type of contamination and access. The environmental investigations currently underway will provide us with significant site-specific information. We will use this information to develop a PMAP that is tailored to the unique conditions of the site.



**Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI)**  
*May 2017 – August 2017*



**Community Water Use Survey**  
*July 2017 – August 2017*



**Community Walk-in Session**  
*August 2017*



**Detailed Site Investigation (DSI)**  
*September 2017 – Mid 2018*



**Community Walk-in Session**  
*7 June 2018*



**Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment (HHERA)**  
*Mid 2018 – Third Quarter 2018*



**Community Walk-in Session**  
*Third Quarter 2018*



**PFAS Management Area Plan (PMAP)**  
*Late 2018*



**Community Walk-in Session**  
*Late 2018*

*\*Dates may be subject to rescheduling*

We will continue to keep you updated on the investigation as it progresses and will provide more details on the next walk-in session closer to the date.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the investigation, please don't hesitate to contact the project team using the details below.

### Contact



[www.defence.gov.au/environment/pfas/wagga/](http://www.defence.gov.au/environment/pfas/wagga/)



[wagga.defence@jacobs.com](mailto:wagga.defence@jacobs.com)



1800 931 700

Media enquiries should be directed to (02) 6127 1999 or [media@defence.gov.au](mailto:media@defence.gov.au)

