



Army Aviation Centre Oakey – Groundwater Investigation

About the Investigation

Defence has undertaken environmental investigations and identified that groundwater beneath the Army Aviation Centre Oakey (AACO) site may have been impacted by the historical use of fire-fighting foams during training activities, held between 1970 and 2005.

These foams contained perfluorooctane sulphonate, known as PFOS, and perfluorooctanoic acid, known as PFOA.

Defence has commenced targeted water sampling to the west and south-west of the base as part of a long-term investigation into the potential human health risks to water users that may be associated with the levels of PFOS and PFOA in groundwater.

Site investigations and assessments are continuing to identify how far these impacts have travelled.

Water sampling and testing

Targeted water sampling and testing outside of the AACO site commenced in early January 2014 to the south-west of the base.

Defence also conducted additional testing in May 2014. Results from the most recent tests will be used to verify the initial groundwater data obtained during the preliminary sampling round in January 2014.

The outcomes of these rounds of water testing are expected to be provided to landholders in mid-2014.



What are we testing for?

This investigation involves testing the groundwater for PFOS and PFOA. These substances are considered likely to be present as a result of activities at the AACO.

However, these substances are also present at trace levels throughout the environment because, in addition to their inclusion in fire-fighting foams, PFOS and PFOA have been used for many years in a wide variety of common household and industrial products such as cleaning products, textiles and paper and packaging products.

Possible health impacts from long term exposure to PFOS or PFOA are not fully understood. They are what are known as “emerging contaminants” and to date, limited research has been done in Australia or overseas into the possible health impacts of these chemicals.

Using underground water

As a precaution, Defence is recommending that landholders within the investigation area do not drink any water sourced from underground water bores on their property.

Further assessment of potential health impacts associated with other uses of the underground water will be undertaken as part of Defence’s ongoing investigations.





Previous consultation activities

Defence would like to thank the local community for its cooperation and assistance during this ongoing investigation and assessment of the local groundwater.

An initial community information session was held in December 2012.

In December 2013, a community information session was held to update key stakeholders and residents about the project.

Individual landowner meetings were undertaken in late 2013.

In January 2014 and May 2014 Defence liaised with affected landholders to undertake bore water sampling and testing. Test results are expected to be provided to these landholders in mid-2014.

Defence will continue to work cooperatively with the relevant Federal and State agencies to ensure the safety of all Defence personnel and the local community.

Invitation—community information session

A community information session about the project will be held:

Tuesday 29 July 2014

6—7.30pm

Oakey Cultural Centre

Corner of McDonald and Campbell Streets, Oakey

If you would like to attend, **please RSVP** to defence.oakey.anz@aecom.com before Monday 28 July 2014.

Contact



Community hotline: 1800 136 129



www.defence.gov.au/id/oakey



defence.oakey.anz@aecom.com



Army Aviation Centre Oakey (AACO)
Groundwater Investigation Project
C/AECOM Pty Ltd
PO Box 1307
Fortitude Valley Qld 4006

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

