



RAAF Base Pearce – PFAS Management Area Plan Update

PFAS Investigation and Management Program

About the Investigation

Defence has completed a detailed environmental investigation, to better understand the nature and extent of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), resulting from historical use of firefighting foams on, and in the vicinity of, RAAF Base Pearce (the Base). The outcomes of the investigation are being used to develop a **PFAS Management Area Plan** (PMAP).

PFAS Management Area Plan

The PMAP will outline activities that Defence will undertake to manage and reduce the risks of PFAS exposure near the Base and surrounding community.

The PMAP will guide Defence to:

- Manage the key sources of contamination such as the former fire stations;
- Reduce the amount of PFAS in the environment;
- Reduce PFAS migration from the Base; and
- Manage the exposure risks for the community such as consumption of groundwater.

Developing the PMAP involves a review of the sources of the contamination and the key ways it is migrating into the wider community. It also includes a comparison and evaluation of a range of available PFAS management activities to identify possible options for the site.

Once finalised, the PMAP will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if new information or technology arises which has the potential to impact the PMAP objectives.

PMAP Focus

The PMAP focuses on the elevated exposure risks identified in the Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments and examines the potential management options available to reduce these risks. The elevated exposure risks are:

- Drinking groundwater from bores with PFAS concentrations above drinking water guidelines;
- Incidental ingestion of shallow groundwater by sub-surface maintenance workers on-base;

- Incidental ingestion of surface water by personnel working in the on-base drainage channels;
- Base workers exposed to soil within the Grounds Maintenance Area located on base (Source Area D); and
- Sub-surface maintenance workers exposed to impacted soil within the Grounds Maintenance Area located on base (Source Area D).

Draft PMAP Recommendations

The management actions recommended in the Draft PMAP are summarised as follows:

- To manage the three main sources of PFAS contamination, the former fire training areas and Grounds Maintenance Area. This will reduce the ongoing release of PFAS to the environment from these sources located on Base.
- To manage the main drainage channels on the Base to minimise the amount of PFAS leaving the Base through surface water run-off, which is the main off-Base migration pathway.
- To manage the properties that have PFAS concentrations in groundwater above the drinking water guideline level, where this groundwater was a primary source of drinking water, through the provision of an alternative water supply.
- To conduct further investigation at some source areas to better understand the extent of PFAS impact and whether or not these sources are contributing to off-base impacts.

The specific management measures that will be implemented to address the management actions recommended will be included in the final PMAP that will be released to the community upon completion.

PFAS Ongoing Monitoring Plan

As part of the PMAP, an Ongoing Monitoring Plan (OMP) is being prepared which outlines the sampling program that will be undertaken by Defence to monitor and track the PFAS contamination around RAAF Base Pearce over the coming years.





The OMP will provide an evidence base for the ongoing management of the PFAS contamination, including looking at the changes in concentration and geographical spread. It will assist Defence to evaluate the progress and success of the management activities being undertaken or identify where more might need to be done.

The Ongoing Monitoring Plan will involve the sampling of groundwater, surface water and sediment at locations both on and off the Base, including in the Base drains, Ellen Brook, Ki-it Monger Brook and the West Bullsbrook drainage. The monitoring will occur every six months for an initial two year period, following which time the frequency will be reviewed.

Defence-wide PFAS Management Actions

Defence is committed to the ongoing management of PFAS to reduce the movement of, and potential exposure to, PFAS.

- From 2004, Defence commenced phasing out its use of legacy firefighting foams containing specific PFAS compounds, perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) as active ingredients.
- Defence contains and appropriately manages the release of firefighting foams for emergency response and fire training activities.
- PFAS is further managed through the implementation of national PFAS environmental guidance used Defence-wide during operations and construction activities such as airfield upgrades.

Next steps

The PMAP is being developed. Prior to implementing this Plan, it will be reviewed by the relevant West Australian government authorities and discussed with the local Bullsbrook community. We expect the PMAP to be implemented in early 2019.

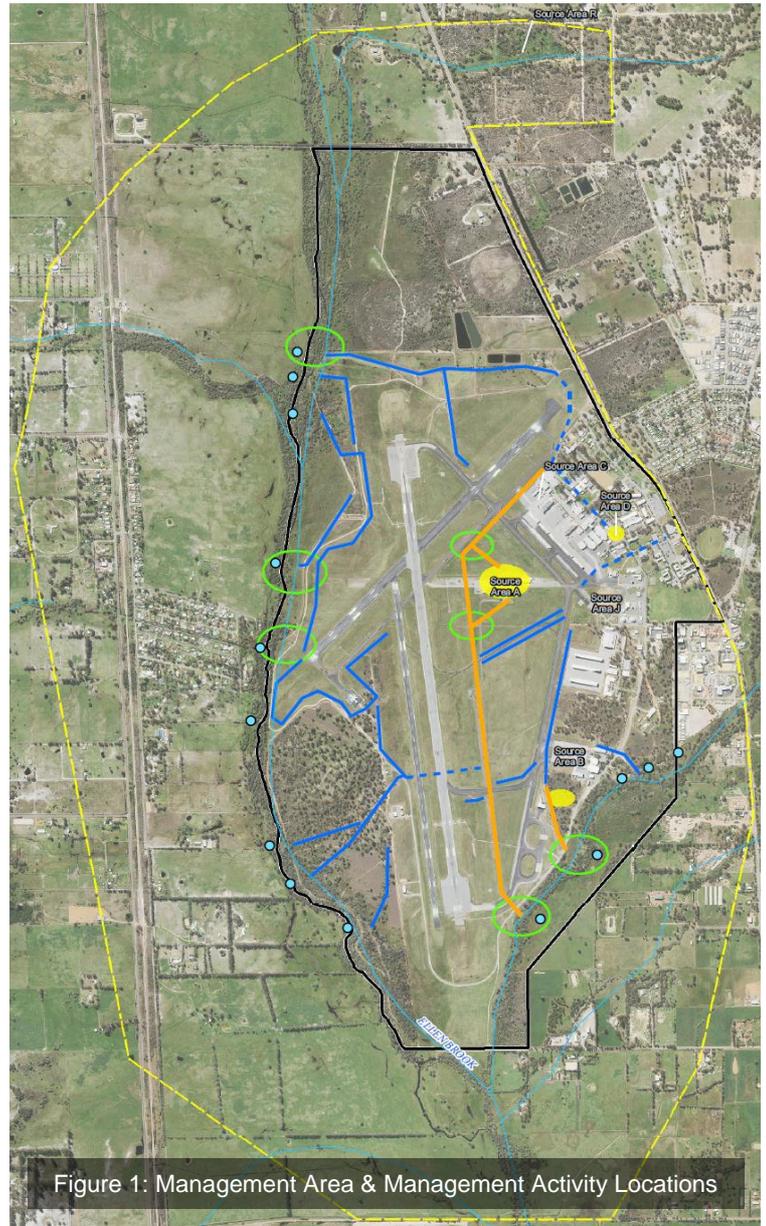


Figure 1: Management Area & Management Activity Locations

LEGEND

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|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Drainage discharge point | Drainage improvement area | Surface water management location |
| River | Inferred drainage pathway | Source management area |
| Site boundary | Known drainage pathway | Management area |

Contact Information

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