



# Community Information Session

PFAS Investigation and Management Program

**HMAS *Cerberus***

PFAS Investigation and Management Program update

Wednesday 19 June 2024





# Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge the **Bunurong communities** as the traditional custodians of the land we meet on today.

Defence acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. Defence recognises their continuing connection to traditional lands and waters and would like to pay respect to their Elders both past and present.

Defence would also like to pay respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have contributed to the defence of Australia in times of peace and war.







## Outline



- **About PFAS**
  - What are PFAS?
  - How PFAS moves in the environment
  - PFAS and health
- **How Defence responds to PFAS contamination**
  - Led by the science
  - Investigating and planning
  - Remediating and managing
- **PFAS at HMAS Cerberus**
  - Management Area and source areas
  - Remediation activities
  - Groundwater and surface water monitoring
  - Next steps
- **Questions**





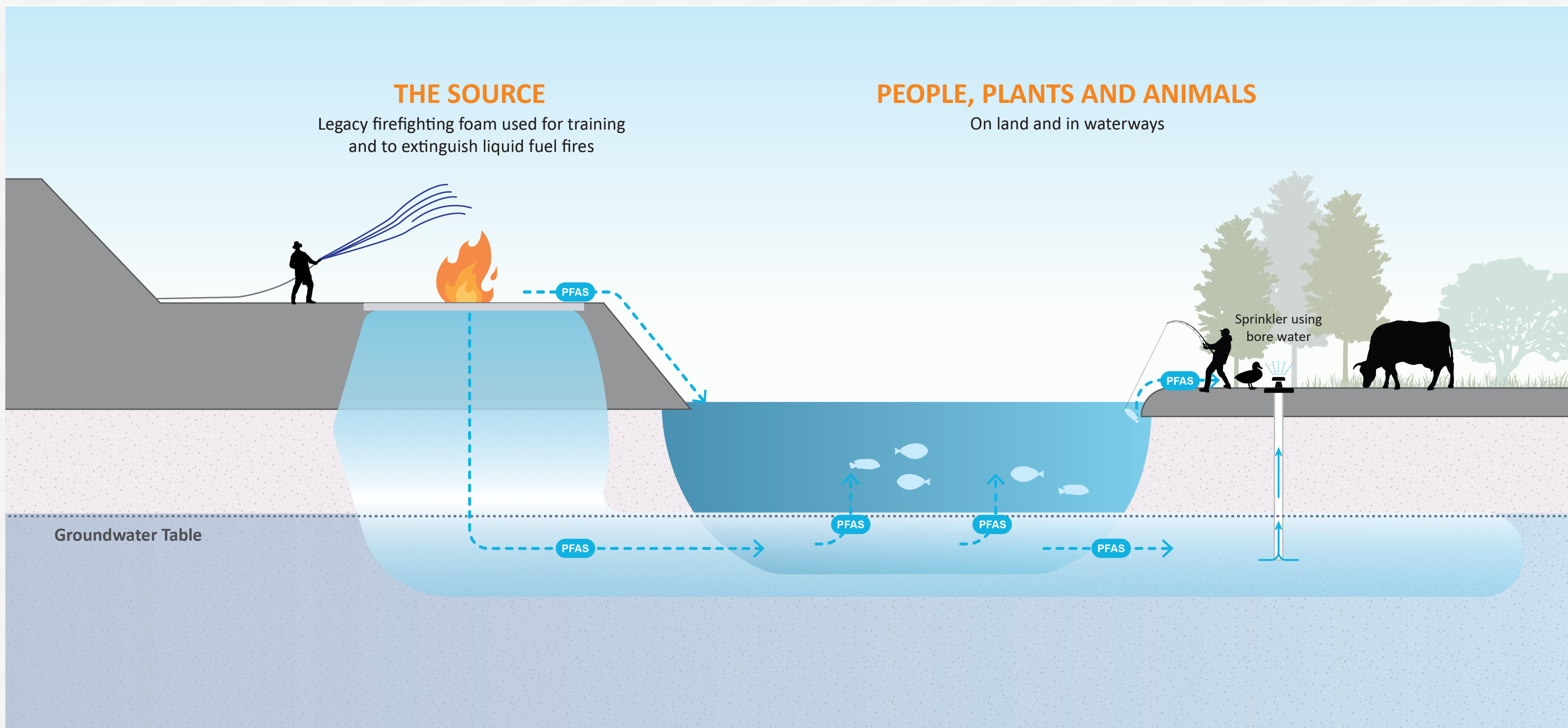
# About PFAS







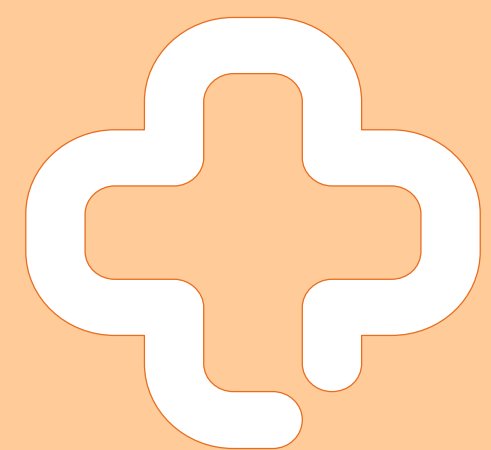
# How does PFAS move?







## PFAS and health



In Australia, health guidance comes from the Department of Health and Aged Care, Food Standards Australia New Zealand and relevant state authorities.

The Commonwealth Government takes a precautionary approach and recommends PFAS exposure is minimised where possible.



Research on the health affects of PFAS in Australia and internationally is continuously evolving. Defence will respond to any new guidelines and health advice.



## PFAS and health – health based guidance values

**PFOS**

**PFOA**

**PFHxS**



Drinking water guideline



Recreational water guideline





## Responding to PFAS contamination – led by the science

- The PFAS Investigation and Management Program was established in 2015.
- Responding to PFAS contamination is a complex issue and requires an effective and evidence-based approach.
- Defence works with other agencies and industries in Australia and internationally to share knowledge and work together to ensure the most appropriate remediation techniques are used and to continuously improve our management approach.



Soil sample taken as part of the Defence and CSIRO collaborative research program.





# Investigating and planning



**Phase 1**  
Investigating and planning





# Remediating and managing



## Phase 2

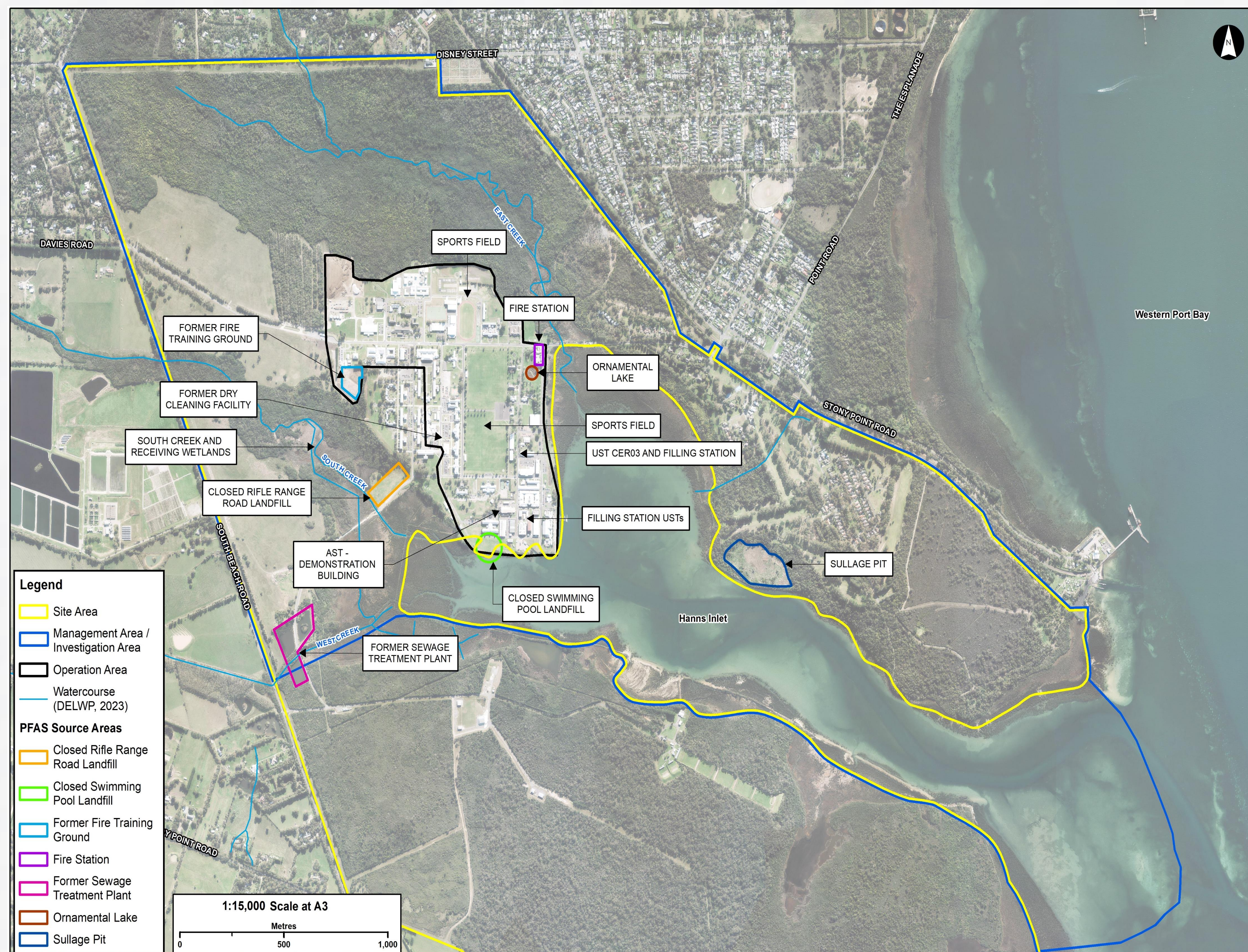
Remediating, managing and  
ongoing monitoring





## PFAS at HMAS Cerberus

- PFAS source areas – usually where firefighting foam was previously disposed of, used, stored.
- PFAS at higher levels was found at the former fire training ground. This has now been remediated.
- PFAS mainly moves off the base via groundwater and surface water flow into surrounding tidal creeks and Hanns Inlet.







## Remediation at HMAS *Cerberus*



Aim of remediation is to minimise PFAS leaving the base by focusing on source areas.



In February 2021, Defence began remediating the site of the former fire training ground.



Remediation involved placing 15,000m<sup>3</sup> of PFAS-impacted soil and concrete into a containment cell on base.



The containment cell was constructed with a base liner, capping layer and leachate collection system.



In April 2023, Defence completed the remediation actions from the HMAS *Cerberus* management area plan.



Monitoring of PFAS in the environment will continue.



Remediation of the former fire training ground.



Containment cell at HMAS *Cerberus*.

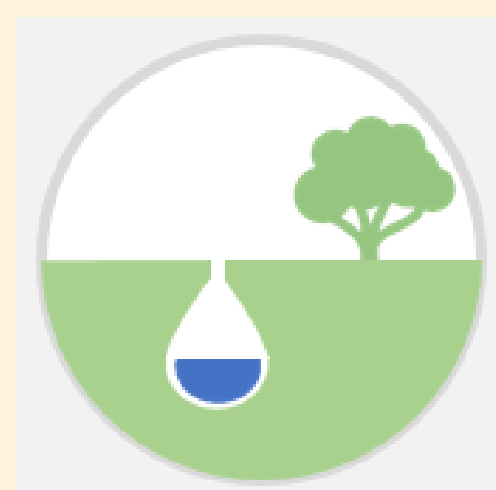




## Groundwater and surface water

### Number of samples collected from the November 2023 sampling

#### Groundwater



50 samples collected from 54 groundwater monitoring locations.

#### Surface water



28 samples collected from 33 surface water monitoring locations.

### Key findings

- No groundwater or surface water sampling locations reported a first-time detection of PFAS.
- No groundwater or surface water sampling locations reported a new exceedance of the adopted human health criteria for PFAS.
- Concentrations of both groundwater and surface water during this sampling round were found to be generally consistent with previous monitoring results.
- The findings from the latest monitoring event show there is no change in risk to the community from the potential exposure to PFAS.





## Next steps

An independent Technical Advisor will complete an evaluation of all remediation works undertaken by Defence.



Defence will continue ongoing monitoring of groundwater and surface water.



Defence will implement a new long term management plan for HMAS *Cerberus* to manage PFAS.



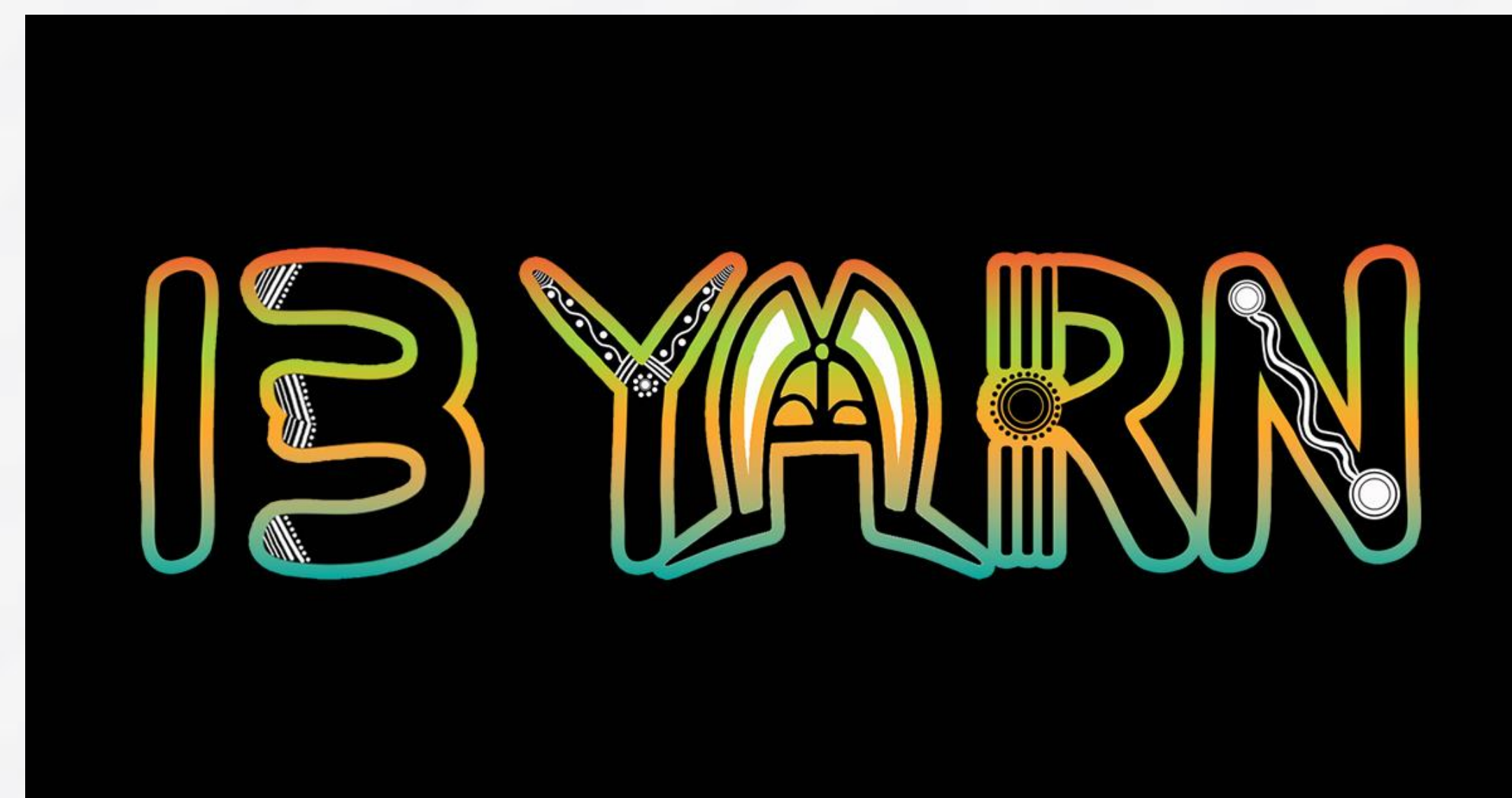




## Support



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health and Aged Care**







Questions?

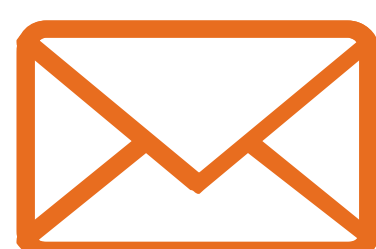




## Contact us



**Phone:** 1800 333 362



**Email:** [pfas.enquiry@defence.gov.au](mailto:pfas.enquiry@defence.gov.au)



**Website:** [www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/pfas/pfas-management-sites/hmas-cerberus](http://www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/pfas/pfas-management-sites/hmas-cerberus)

