

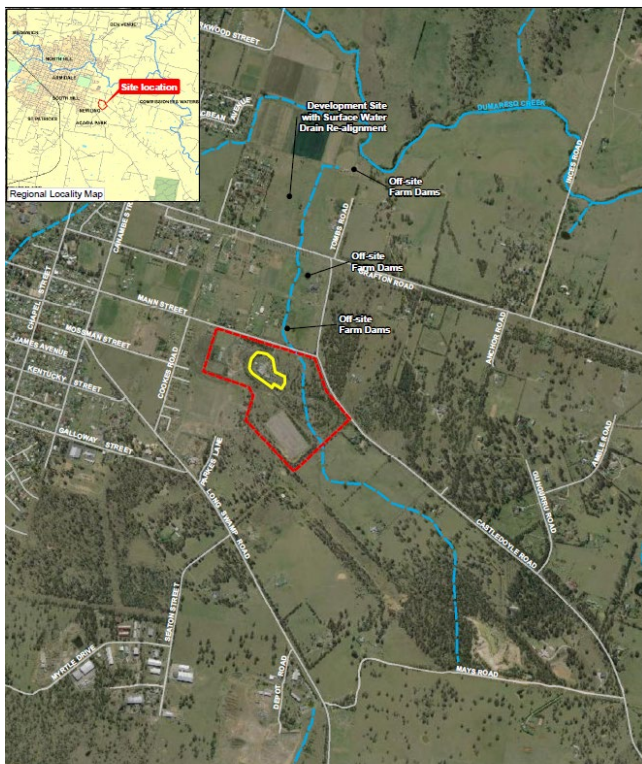
Project Background

In 2016, Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) commenced environmental investigations to understand the nature and extent of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) presence on and near the FRNSW training facility (the site) located at 2-16 Mann Street, Armidale NSW 2350. This included surface water and drainage lines that leave the site.

The investigations are a part of a review of a number of FRNSW sites across NSW where legacy aqueous film forming foams (AFFF) containing PFAS have been stored and used during firefighting training exercises, as is the case with this site.

FRNSW is undertaking these investigations to assess potential risks to human and ecological health, including identifying pathways through which people may be exposed to these chemicals.

This factsheet summarises investigations completed to date, as well as the next steps in the investigation process.



FRNSW Armidale Training Site (shaded in yellow), and surrounding community

Previous Investigations

FRNSW has engaged environmental consultants since 2016 to undertake investigations at the site, as summarised below.

Preliminary Investigation, August 2016

The preliminary investigation of the site was completed in August 2016. This included a review of site history, use of AFFF, identification of potential sources of PFAS, and identification of potential receptors. This phase also included development of a sampling and analysis quality plan (SAQP) to inform additional investigations.

Environmental Site Assessment, April 2017

An environmental assessment of the site and surrounding area was completed in April 2017. This included on- and offsite sampling and laboratory analysis of groundwater, surface water, soils and sediments to characterise the potential risk to human and environmental health.

Environmental Site Assessment, October 2017

A more detailed Environmental Assessment of the Armidale site and surrounding area was completed in October 2017, with additional onsite and offsite sampling being conducted to allow further understanding of the pathways for potential migration of PFAS from the site.

As part of this assessment, the community was asked to assist these investigations by completing a water use survey to help us identify how potentially contaminated water is being used. The water use survey was distributed to 28 people, and a fact sheet was also distributed to residents within a 2 km radius of the Armidale site.

PFAS Management Options Assessment, December 2017

In December 2017, a PFAS Management Options Assessment was prepared to provide a better understanding of the potential management options to address onsite and offsite impacts in soil, groundwater and surface water from the use of legacy firefighting foam at the site.

Armidale Tourist Park - Private Bore Sampling Results, May 2018

In May 2018, FRNSW completed sampling of a private groundwater bore located at the Armidale Tourist Park at 39 Grafton Road, Armidale NSW 2350.



PFAS FACT SHEET ARMIDALE INVESTIGATION Program Update - January 2020

Site Improvement Plan, February 2019

A Site Improvement Plan was developed to address the management of contamination issues associated with the presence of PFAS at the Armidale training facility. Its main objectives were to: provide a strategy to manage or mitigate the potential risks posed by the presence of PFAS contamination remaining within the sediments and water in the on-site retention basin adjacent to the former fire training area; and, provide recommendations to manage potential long term risk posed by residual PFAS contamination remaining at the site following completion of the remediation (if any) and detail ongoing monitoring requirements.

Project Update - January 2020

Following review of the previous reports by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), a series of data gaps were identified. It was also recommended by the NSW EPA that further investigation works be completed within the potential onsite source areas to better inform management actions.

The next phase of works, proposed for January 2020, has two main objectives: address data gaps identified in the previous investigation phases and provide better understanding of PFAS impacts within potential onsite source areas. These will be addressed through collection of additional soil, groundwater, surface water, and sediment samples from the vicinity of the site. We note that, given the current dry conditions in Armidale, there will be very little opportunity, if any, for the collection of surface water samples.

An additional water use survey of landowners near the site will also be undertaken to update FRNSW's understanding of water and land use in the area. The analytical and survey results will update and refine our understanding of potential sources and receptors for the area.

Next Steps

FRNSW has initiated the procurement process to engage a NSW EPA accredited Site Auditor to provide independent technical review of the proposed additional investigations to be conducted at the site, with this phase of works expected to commence during Q1 of 2020.

PFAS Further Information

Further information about the FRNSW PFAS Investigation, including copies of previous reports, is available at www.fire.nsw.gov.au/pfas

Information on the PFAS Investigation Program being undertaken by the NSW EPA is available at www.epa.nsw.gov.au/Mediainformation/pfasinvestigation.htm

Information on PFAS health effects and exposure pathways can be found on the Department of Health's website at

<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-pfas.htm>

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