



Human Health Risk Profile Factsheet

KEY POINTS

- **Defence's PFAS Investigation and Management Program commenced in 2015.**
- **Defence manages, remediates, and monitors PFAS contamination on and around impacted sites.**
- **Defence completed human health risk assessments (HHRAs) to understand how and who has the highest risk of being exposed to PFAS.**
- **Defence has a number of measures in place to confirm if a HHRA remains current or if an update is required.**
- **The Government response to the PFAS Independent Review agreed to ensure the HHRAs remain current.**

PFAS and health

For most people the level of PFAS exposure is likely to be relatively small. No public health and safety concerns have been identified from the overall dietary exposure for the general Australian population.

The Australian Centre for Disease Control is responsible for Australian health guidance on PFAS.

Scan the QR code to view the enHealth PFAS guidance statement:



For more information

Contact Defence:

Phone: 1800 333 362

Email: pfas.enquiry@defence.gov.au

Human Health Risk Assessment

A human health risk assessment (HHRA) estimates the potential PFAS exposure risks for a community. The outcomes of a HHRA is commonly referred to as the 'risk profile' for the site. In Australia, there is specific guidance on how a HHRA should be prepared, as published in the *National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure 1999 (as amended in 2013)*. For PFAS specific risk assessments, further guidance is provided in the *PFAS National Environmental Management Plan*.

The guidance identifies that each HHRA should comprise five key stages:

Stage 1: Issues Identification – *What is the issue that requires further assessment?*

Stage 2: Data Collection and Evaluation – *What additional data is needed for the assessment?*

Stage 3: Exposure Assessment – *How much of the chemical is a person exposed to?*

Stage 4: Toxicity Assessment – *What is considered to be a safe level of exposure over a lifetime?*

Stage 5: Risk Characterisation – *How does a person's estimated exposure compare to that safe level?*

What would trigger an update to the HHRA?

An update to a HHRA can be triggered by several key factors, including:

1. **New toxicological data:** discovery of new health effects or updated 'safe levels' for specific PFAS.
2. **Emerging PFAS:** identification of new PFAS in the environment that were not previously assessed.
3. **Changes in exposure pathways:** new information about how people could be exposed to PFAS.
4. **Changes in exposure concentrations:** if PFAS concentrations in the environment increase or decrease.
5. **Updated analytical methods:** advances in detection technologies that allow for more accurate detection of PFAS in the environment.
6. **Regulatory or policy changes:** updates to Commonwealth or state/territory regulations and health based guideline values.
7. **Community or site-specific concerns:** community health concerns may trigger site-specific risk assessments or updates to broader assessments.
8. **Scientific consensus or reviews:** periodic reviews by scientific advisory boards or inter-agency groups may recommend updates based on the latest consensus.

How does Defence confirm a HHRA remains current?

Defence annually assesses the risk profile for the site and the currency of the HHRA as part of the PFAS Ongoing Monitoring Program, as reported in the Ongoing Monitoring Reports. This is explained in the flow diagram at **Figure 1**.

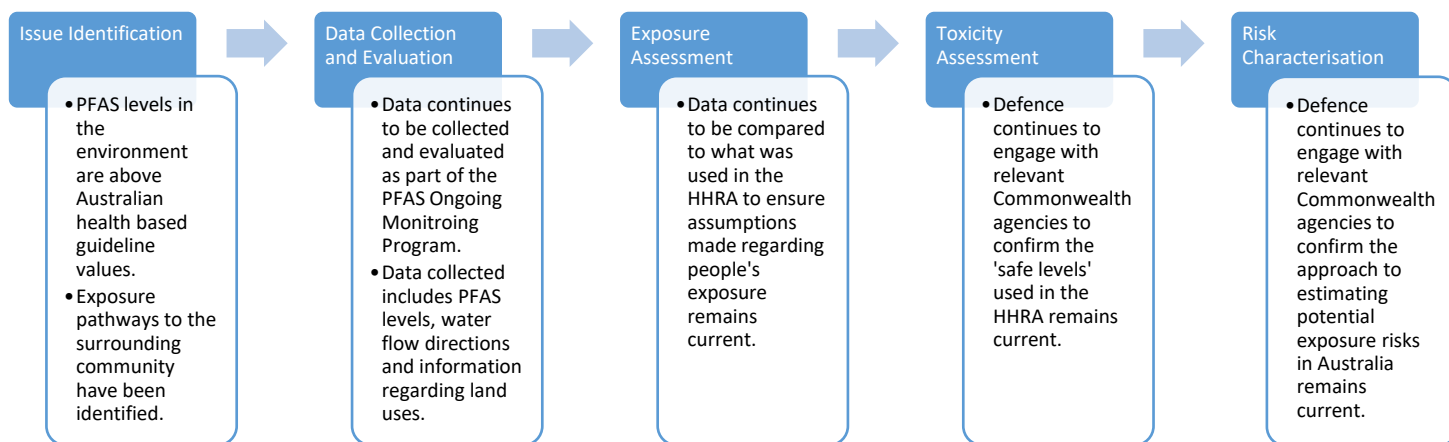


Figure 1: PFAS Investigation and Management Program assessment diagram