



Community Information Session

PFAS Investigation and Management Program

RAAF Base Tindal

PFAS Investigation and Management Program update

16 October 2024





Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge the **Jawoyn, Dagoman, and Wardaman** 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 science
- Investigation and planning
- Remediating and managing

PFAS at RAAF Base Tindal

- PFAS management area and sources
- 2023 - 2024 monitoring results
- Remediation
- Cossack area update
- Next steps

Questions

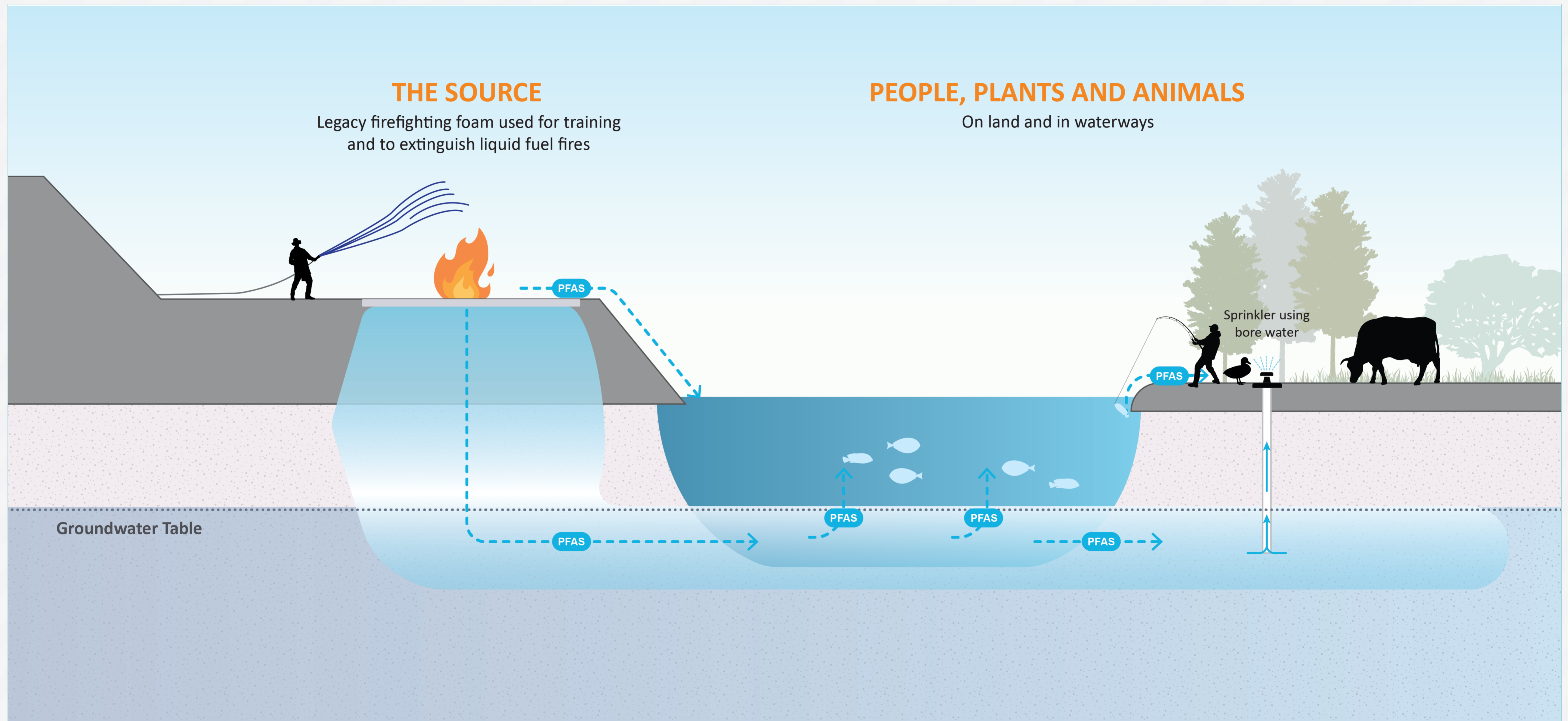


About PFAS



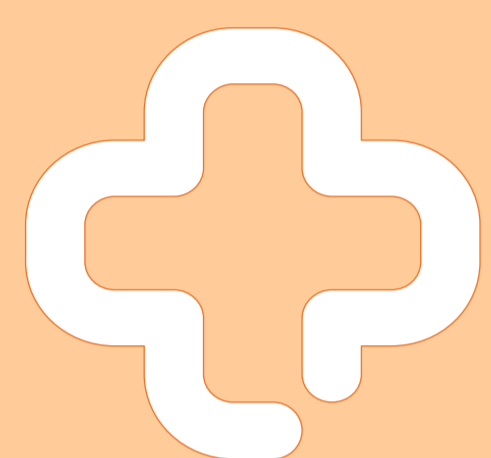


PFAS movement through the environment





PFAS and health



Defence relies on health guidance 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 effects of PFAS undertaken in Australia and internationally is continuously evolving. Defence will respond accordingly as new guidelines and health advice become available.



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.
- PFAS science, technologies, and environmental management practices continue to evolve.
- 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.



Our approach



Phase 1

Investigating and planning

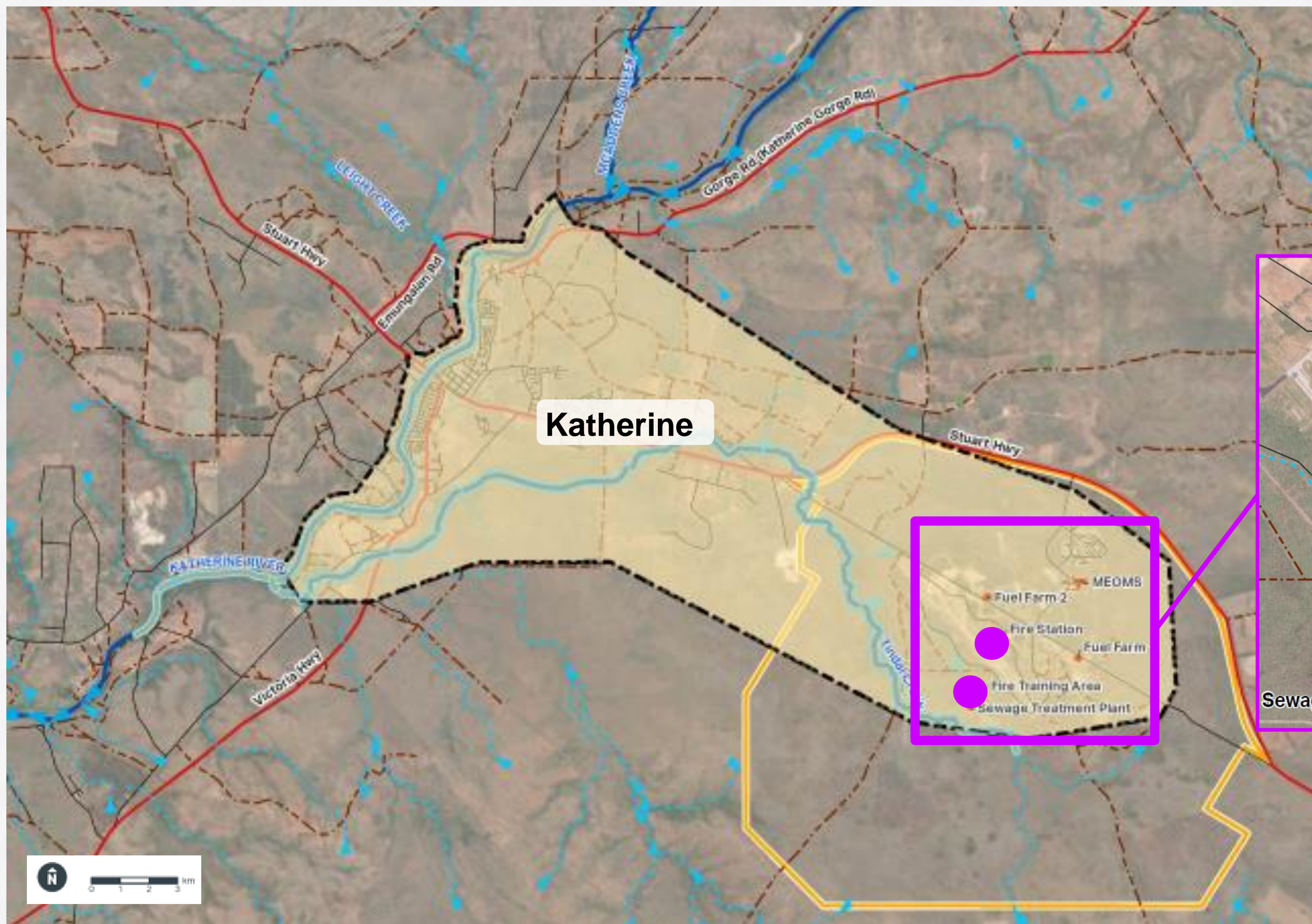


Phase 2

Remediating, managing and
ongoing monitoring

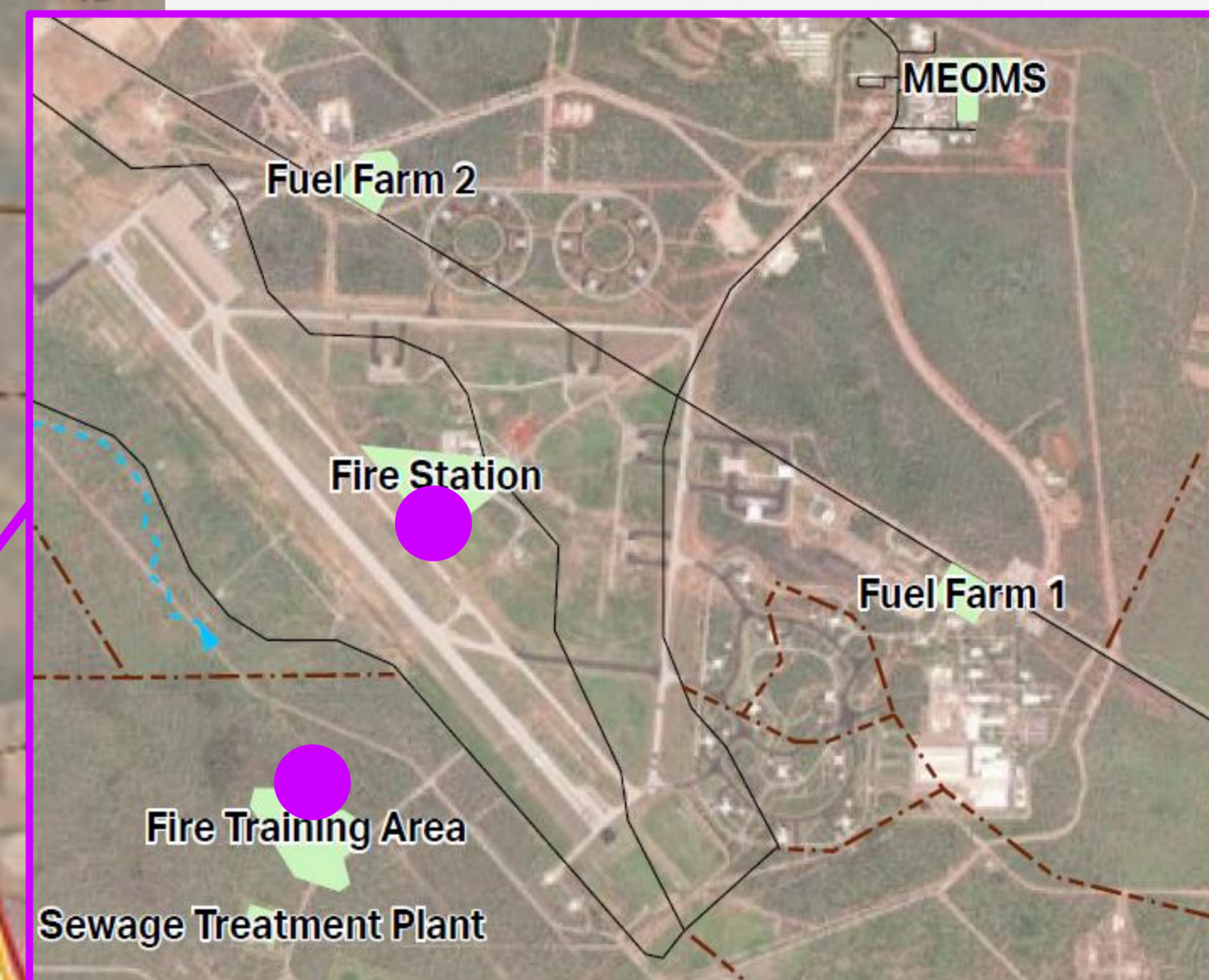


Management area and source areas



Legend

| | |
|--|------------------|
| | RAAF Base Tindal |
| | Management area |
| | Source area |





Management approach



Source controls

Manage the source areas.



Pathway controls

Targets the paths by which PFAS leaves the base.



Exposure controls

Follow existing precautionary advice to reduce exposure.



Soil remediation



In 2022, Defence started soil remediation at the fire training area and fire station area.



Approximately 65,000 tonnes of soil has been treated or destroyed.



Soil remediation at the fire station area was completed in November 2023.



Soil remediation at the fire training area is due to be completed in late 2024.



Soil remediation works at the fire training area.



Groundwater remediation



In February 2016 Defence commissioned 2 groundwater treatment plants at the former fire training area and fire station.



The treatment plants remove PFAS from groundwater and reduce PFAS leaving the base.



To date, the plants have treated around 3,110 billion litres of PFAS contaminated groundwater.



Groundwater treatment plant



Katherine town water treatment plant



The Defence funded Katherine water treatment plant was commissioned in May 2024.



The new plant can treat up to **10 million** litres of water a day.



Cossack area update



Defence has been monitoring PFAS movements within Cossack in response to first time detections of PFAS in mid-2023.



Defence undertook additional testing of private bores and water tanks at 58 properties within the Cossack area. No further detections were recorded.

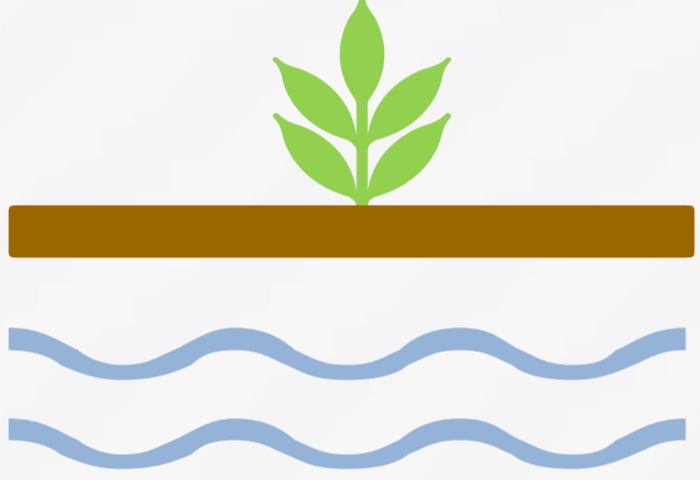

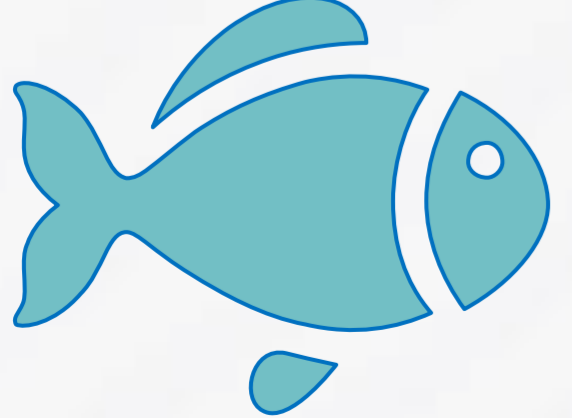


Defence has supported residents within the Cossack area and we will continue to offer support to residents.



Latest monitoring results

Number of samples collected from July 2023 – April 2024

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Groundwater</p>  | <p>158 samples from monitoring wells and private bores.</p> |
| <p>Surface water</p>  | <p>30 samples collected from on-base, Katherine River, Katherine Hot Springs, Tindal Creek, and Katherine Town Council Swimming Pool.</p> |
| <p>Aquatic biota</p>  | <p>41 samples of fish and crustaceans collected from local waterways.</p> |

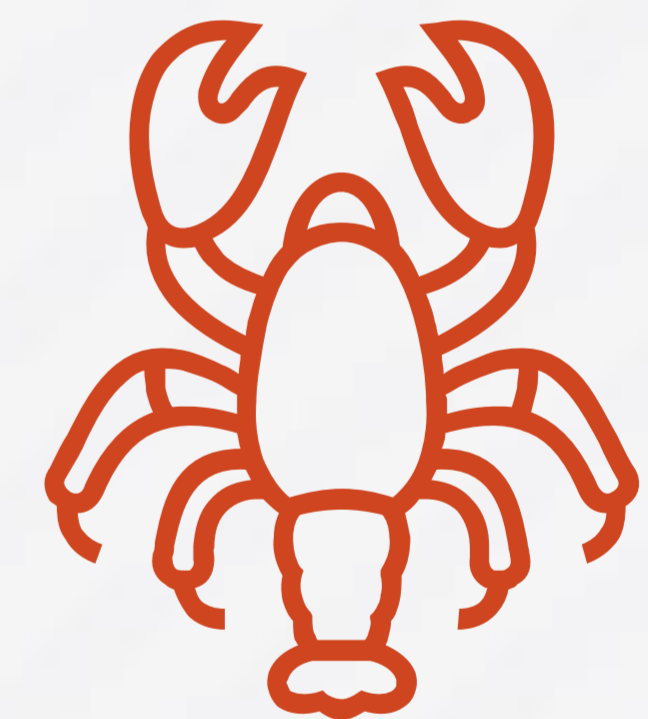
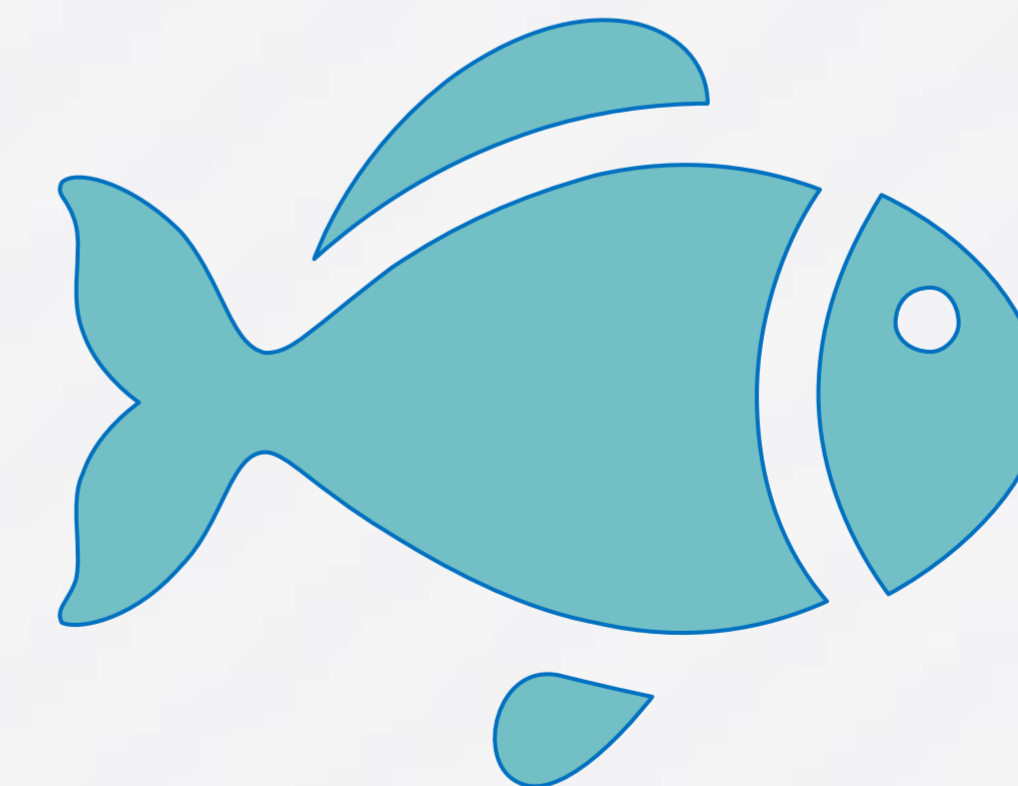
Key findings

- Remediation works are reducing PFAS movement in groundwater and surface water.
- Groundwater is seasonally influenced, and concentrations suggest movement of the plume westward of the base.
- One sample outside the monitoring area detected PFAS concentrations above the limit of reporting, but not above drinking water guideline.
- Findings show no change in risk to the community from potential PFAS exposure.
- Residents should continue to follow NT Health’s precautionary dietary advice.



Precautionary dietary advice

NT Government has issued precautionary dietary advice for community members to **guide** how much **fish**, **shellfish** and **crustaceans** they eat from **Katherine River** (between Donkey Camp Weir and Daly River) and **Tindal Creek**.



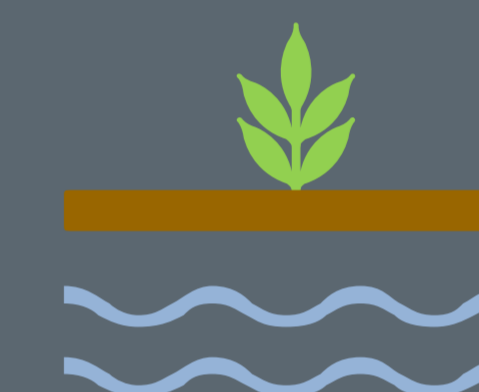


Next steps

Continue monitoring on and around RAAF Base Tindal and the Cossack area



Continue groundwater remediation work



Implement actions from the updated PFAS management area plan and ongoing monitoring plan



Complete soil remediation at the Fire Training Area



Keep the community informed





Support



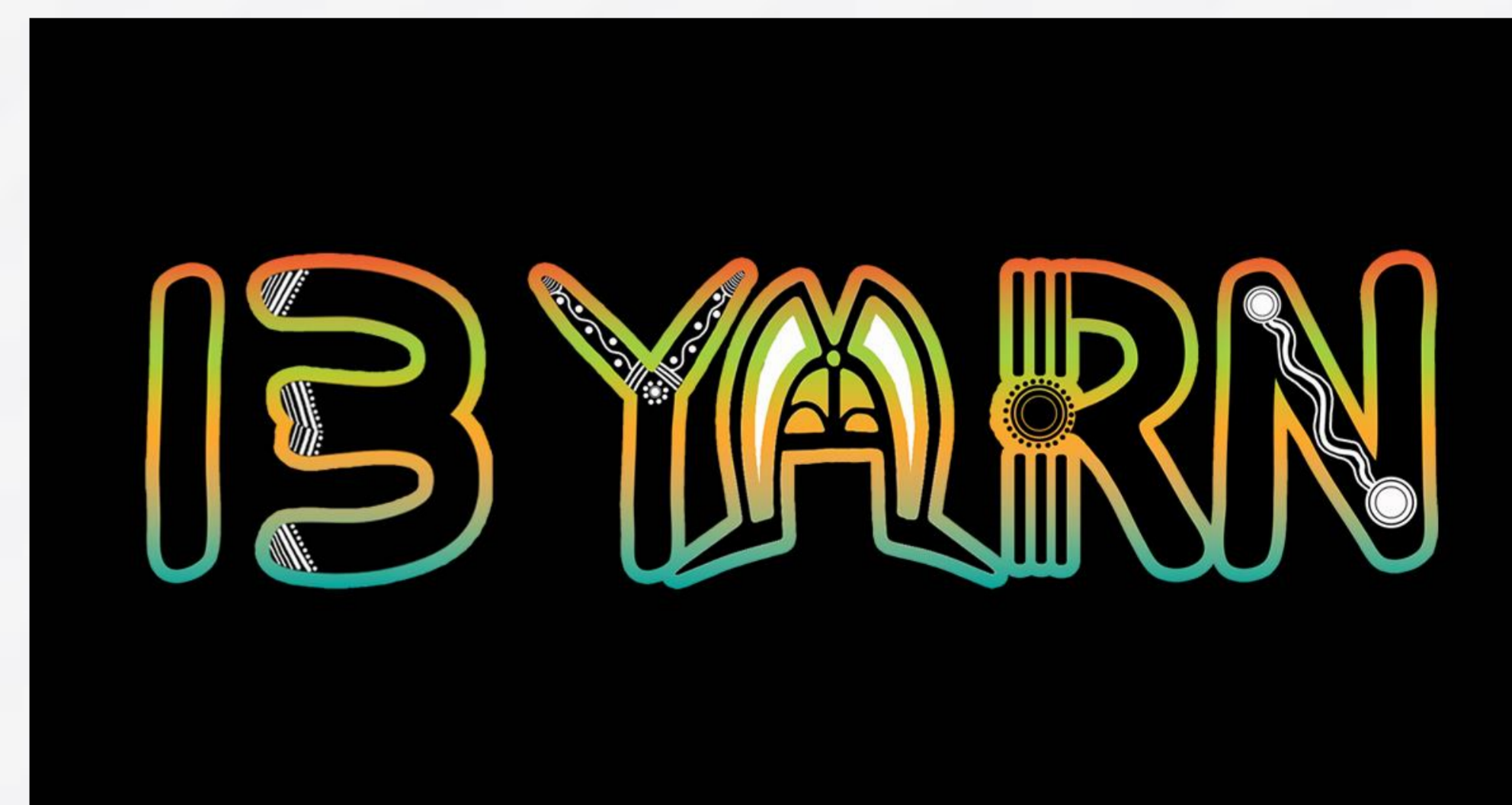
Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care



Australian Government

Department of Veterans' Affairs





Questions



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Website: www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/pfas/pfas-management-sites/raaf-base-tindal

