

Terms of Reference

PFAS INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP (PFCIWG)

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

Background

Per- and poly-fluorinated alkyl substances (PFASs) have been used in a wide variety of industrial and commercial products, including textiles, food packaging, inks, paints, sealants, floor waxes, cleaning products, pesticides and fire-fighting foams.

These chemicals have been identified worldwide as emerging contaminants of concern due to their toxicity, highly persistent nature, mobility in the environment and significant potential for bioaccumulation and biomagnification.

The Per- and poly-Fluorinated Alkyl Substances Interagency Working Group (PFASIWG) has been assembled as a response to community concerns from emerging contamination issues associated with the historical use of PFASs and an expectation from Government and the community that further actions be taken to address these concerns in the Northern Territory (NT).

Role and Function

The major role of the PFAIWIWG is to develop and implement a strategy that will be used to: identify and investigate locations where PFASs have been historically used in the NT; determine the level of contamination of the environment from historical usage; determine any current storage of products containing PFASs; and to take further appropriate action to minimise environmental and human health exposure risks.

Selected members of the PFAIWIWG will undertake follow up investigations; determine the management measure(s) to employ on high risk sites; and provide a mechanism to communicate its work to stakeholders and the broader NT community.

Tasks for the PFAIWIWG are likely to include:

- a) Development and finalisation a PFAS legacy site investigation strategy for the NT (the strategy) by using the NSW Environment Protection Authority's Perfluorinated Legacy Site Investigation template and Decision Tree.
- b) Allocation of areas of the strategy to members of the working group to populate the strategy's requirements in a purposely designed template insofar as it is relevant to the NT i.e. category 1-4 site tasks.
- c) Develop a secure centralised repository where information from allocated tasks where progress of all assessments and investigations are recorded.
- d) Through appropriate Agencies undertake desktop assessments of identified key sites.
- e) Through appropriate Agencies undertake inspections and screening sampling using the screening decision tree to prioritise sites.

- f) Further investigations to be developed and undertaken on prioritised sites based on the screening samples and in line with the National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure 1999.
- g) Develop management responses on sites based on the results of further investigations undertaken.
- h) Provide a centralised forum for the dissemination of information and communication between members and to relevant stakeholders.
- i) Develop guidance documents and fact sheets.

2. Term

The Terms of Reference are effective from 10 June 2016 and will be ongoing until terminated by agreement by members.

3. Membership

The PFASIWG will comprise one or more members from the following Agencies:

- NT Environment Protection Authority(NT EPA)
- NT Department of Health (DoH)
- NT Department of Business (NT WorkSafe)
- NT Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries (NT DPIF)
- NT Department of Mines and Energy (NT DME)
- NT Department of Land Resource Management (NT DLRM)
- NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NT PFES)
- Northern Territory Airports Pty Ltd (Darwin International Airport)
- Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (DIRD)
- Air Services Australia (ASA)
- Senior Australian Defence Force Officer – RAAF Base Darwin (SADFO)

This membership may change over time and others may be invited to attend as necessary.

Detail of membership is included at Schedule 1 which may be amended at any time by the Chair.

4. Roles and Responsibilities (rules of engagement)

The inter agency working group will:

- foster collaboration.
- remove obstacles to the PFASIWG successful delivery of tasks.
- commit resources to the tasks of the PFASIWG.
- take responsibility for the outcomes of the PFASIWG.
- share all communications and information across all members where suitable.
- make timely decisions and take action so as to not hold up the process.

- be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner.
- be given reasonable time to make key decisions.
- be alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact the PFASIWG tasks, as they arise.
- undertake open and honest discussions, without resort to any misleading assertions.

5. Meetings

- Members are to commit to attend scheduled meetings, actively participate in the group's function and if necessary nominate a proxy.
- All meetings will be chaired by the NT EPA.
- Meetings will be defined by a written agenda circulated at least one week prior to the meeting.
- Decisions are to be made by consensus. If consensus on a decision is not possible, the Chair will make the final decision.
- Meeting agendas minutes will be provided on a rotational basis, this includes: preparing agendas and supporting papers, preparing meeting notes and information.
- The PFASIWG will utilise email, and formal papers for out-of-session discussion and agreement.
- Meetings will be held monthly for 2 hours at NT EPA offices.
- If required additional meetings will be arranged outside of these times at a time convenient to members.

6. Review

- The effectiveness and membership of this group will be reviewed every 12 months.

Schedule 1:

PFASIWG Membership 10 June 2016

Name	Role	Organisation
Peter Vassel	Director, Pollution Control	NT EPA (Chair)
Jane Orr	Senior Environment Protection Officer	NT EPA
Jonathon Burcher	Environment Protection Officer	NT EPA
Anthony Waite	Manager, Major Hazards Facilities	NT WorkSafe
Neil Burgess	Director, Operations	NT WorkSafe
Chris Daly	Senior Program Development Officer	NT DoH
Xavier Schobben	Director, Environmental Health	NT DoH
Ian Kew	Chief Executive Officer	Darwin International Airport
Leonie Horrocks	General Manager, Airports Branch	DIRD
Holly Ainslie	Director, Airports Infrastructure Regulation	DIRD
Rob Weaver	Executive General Manager, Safety, Environment and Assurance	ASA
Behzad Emami	A/Manager, Environmental Services	ASA
Julia Schult	Limnologist, Aquatic Health Unit	NT DLRM
Simon Townsend	Manager, Aquatic Health Unit	NT DLRM
Wes Perrett	Commanding Officer No 13 Squadron	SADFO
Glenn Schipp	Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture	NT DPIF
Ian Curnow	Deputy Chief Executive	NT DPIF
Peter Zeroni	Legislation Review Leader	NT DPIF
Shane Penny	Fisheries Research Scientist	NT DPIF
Terry Trewin	District Officer	NT PFES
Kim MacDonald		NT PFES