



About the Investigation

The Department of Defence has completed a detailed environmental investigation into the nature and extent of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), resulting from historical use of legacy firefighting foams on RAAF Base Townsville.

The outcomes from the investigation have been used to develop a PFAS Management Area Plan (PMAP) for the Base and surrounding area.

PFAS Management Area Plan

The PMAP outlines activities that Defence will undertake to manage and reduce the risks of PFAS exposure on-base and in the surrounding community. The Base is defined as the 'Management Area' in the PMAP, while major PFAS source areas are termed 'Sub-Management Areas'.

The PMAP will guide Defence to:

- Manage the key sources of contamination such as Fire Training Areas and the Fire Station Area (refer Sub-Management Areas in Figure 1);
- Reduce PFAS migration from the Base; and
- Reduce the amount of PFAS in the environment.

The PMAP will prioritise the implementation of practical solutions to prevent or minimise PFAS migrating from the Base. This will include:

- Reducing the PFAS contamination source;
- Blocking or diverting the contamination; and/or
- Reducing the concentration of PFAS in migration pathways.

Developing the PMAP involved a review of the source areas of PFAS contamination and the key ways it is migrating into the wider community. It also included a comparison and evaluation of a range of available PFAS management activities, to identify possible options for the Base.

The PMAP will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if new information or technology arises which has the potential to impact the PMAP objectives.

PMAP Recommendations

The PMAP makes recommendations that focus on reducing the mass of PFAS discharged from the Base following rainfall. To address this, the PMAP recommends some or all of the following options be considered:

- Remediating on-base PFAS source areas, to minimise future migration of PFAS in surface water, such as excavation and off-base disposal of PFAS impacted soil to landfill or incineration.
- Diverting surface water away from source areas to reduce PFAS migration from the Base. This may include reshaping the area to allow surface water to move away from source areas and minimise the uptake of PFAS from impacted soil.

Ongoing Monitoring Plan

As part of the PMAP, an Ongoing Monitoring Plan (OMP) has been prepared which outlines the sampling program that will be undertaken by Defence to monitor and track the PFAS contamination over the coming years.

The OMP provides an evidence base for the ongoing management of the PFAS contamination, including looking at the changes in concentration and geographical spread. It will assist Defence to evaluate the progress and success of the management activities as well as identify where more might need to be done.

What	Where	When
Monitoring of groundwater, surface water and sediment	The Base, The Common, Garbutt, Belgian Gardens, Rows Bay, Pallarenda, Bohle	Biannual sampling for 3 years, followed by a review.
Event-based sampling of surface water	The Base, The Common, Garbutt, Belgian Gardens, Rows Bay	Following rainfall >50mm in 24 hours, or >100mm in 7 days.





Next Steps

Ongoing monitoring will commence in early 2020.

The timeframes for the implementation of the recommended actions in the PMAP vary between the short term (i.e. less than 12 months) and long term (i.e. beyond 3 years). This is dependent on the outcome of assessments that are required to determine the best option for the sub-management areas before remediation actions commence.

Keeping the Community Informed.

Defence will continue to provide updates as the management actions are implemented and continue to keep the community informed on the outcomes on further sampling and the implementation of management plans. As additional information becomes available, updates will be provided through community information sessions, project website, direct mail, factsheets and newsletters.



Figure 1: Sub-Management Areas

Contact Information

RAAF Base Townsville Investigation Team

- Phone 1800 842 122
- Email Townsville.Defence@wsp.com
- Website www.defence.gov.au/environment/pfas/Townsville
- Post WSP Project Team
PO Box 12020
George Street, Brisbane QLD 4003

Media enquiries should be directed to Defence Media on (02) 6127 1999 or media@defence.gov.au.

Useful Links

Department of Health

- 1800 941 1800
- www.health.gov.au/PFAS

Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ)

- www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohppfas.htm

