

**Overview of PFAS reporting, testing and mapping in Australia**  
**Prepared for NGO members of the PFAS Subgroup, NPRI WG**  
**Date: 22 January, 2022 (rev)**

The memo aims to provide an overview of the reporting mechanism on PFAS in Australia, plus PFAS testing and the extent of contamination.

Australia's National Pollutant Inventory (NPI) and Canada's National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) aim to provide transparent information about pollutant releases and transfers. However, specific thresholds and reporting requirements can vary between the two systems. The differences may include the types of pollutants covered, industry sectors included, and the numerical thresholds triggering reporting obligations.

NPI covers emissions and releases. Contaminated sites are under state regulation with different systems and legislations.

Adding new substances to the NPI requires a consultation process with industry. They don't have validated/accredited emission testing techniques for PFAS, which could be challenging.

Currently, Australia has no requirements for industry to monitor or report PFAS emissions and releases.

The NEMP is guidance and therefore not legally binding. Currently, the Australian government makes claims that there are no confirmed health impacts of PFAS, which is in contradictions to findings of other jurisdictions around the world.<sup>1</sup>

## **Introduction to Australian NPI**

The Australian National Pollutant Inventory (NPI), approved by the National Environment Protection Council on 27 February 1998, is an internet-based database that provides information on emissions and releases in Australia

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pfas.gov.au/about-pfas/faq>

to the public, industry, and government.<sup>2</sup> It contains more than 20 years of data on emissions from industrial plants and diffuse sources such as automobile exhaust and others.<sup>3</sup> From the tenth reporting year (2007- 08 onward), 93 substances must be reported if a facility exceeds substance reporting thresholds.<sup>4</sup> Compared to the list of 90 substances required for reporting in 2007, the new list of 93 substances includes Hexane<sup>5</sup>, Hydrochloric acid<sup>6</sup>, and Hydrogen sulphide<sup>7</sup>. Reporting substances are selected considering their potential impact on human health and the environment. According to independent experts, adding new substances to NPI requires consultation processes with industry.

If the facility exceeds reporting thresholds for one or more substances, it must calculate and report the annual emissions and transfers to the NPI. Data comes from industrial facilities such as power plants, factories, mines, and other sources such as transportation. 94 emission estimation technique (EET)<sup>8</sup> manuals are approved for industry use to facilitate emission estimation from industrial sources.

For facilities too small to report individually, governments estimate emissions to air and water using diffuse emissions manuals.<sup>9</sup> These manuals help to estimate emissions from the following sources:

- non-industrial activities such as transportation;
- domestic activities such as lawn mowing;
- commercial activities such as small bakeries;
- industrial activities which are not reported because the relevant thresholds are not exceeded or because the industries are exempt from reporting.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2007B01123/latest/text> Contaminates sites are under state regulation with different systems and legislations.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/data>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/substances/substance-list-and-thresholds>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/substances/fact-sheets/n-hexane-sources-emissions>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/substances/fact-sheets/hydrochloric-acid>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/substances/fact-sheets/hydrogen-sulfide>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/reporting/industry-reporting-materials/emission-estimation-technique-manuals>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/reporting/industry-reporting-materials/diffuse-emissions-manuals>

## Reporting requirements for groups of chemicals

In NPI reporting, the 'Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (Benzo[a]pyrene equivalent) (PAHs B[a]P<sub>eq</sub>)' emission amount is the total of the toxic equivalent amounts of individual congeners emitted or transferred. Toxic equivalent amounts are calculated by multiplying the congener's mass by the Toxicity Equivalency Factor published in the NPI Guide.

The NPI defines volatile organic compounds (VOC) as carbon-containing compounds that easily evaporate under normal indoor conditions and can contribute to photochemical smog. Total VOCs are considered to account for the combined effect of various compounds contributing to smog, even if individual substances don't meet specific usage thresholds. Common sources of Total VOCs include storing and using fuels, solvents, and fuel combustion.<sup>10</sup>

## Transfers

In addition to reporting emissions, the NPI also requires reporting of transfers. If waste is moved for containment or destruction, reporting is required. Containment destinations include landfills, tailings storage facilities, underground injection, or other specialized waste storage structures. This also includes transporting substances in waste to a sewage system. Reporting can be voluntary if transfers are for reuse, recycling, reprocessing, purification, partial purification, immobilization, remediation, or energy recovery.<sup>11, 12</sup>

## Are PFAS listed in NPI?

PFAS compounds are not currently listed in the NPI. According to expert opinion, one of the reasons for not having PFAS compounds listed in NPI is that Australia does not have validated/accredited emission testing techniques for PFAS.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/reporting/industry-reporting-materials/industry-reporting-frequently-asked-questions/substance>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/data>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/npi/publications/transfers-information-booklet-version-2>

There is no regulatory requirement to test for or monitor PFAS emissions or releases from the industry. Sometimes, air emissions from specific facilities, such as waste incinerators or cement kilns, are tested for PFAS. However, most facilities don't provide this type of information.

There is a regulatory framework for PFAS-contaminated sites, which is mainly limited to sampling and reporting if guidelines for soil contamination are exceeded.

There is no national map or database of such sites the government provides, but some state databases may include information on PFAS-contaminated sites. There are also many legal actions/class actions about PFAS contamination.<sup>13</sup>

### **PFAS remediation in and around Defence bases**

In January 2022, the Australian Government welcomed the Second Progress report of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade PFAS Sub-committee's Inquiry into PFAS remediation around Defence bases and responded to the PFAS Sub-committee's recommendations.<sup>14</sup>

For example, the Committee recommends that the Department of Defence regularly update and publish maps on its website displaying the evolving boundaries of PFAS investigation and PFAS Management Area Plan (PMAP) sites. These maps should clearly indicate the status of areas officially cleared of PFAS contamination. Additionally, the Committee suggests providing copies of these maps to residents upon request. Furthermore, the Department should actively seek public input through community engagement throughout the entire process.

In addressing this recommendation, the government states that current Investigation Area or Management Area maps for each site in Defence's national PFAS Investigation and Management (PFAISM) Program are

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/may/15/australian-government-reaches-1327m-class-action-settlement-with-landowners-over-pfas-contamination>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/aus-govt-response-pfas-remediation.pdf>

available on Defence's PFAS website.<sup>15</sup> The Department of Defence commits to seeking public input through community engagement.

The government's response also explains the terminology used in the PFAS Investigation and Management Program, distinguishing between Investigation Areas and Management Areas. State and territory authorities issue precautionary advice based on the Defence's environmental investigations, and the Defence develops PFAS Management Area Plans (PMAPs) with ongoing monitoring to track contamination. The Department will release Annual Interpretive Reports for the Ongoing Monitoring Plans at each site to assess changes in PFAS distribution and concentration, enabling effective risk management decision-making and early detection of potential issues in areas not initially understood to be affected by PFAS.

PFAS-contaminated sites around Defence bases include:<sup>16</sup>

Australian Capital Territory

- [Jervis Bay Range Facility](#)

New South Wales

- [Blamey Barracks \(Kapooka Military Area\)](#)
- [HMAS Albatross](#)
- [Holsworthy Barracks](#)
- [RAAF Base Richmond](#)
- [RAAF Base Wagga](#)
- [RAAF Base Williamtown](#)
- [Singleton Military Area](#)

Northern Territory

- [RAAF Base Darwin](#)
- [RAAF Base Tindal](#)
- [Robertson Barracks](#)

Queensland

- [HMAS Cairns](#)
- [Lavarack Barracks](#)

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/pfas>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/pfas/pfas-management-sites>

- [RAAF Base Amberley](#)
- [RAAF Base Townsville](#)
- [Swartz Barracks \(formerly Army Aviation Centre Oakey\)](#)
- [Wide Bay Training Area](#)

#### South Australia

- [RAAF Base Edinburgh](#)

#### Western Australia

- [Gingin Satellite Airfield](#)
- [HMAS Stirling \(Garden Island\)](#)
- [Naval Communication Station Harold E Holt A and B](#)
- [RAAF Base Learmonth](#)
- [RAAF Base Pearce \(Bullsbrook\)](#)

#### Victoria

- [RAAF Base East Sale](#)
- [HMAS Cerberus](#)
- [Bandiana Military Area](#)
- [RAAF Base Williams \(Laverton and Point Cook\)](#)

For each site, a PFAS Management Area Plan is developed. They describe the management, remediation and monitoring actions undertaken by Defence.<sup>17</sup>

The Department of Defence is a NATA (National Association of Testing Authorities 17) accredited organization.<sup>18</sup> NATA-accredited analytical testing services for PFAS chemicals in biosolids, soil and water samples are based on:

- USEPA 537 Determination of Selected Perfluorinated Alkyl Acids in Drinking Water by SPE and LC/MS/MS

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/pfas/defence-approach>

<sup>18</sup> <https://nata.com.au/accredited-organisation/department-of-defense-21051-25316/>

- USEPA Draft Method 821-R-11-007 utilising solid phase extraction (for water) and LC-MSMS detection.<sup>19</sup>

## **Australian NGO Friends of the Earth published PFAS Map of contaminated sites**

Experts from Friends of the Earth (FOE) Australia have created a database of PFAS-contaminated sites<sup>20</sup> to inform the public about the location of PFAS substances in the environment. The map includes the sites contaminated with 45 PFAS substances, including PFOA and PFOS:

1. [6:2 CI-PFESA](#)
2. [6:2 Fluorotelomer Sulfonic acid](#)
3. [6:2 FTS \(6:2 Fluorotelomersulfonate\)](#)
4. [8:2 Fluorotelomer Sulfonic acid](#)
5. [10:2 Fluorotelomer Sulfonic acid](#)
6. [Et-FOSAA: 2-\(N-Ethyl-perfluorooctane sulfonamido acetic acid](#)
7. [FBSA](#)
8. [FOSA](#)
9. [FOSAA](#)
10. [MeFOSE](#)
11. [N-EtFOSAA](#)
12. [N-MeFOSA](#)
13. [N-MeFOSAA](#)
14. [N-MeFOSE](#)
15. [N-Methyl-heptadecafluorooctane](#)
16. [NEPS \(N-ETHYL PERFLUOROOCTANE SULFONAMIDE\)](#)
17. [NMeFOSAA](#)
18. [perfluoropentane sulfonic acid\)](#)
19. [PFAS \(assorted compounds\)](#)
20. [PFAS \(unspecific\)](#)
21. [PFBA](#)
22. [PFBA \(Perfluorobutyrate\)](#)
23. [PFBeS \(Polyfluoro biphenyl ethers\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.industry.gov.au/national-measurement-institute/testing-and-analytical-services/environmental-testing-and-analytical-services/and-poly-fluoroalkyl-substances>

<sup>20</sup> <https://pfas.australianmap.net/about/>

24. [PFBS \(Perfluorobutane sulfonate\)](#)
25. [PFDA: Perfluorodecanoic acid](#)
26. [PFDoDa \(Perfluorododecanoic acid\)](#)
27. [PFDS \(Perfluorodecane sulfonic acid\)](#)
28. [PFEECH](#)
29. [PFHpA \(Perfluoroheptanoic acid\)](#)
30. [PFHpH](#)
31. [PFHpS](#)
32. [PFHxA \(Perfluorohexanoic acid\)](#)
33. [PFHxDA](#)
34. [PFHxS: Perfluorohexane sulfonic acid](#)
35. [PFMPA](#)
36. [PFOA: Perfluorooctanoic acid](#)
37. [PFOS: Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid](#)
38. [PFOSA: 2-\(N-Methyl-perfluorooctane sulfonamido\) acetic acid](#)
39. [PFPeA \(Perfluoro-n-pentanoic acid\)](#)
40. [PFPeS \(perfluoropentane sulfonate\)](#)
41. [PFPeS \(perfluoropolyethers\)](#)
42. [PFTeDA](#)
43. [PFTrA \(perfluorotridecanoic acid\)](#)
44. [PFTrDA](#)
45. [PFUnDa \(Perfluoroundecanoic acid\)](#)

PFAS sources of contamination were checked in 9 areas, including:

1. [Australia Capital Territory](#)
2. [New South Wales](#)
3. [Norfolk Island](#)
4. [Northern Territory](#)
5. [Queensland](#)
6. [South Australia](#)
7. [Tasmania](#)
8. [Victoria](#)
9. [Western Australia](#)

**Examples of sources of PFAS contamination in FOE reports include:**

1. Australia Capital Territory

- Former Fire Stations
- Fire Stations and Training Centres

## 2. New South Wales

- Historical use of fire-fighting foams at Mulwala site.<sup>21</sup> Lavington Rural Fire Service where Foam containing PFAS has been used in firefighting activities, such as fuel type fires and training, by some Rural Fire Brigades since 1975 for the protection of people and property.<sup>22</sup> The site is owned by the Australian Department of Finance.
- Australian Military Bank at Kapooka Army Base. Department of Defence finds elevated risks to people and animals due to historic PFAS use at Kapooka Army Base<sup>23</sup>.
- Wagga Wagga airport. A southern New South Wales council has removed 3,000 tonnes of PFAS-contaminated soil from a taxiway at its local airport. PFAS were historically used in firefighting foams at this site.<sup>24</sup>
- RAAF Wagga Air Force-managed ground training owned by the defence department.<sup>25</sup> The defence department said low levels of PFAS were found in two groundwater monitoring wells 650 metres away from the East Wagga bore field, part of Wagga Wagga's water supply.<sup>26</sup>
- Forest Hill Sewage Treatment Plant. Wagga Wagga City Council has initiated discussions with the Department of Defence and EPA after PFAS contamination was detected at the Forest Hill Sewage Treatment Plant. Council believes that the PFAS contamination in the effluent is sourced from the PFAS contamination at the RAAF base. The Department of Defence has been overseeing PFAS contamination investigations in the Forest Hill area for some time.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/contaminated-land/pfas-investigation-program/pfas-investigation-sites/Thales>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/news-and-media/pfas-environmental-investigation/lavington-rfs>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-24/kapooka-pfas-reports-contamination-kapooka-creek/100237442>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-02-23/million-dollar-dig-wagga-wagga-airport-to-remove-pfas/13182188>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.airforce.gov.au/about-us/history/our-journey/establishment-raaf-base-wagga-wagga>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/8400452/towns-water-safe-after-toxic-chemical-discovery/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://pfas.australianmap.net/location/new-south-wales/>

### 3. Norfolk Island

- Norfolk Island Airport. Preliminary site investigation was prepared for Department for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications<sup>28</sup>
- Detailed site investigation into PFAS contamination was conducted in 2021<sup>29</sup>

### 4. Northern Territory

- Alice Springs fire station. The Northern Territory Environment Department has assured residents in Alice Springs that the detection of PFAS substances at the town's fire station is not cause for concern. The chemicals, which have historically been used in firefighting foams, were found in soil samples taken by the NT Environment, Parks and Water Security Department.<sup>30</sup>
- Alice Springs Wastewater Facility. Tests were conducted for PFOA, PFOS and PFHxS.

### 5. Queensland

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. In mid-2016, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) tested soil and water held in the in-ground water tanks at the Enoggera, Cairns, Rockhampton, Southport, Yeppoon, Townsville and Oakey fire stations. In late 2016, QFES also tested the water held in the in-ground water tanks at the following fire stations: Cairns South, Forrest Beach, Ayr, Home Hill, Mt Isa, Airlie Beach, Proserpine, Dysart, Mackay, Sarina, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Maryborough, Noosa Heads, Caloundra, Charleville, Arana Hills, Annerley, Windsor, Roma St, Kemp Place and the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy (QCESA) at Whyte Island in Brisbane's east. Testing was conducted to identify the concentration of a range of PFAS, including PFOS and PFOA, in the in-ground water tanks at these locations.

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<sup>28</sup> [https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/territories/norfolk\\_island/pfas/files/preliminary-site-investigation-into-per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-norfolk-island-airport.pdf](https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/territories/norfolk_island/pfas/files/preliminary-site-investigation-into-per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-norfolk-island-airport.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/dsi-report-3-tables.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-28/pfas-alice-springs-no-immediate-public-health-risk-officials-say/100496338>

The test results were compared to health-based guidance values for PFAS established by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) on behalf of the Commonwealth Department of Health. These values, published in April 2017, provide guidance for PFAS levels in drinking water and water used for recreational activities such as swimming and bathing.

Water stored in the in-ground tanks has not been utilized for drinking or recreational purposes. Historically, these tanks have been employed to recycle water from training activities and surface water runoff. While there are no specific health-based guidance values for PFAS in recycled water used for these purposes, the guidance values for recreational water use have been utilized as a reference for testing purposes.

## 6. South Australia

- Inkerman Landfill PFAS Detection 2020/21

Cleanaway Inkerman Landfill Risk Assessment

Groundwater

Inkerman 1: 21/10/2020 - Upper Quaternary Aquifer 6.2 FTS 0.15 ug/l

Inkerman 2: 20/10/2020 - Upper Quaternary Aquifer PFBA 0.20ug/l

Inkerman W 36: 20/4/2020 - PFPeA 0.05ug/l, PFHxA 0.02 ug/l

Inkerman W 36: 19/4/2020 - PFPeA 0.03 ug/l

## 7. Tasmania

- Legana Sewage Treatment Plant – TasWater Customer Water Investigation

Lagoon 2A 28/6/23:

MeFOSAA 0.0022mg/kg, PFDoDA 0.0006mg/kg. Sum of PFAS 0.0028mg/kg

Lagoon 2B 28/6/23:

MeFOSAA 0.0032mg/kg, PFDODA 0.0007mg/kg. Sum of PFAS 0.0039mg/kg

Lagoon 2C 28/6/23:

MeFOSAA 0.0044mg/kg, PFDODA 0.0011mg/kg. Sum of PFAS 0.0055mg/kg

8. Victoria

- Dinner Plain Wastewater Treatment Plant Primary Lagoon  
2018: Sum of PFHxS + PFOS: 0.0023mg/kg,
- Moorabool water treatment plant<sup>31</sup>

Date	PFOA (µg/L)	PFHxS + PFOS
01/04/2022	<0.002	0.003

9. Western Australia

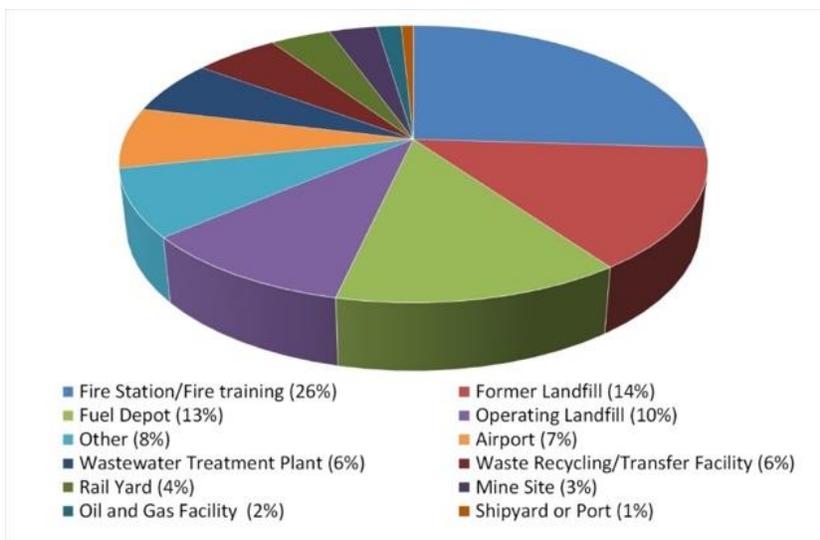
- Cadjebut Mine. The former Pilbara lead and zinc mine at St Georges Range in the Kimberley region (an inactive mine site where PFAS have been identified at the former fire training ground) is classified as *contaminated – remediation required*.

<https://www.der.wa.gov.au/our-work/community-updates/416-pfas-investigations-in-western-australia>

The chart below shows the distribution of different types of sites in Western Australia where PFAS research, remediation and management are being undertaken.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/water-and-waste/water-quality>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/service/environment/environment-information-services/pfas-investigations-western-australia>



## How are PFAS regulated in Australia?

While PFOS, PFOA and other PFAS were not manufactured in Australia, some are still used in various industrial processes and commercial and consumer products.

PFOS, PFOA, their salts and precursors are imported mainly for use as:

- Mist suppressants in the metal plating industry
- Hydraulic fluid in the aviation industry
- Surfactants in the photography industry
- Fire-fighting foams.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, PFOS and PFOA may be present in imported consumer products despite regulation under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. For example, some imported articles, such as textiles, may have been treated with PFAS.

Australia ratified the Stockholm Convention on May 20, 2004. However, it has yet to ratify the listing of PFOS, PFOA or and PFHxS under the Convention.<sup>34</sup> To ratify the listing of PFAS chemicals, Australia must first

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.industrialchemicals.gov.au/consumers-and-community/and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.pfas.gov.au/government-action/international-cooperation>

establish a National Standard for the Environmental Risk Management of Industrial Chemicals (IChEMS), including PFAS. Scheduling decisions under IChEMS include, inter alia, decisions for PFOS, PFOA or and PFHxS and related substances.<sup>35</sup>

The consultation on the proposed standards for managing the environmental risk of PFOA, PFOS and PFHxS and related chemicals is now closed. Proposed decision and supporting documents are available at IChEMS website.<sup>36</sup>

Regarding a legal framework, the primary national guidance, not legally binding, is the PFAS National Environmental Management Plan 2.0 (PFAS NEMP).<sup>37</sup> This framework includes Environmental guideline values, Soil reuse, Wastewater management and On-site containment and primarily focuses on contaminated sites.

According to the Australian government, the PFAS NEMP establishes “a practical basis” for nationally consistent environmental guidance and standards for managing PFAS contamination.<sup>38</sup> All jurisdictions participated in developing the plan and recognized the need to implement best practice regulation through individual jurisdictional mechanisms. The plan represents a how-to guide for investigating and managing PFAS contamination and waste management.

The federal government is currently developing its third version of the National Environmental Management Plan on PFAS, which will include details of sampling methods, standards, acceptable limit values etc. Consultation on the draft finished a year ago, but the new plan (version 3) has not been released yet. The draft is available on the federal website.<sup>39</sup>

The Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA) called on the Federal and State Governments to urgently implement PFAS controls.<sup>40</sup> AORA believes that the PFAS pollution problem is so severe that it is impossible to solve by recycling goods at the end of their life cycle. According to AORA, placing control of the PFAS problem on the waste

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/chemicals-management/national-standard>

<sup>36</sup> <https://consult.dcceew.gov.au/ichems-s17-proposed-decisions>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/publications/pfas-nemp-2>

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>39</sup> <https://consult.dcceew.gov.au/nemp-pfas>

<sup>40</sup> <https://pfas.australianmap.net/16-10-23-pfas-controls-needed-now-australian-organics-recycling-association/>

treatment industries, such as organics recycling, will not address the issue. The only way to effectively deal with PFAS contamination is to restrict and entirely ban the use of these chemicals at the government level as soon as possible.

## **PFAS in Drinking Water**

According to Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011) – Updated September 2022, the concentration of sum of PFOS and PFHxS in drinking water should not exceed 0.07 µg/L (70 ng/L). The concentration of PFOA should not exceed 0.56 µg/L (560 ng/L).<sup>41</sup>

In Australia, the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) are developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), which is a federal government agency. The ADWG set out the health-based framework for the supply of safe drinking water in Australia.

While the ADWG is a national document, the implementation and regulation of water quality standards typically fall under the jurisdiction of the individual states and territories. Each state and territory in Australia has its own regulatory bodies responsible for monitoring and managing water quality within their boundaries. These bodies may adopt the ADWG as a basis for setting and enforcing water quality standards within their regions.

In practice, the federal guidelines provided by the NHMRC through the ADWG serve as a foundation for developing state and territory-specific regulations and standards. States and territories may adopt the ADWG or modify certain aspects to address local conditions or specific requirements. The aim is to ensure that drinking water supplied to communities across Australia meets high-quality standards to protect public health.

The Australian government still claims no confirmed health impacts of PFAS.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>[https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/publications/Australian\\_Drinking\\_Water\\_Guidelines\\_ADWG\\_V3-8\\_Sep2022.pdf](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/publications/Australian_Drinking_Water_Guidelines_ADWG_V3-8_Sep2022.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.pfas.gov.au/about-pfas/faq>

## PFAS testing in Australia

Envirolab embraced the Total Oxidizable Precursor Assay (TOPA) early on, a method that aids in identifying precursor PFAS compounds—those capable of undergoing chemical and/or biotransformation into persistent PFAS, such as PFOS, PFHxS, and PFOA. The process of analysis involves the integration of liquid chromatography with mass spectrometry (LC-MSMS). This technology offers a rapid and precise approach to identify per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) across diverse sample matrices such as water, soil, blood/serum, and biota.<sup>43</sup>

Eurofins Environment Testing Australia provides a variety of PFAS testing packages designed for water, soil, sediment, and biosolids; air, including soil vapor and stack emissions; blood and biological tissues; as well as food and consumer products.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> <https://www.envirolab.com.au/Capabilities/PFAS>

<sup>44</sup> <https://cdnmedia.eurofins.com/apac/media/608003/analytical-method-summaries-002.pdf>