



The Department of Defence (Defence) has completed a detailed environmental investigation to better understand the nature and extent of per- and poly- fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination on and around RAAF Base Wagga.

The outcomes from the environmental investigation are being used to develop a PFAS Management Area Plan (PMAP) which will outline activities that Defence will undertake to manage and reduce the risks of PFAS exposure on, and around, the Base.

As an outcome of the Detailed Site Investigation and to better inform the PMAP, further assessments of the stormwater and wastewater network at the Base have been conducted to better understand how PFAS is entering those networks. As a result, the PMAP is now expected to be released in the coming months. A community information session will be held upon completion of the PMAP, to present and discuss the recommendations. We will advertise this session in local newspapers, send an invitation by mail to surrounding residents and email the invitation to people on our mailing list. If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive invitations to information sessions and updates on the investigations by email, please send your details to [wagga.defence@jacobs.com](mailto:wagga.defence@jacobs.com)

### What will the PMAP involve?

The PMAP will describe the practical measures that Defence will take to manage, monitor and reduce identified PFAS exposure-risks within the established Management Area.

The PMAP will guide Defence to:

- Manage the key sources of contamination, such as the former and current fire station;
- Reduce the amount of PFAS in the environment;
- Reduce PFAS movement from the Base; and
- Manage the exposure risks for the community,

The PMAP will also include an Ongoing Monitoring Plan (OMP). The OMP will describe how Defence will continue to monitor and track PFAS concentrations in groundwater and surface water over time. This will include routine sampling of groundwater and surface water to monitor and PFAS in the environment and identify where more may need to be done.

The PMAP will be reviewed annually, as actions are progressed and new information on PFAS behavior and treatment becomes available.

### Base stormwater and wastewater network assessment

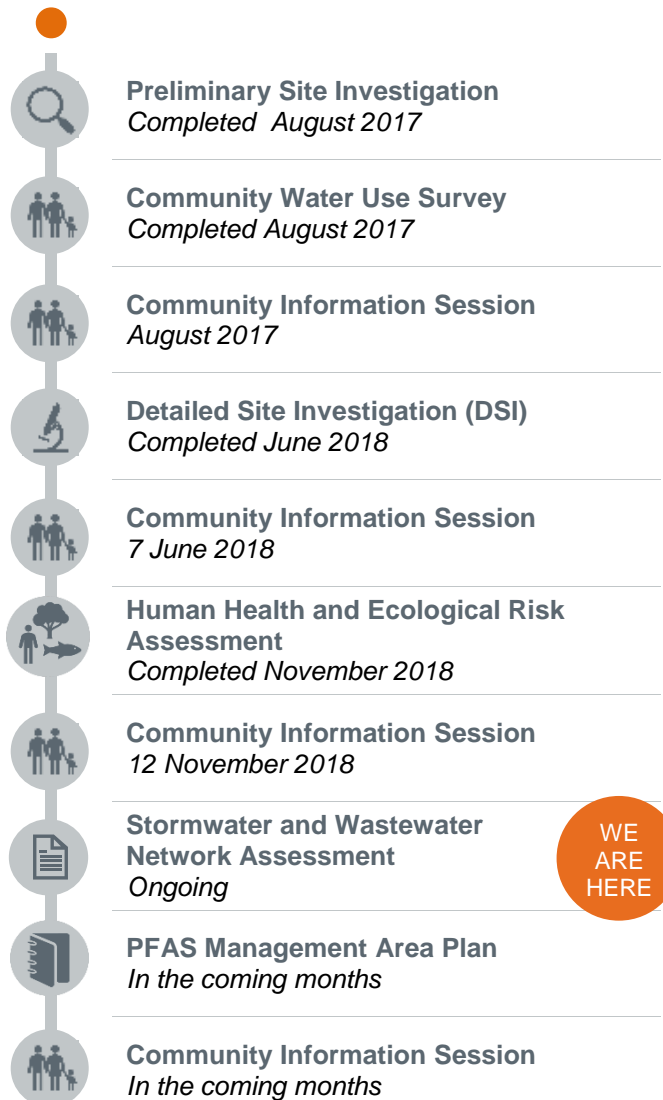
Defence has undertaken further assessments at the Base to better understand how PFAS is entering the stormwater and wastewater networks. This included detailed sampling of the networks and an assessment of the condition of pipes and pits.

Testing has confirmed that the highest concentrations of PFAS are in samples collected close to the known source areas (areas where legacy firefighting foam was used historically).

The additional investigation identified the points where PFAS is entering the stormwater and wastewater networks.

It will also assist in informing if other management actions, such as excavation and containment of impacted soil, which may be recommended in the PMAP.

### Project timeline



\*Dates may be subject to rescheduling





## What management actions are being considered?

It is important that the management actions chosen use proven technologies and are appropriate for the level of contamination. As PFAS are very stable, soluble and resistant to heat, many technologies that are effective for other types of contaminants are not effective for PFAS.

For PFAS contaminated soil, proven technologies typically focus on excavation and/or containing the soil to reduce surface water and groundwater contact with the soil which can reduce the levels of PFAS migration. For example, contaminated soil can be excavated and placed in a specially designed and constructed landfill cell so that water does not come into contact with the soil.

For PFAS impacted water, actions can focus on treating contaminated water, or redirecting clean water from source areas so that it does not become contaminated. Treatment of contaminated water can require the installation of collection systems for surface water, or pumping systems for groundwater.

The management and remediation responses will:

- Target key contamination source areas including on-Base locations where firefighting foam has been historically used or handled;
- Target identified contamination migration pathways including surface water run-off from the Base;
- Focus on proven technology, which can be implemented effectively.

Defence is also engaging with national and international industry experts to identify and evaluate the best PFAS management and remediation activities.


## Next steps

Some management actions are already being implemented ahead of the PMAP to proactively prevent further contribution of PFAS to the environment. For example, Defence has removed PFAS impacted wastewater from on-Base storage tanks, and has stopped the irrigation of lawns in PFAS impacted areas. Defence is also working with Council to better understand PFAS issues at the Forest Hill Sewage Treatment Plant.

The PMAP is expected to be complete and published in the coming months. A community information session will be held to present and discuss the PMAP with the community when it is released. Further information on the next community information session will be provided closer to the date.


## Contact

For more information or to view previous reports and factsheets, visit:

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