

Contamination of Australian Defence Force Facilities And other Commonwealth, State and Territory Sites in Australia.

Submission

Committee inquiry on contamination caused by firefighting foams at RAAF Base Williamtown.

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns over the handling of the contamination issue that has leaked from the RAAF Base at Williamtown.

My husband, myself and our 5 children moved to Salt Ash in 2013. This was due for the LIFESTYLE, the extra land enabled more room for our business tools and room for our children to play. We utilised our large veggie gardens in our diets, used our citrus & fruit trees. There is now HEALTH uncertainty & we can NO LONGER enjoy eating our own produce. We cannot eat our own chook eggs yet still have to pay for their food plus buy eggs for ourselves. I also have 3 beehives with no testing being done to see how honey may be affected.

The LACK of COMMUNICATION from the RAAF has been appalling. We have only received 1 letter by mail for our water results and 1 other letter from the EPA to say we were in the "Red Zone". I have attended the two drop in sessions at the Salt Ash School & found these to be unhelpful with conflicting answers or no answers. At this meeting I gave Jeffrey Leeke WGCDR1 a list of questions he replied with an email on 23/11/15 reinstating my questions & had been passed onto Air Vice Marshall Greg Evans. Still waiting for answers. My 1st water/bore survey was lost/ not received by post. For those in our community that do not have access to social media they would not beware of the situation or the drop in sessions due to the lack of correspondence.

The RAAF & our Local Council Port Stephens did not let the community know. If they were upfront we would not have bought here. We are now under stress that our home that we have worked so hard for is worth nothing due to being in the "Red Zone". We can no longer use our equity off our home. This is a FINANCIAL CONCERN for us. Why has it taken so LONG for the public & testing / investigation to start from when they first realised there was an issue?

Our lives are on hold with uncertainty. We might as well be living in a unit as we can no longer use our property for what we bought to use utilise it for. We can not irrigate so our paddocks & plants have to die because we are now not allowed to use our bore water. We can not use our pool due to it being filled with bore water.

Very disappointed to read in The Newcastle Herald 13/11/15 that \$3 million is being spent on contaminated area on RAAF Base to be remediated to push ahead with upgrades for the Joint Striker Jets but still the leak has not been contained for the welfare of the residents surrounding the RAAF Base.

We have the worry for our health of our family and friends. Lost trust in the RAAF & Local Council. Our lifestyles & health have been effected. Our finances have been effected. The reputation of our area has been affected with being toxic & contaminated by being included in this "Red Zone". Unfortunately I now see the RAAF as the Untouchables and above the law.

Kind Regards,
Concerned Salt Ash Resident.