

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 2017 - 2018

**Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities**

**Committee Question Number: 57**

**Departmental Question Number: SQ18-000077**

**Program: n/a**

**Division/Agency: Airservices Australia**

**Topic: Accidental PFAS discharge at Darwin Airport**

**Proof Hansard Page: Written (7 March 2018)**

**Senator Malarndirri McCarthy asked:**

1. How many times has PFAS foam been accidentally discharged at Darwin Airport?
2. How many times has the accidental discharge of PFAS foam from Darwin Airport been reported?
3. How will more accidental discharges be prevented?
4. What is the procedure for containing and stopping the spread of Foam when there has been an accidental discharge?

**Answer:**

1. There were four small accidental discharges of foam at Darwin Airport during checks; one in August 2016, one in September 2017 and two in February 2018.
2. All four were reported consistent with protocol and were contained in accordance with our procedures. No foam from the spills escaped to the drain.
3. Airservices is currently reviewing its policies and procedures for Darwin Airport to determine if there are any improvement opportunities that could be introduced to reduce the likelihood of accidental discharges without compromising its regulatory obligations. Airservices has also sought to raise awareness with staff about the sensitivities surrounding PFAS and the extra vigilance needed when performing work.
4. When an incident or an accidental discharge occurs, Airservices procedures ensure:
  - waste water is captured in containers;
  - absorbent soakers soak up any residue;
  - waste water and soaker material is removed by a licensed waste management company;
  - the vehicle is taken to a bunded pad and the outlets are flushed; and
  - the discharged water is captured in a retention pit and pumped out by a licensed waste management company.