

PFAS Williamstown Working Group Key Updates from 17 June 2026 meeting



Defence provided an update on the flood mitigation works. The scope for short-term drain clearing works is nearing completion. In-principle agreement has been reached between Defence, Port Stephens Council and the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for delivery of these works.

Defence also provided an update on per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) remediation works including the imminent commencement of works to construct a pipeline from Cabbage Tree Road to the base. This will transfer PFAS contaminated groundwater from around Leary's Drain for treatment on base. Works will occur along Cabbage Tree Road and Nelson Bay Road and Medowie Road from September 2026 through to early 2027.



Members raised the need for an independent assessor, as referenced in the Independent review of land uses around key Defence bases impacted by PFAS contamination to undertake property

reviews within the Primary Management Zone. Defence will commence discussions with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) on next steps.

Community members proposed that outcomes of the group should be provided through social media to assist with further sharing amongst the community. Defence will investigate options to provide communication through other channels and will report back to the members.

The NSW EPA provided an update on its assessment of the PFAS Broader Management Zone. This is expected to conclude in August 2026.

Members were provided an overview of Defence's approach to new PFAS remediation technologies and Defence's relationship with international research panels, and its own technology and research program. The Chair noted that a formal process is in place for parties interested in partnering with Defence on the development of PFAS remediation technology.

