

Minutes

Katherine PFAS Community Consultation Group

5:30pm, 14 November 2017

Katherine Government Centre

Attendees:

Kevin Grey	Community
Meg Geritz	Community
Anthony Bartlett	Community
Allan Domaschenz	Community
Petrena Ariston	Community
Fay Miller	KTC
Claire Johannsen	KTC
Jenny Mackie	PWC
Jane Dellow	PWC
Xavier Schobben	DoH
Kristoffer Vanharderen	RAAF
Matthew Clarke	DoD
Jake Quinlivan – Chair	
Nathanael Knapp – Secretariat	
Kim Wheatley	DCM

Apologies:

Errol Lawson
Natalie Ellis
Merlyn Smith
Robert Jennings
Chris Horton
Andrew Tatnell
Karen Vohland
Craig Stevens

Sue Jones

Absent or no response:

Lisa Mumbin
Warren De With

1	Acknowledgement of Country	Chairperson
2	Apologies and membership	Chairperson
3	Confirmation of previous minutes	All

Minutes confirmed.

Moved: MG

Seconded: FM

4	Update on Action Items	All
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Refer to action item register

Outstanding item 4.1 – discussion regarding the role of the Chair and potential or perceived conflicts of interest, direct line of communication with the Department of the Chief Minister and seeking an independent chair.

Members discussed the dissemination of information out to the community and whether the group needed a public spokesperson. Members agreed that they will continue to provide information to community members as required.

Members discussed the vacant KPCCG position that has arisen and other membership matters relating to responses to meeting invitations, non-attendance at meetings and community representation, more broadly, on the committee.

4.1 Action: Amend terms of reference to reflect that membership will be revoked if absent without apology for three consecutive meetings.

Responsibility: Secretariat

4.2 Action: Offer vacant position to May Rosas as a representative of the Aboriginal community

Responsibility: KPCCG Chair

4.3 Action: Follow up with Lisa Mumbin

Responsibility: KPCCG Chair

Outstanding Action item 5.2 - Members discussed and requested further information in relation to the possible contamination of rain water tanks and spread of disease from bats.

4.4 Action: Provide information related to contamination and spread of disease from bats.

Responsibility: DoH

Outstanding Action item 6.1 - members discussed their request for blood testing be made available as a priority. Members were informed that the PFAS Inter Agency Steering Committee were meeting this week to consider the request and provide a response to KPCCG members.

Members also discussed and raised concerns regarding the current levels of PFAS in blood stored in the blood bank and whether this could be explored further.

4.5 Action: Seek information relating to concerns raised about current levels of PFAS in blood stored the blood bank.

Responsibility: MG / Australian Red Cross

5 Department of Defence

Members were informed that the installation of rain water tanks were progressing well and that new properties were continuing to be added as they became eligible.

The DRAFT Human Health Risk Assessment Report has now been completed and is now being reviewed. It is anticipated that key details from this report will be available at the next public information walk in session and shop front on 4 December 2017 and 5 December 2017, with the report publically released by the end of the year.

Dept of Defence are continuing to proactively engage residents in the Uralla area to test swimming pools for presence of PFAS.

Dept of Defence will be conducting community information and awareness session in Aboriginal Town Camps and Communities during the week of 20 November 2017.

6 Department of Health

Members were informed that the Australian Government, Department of Health has established an Expert Panel for PFAS to advise on the potential health impacts associated with PFAS exposure and to identify priority areas for further research. The Expert Panel has invited written submissions from the public.

DoH are awaiting release of the human health risk assessment report.

7 Power and Water Corporation

- Sampling was taken every three days with the last end of month sample taken on 30 October. Current testing is to 10 November.
- There is a three working day turnaround from when the samples are received at the lab interstate.
- Water use in Katherine remains at 20% less than at the same time last year, which is ensuring the use of bore water is kept at a minimum.
- The new ECT2 treatment plant is now operational and producing 12.5 litres per second (1 million litres per day) of treated bore water with undetectable levels of PFAS. Samples are currently being taken daily.
- The amount of bore water used in the reticulated supply will be capped at 10%.
- Water conservation measures will remain in place to keep water demand down and manageable at the 90:10 blend ratios.
- The KTC pool water was emptied into the sewer system and will be contained at the treatment ponds. The sludge will be tested as per all other waste water facilities for PFAS residue. If levels are excessive, we will work with Defence and the EPA on appropriate disposal.
- Power and Water has commenced a comprehensive campaign through both traditional and social media to provide accurate information to the community about how we are responding to the PFAS situation.
- A community open day will be held at the water treatment plant on Saturday 2 December 9am – 12pm for interested members of the community to see how the new plant works.

Members were provided with an update (attachment A) and handouts of media releases (Attachment B)

7.1 Action: Seek information regarding chlorination, fluorination and PFAS cocktail in reticulated water supply and whether there have been any studies undertaken to establish whether this is safe for human consumption

Responsibility: DoH

8 General Business

All

Members discussed action and support that could be initiated or taken by the KPCCG for residents directly effected by the detection of PFAS on their properties.

8.1 Action: KG, MG and AD to draft a letter of support for residents directly effected by the detection of PFAS on their properties.

Responsibility: KPCCG members

Discussion regarding counselling services available either through Dept. of Human Services (Andrea Read) or another source. Members were informed that counselling services can also be accessed through the PFAS hotline.

8.1.2 Action: Follow up EASA regarding their capacity and capability to deal with PFAS related queries and requests for counselling

Responsibility: Secretariat

8.2 Member request for further information:

With reference to the Northern Territory PFAS Interagency Steering Committee (PFASISC) - Please clarify the three points identified in detail below:

- a) identify each and every PFASISC member.
- b) advise terms of agreement of each PFASISC member.
- c) advise terms of engagement of each PFASISC member.

8.2 Action: Request a response, in writing, from the PFASISC Chair, to the following:

- a) identify each and every PFASISC member; and

b) advise terms of agreement of each PFASIASC member.

c) request a member of the PFASIASC to attend the KPCCG meeting to be scheduled for late January 2018.

Responsibility: Secretariat

8.2.1 Member request to invite Senator Scullion to attend KPCCG:

Consider it very important that the HON NIGEL SCULLION be contacted and be requested to attend a Katherine PFAS Community Consultation Group Meeting in the very near future with the intention that :-

(a) that HON NIGEL SCULLION (PERSONALLY) provide and present a detailed briefing relative to Senate Inquiry into PFAS

(b) that HON NIGEL SCULLION (PERSONALLY) provide and present a briefing relative to the PFAS effect on Katherine Aboriginal Community

8.2.1 Action: Invite Senator Nigel Scullion to attend a future meeting of the KPCCG with the intention that :-

(a) that HON NIGEL SCULLION (PERSONALLY) provide and present a detailed briefing relative to Senate Inquiry into PFAS

(b) that HON NIGEL SCULLION (PERSONALLY) provide and present a briefing relative to the PFAS effect on Katherine Aboriginal Community

Responsibility: secretariat

8.2 Member request to discuss availability of Agenda and Minutes to the general public

Members agreed that meeting documentation was currently available through a number of sources. Members were informed that a website was being developed for future meeting documentation and information to be made available to the public.

8.2.1 Member request to discuss the management and response to questions or mis-statements on social media platforms

Members agreed that they should continue to respond individually.

Members were encouraged to express their point of view however they feel.

8.3 Site visit to ECT2 Plant – PWC

Open day scheduled for 2 December 2017, KG will attend on behalf of the KPCCG

9 Late Item – Katherine Region PFAS Information Management Plan - EL

9.1 Action: Distribute member initiated Draft Katherine Region PFAS Information Management Plan to KPCCG members for consideration

Responsibility: secretariat

10 Next Meeting

Chairperson

Tuesday 5 December 2017, 5:30pm, Katherine Government Centre

Meeting close

Chairperson

Meeting closed at 8:30pm

From: Errol Lawson
To: [KPCCG DCM](#)
Subject: Communique 1 - KPCCG Meeting 17 October 2017
Date: Sunday, 12 November 2017 6:25:32 AM
Attachments: [Katherine region PFAS information management plan.docx](#)

To:

Nathanael Knapp
KPCCG Secretariat

You already have my apology for my inability to attend the next meeting on 17 November. In my absence I ask you to consider the attached Katherine Region PFAS information management plan. The plan is “for Group consideration” and is offered as a follow on to the first two actions from the first group meeting on 17 October. These actions raised the issues of a “visual representation of the governance structure” and “dissemination of actions and information”. The effectiveness and credibility of the Consultation Group both upwards into the governance structure and outwards into the Katherine community will be determined by our management of information gathered. The attached information management plan is intended to provide the basis for a consistent, accessible and responsive format for information on PFAS.

For the consideration of the Group

Errol Lawson

Katherine Region PFAS Information Management Plan

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Management Plan for the Katherine Region is to provide an aid to the Community Consultation Group in:

- Organising the information gathered by the Group into a structure which maps onto the main areas of concern associated with the PFAS crisis.
- Identifying gaps in the activities reported by the various federal, state and territory agencies
- Identifying gaps in the information provided by the various federal, state and territory agencies
- Requesting for information from the above various agencies
- Situating comments from and providing information to the Katherine community in a consistent structure

METHOD

The method applied is to divide the PFAS issue into the following areas:

1. The source
2. The carrier
3. Consequences

Source

The source is the fire fighting foam used at Tindal RAAF Base over an extended period. As a result PFAS has leached into the underlying Tindal aquifer.

To prevent further leaching of PFAS into the aquifer the following steps are necessary:

1. Identify distribution of PFAS in the soil at Tindal
2. Develop plan for removal and/or isolation from the aquifer
3. Implement such plan ASAP

The Consultation Group might inquire:

1. Is a soil testing program being undertaken. If so, by which agency, and when are results expected?
2. Does the responsible agency envisage a clean-up program to prevent further leaching into the aquifer?
3. Is the clean-up program sufficiently advanced to prevent further leaching during this Wet season?
4. What linkages are in place between the responsible agency and other agencies?

Carrier

The carrier of the PFAS beyond the RAAF Base is Tindal aquifer.

As a result bores, domestic, town water and irrigation are showing levels of PFAS higher than the national acceptable level of 0.07 mg/l.

Necessary steps include:

1. Ensure for all residents drinking water is below the national level of PFAS.
2. Determine the extent of contamination of the aquifer
3. Advise the consequences of contaminated bore water on stock, food producing agricultural and horticulture.
4. Research methods of removing PFAS from the aquifer
5. Conduct a review of water resources Vs anticipated demand for water in the Katherine region over an extended time frame

The Consultation Group might inquire:

Agency/agencies responsible for each of the above and the linkages between each

Consequences

Consequences are divided into Health and Property Values

Health

There is considerable disquiet throughout the Katherine region concerning the health consequences of PFAS. The Community Consultation Group is not sufficiently informed to offer credible advice to the wider community. Necessary steps are:

1. Identify the lead agency on health issues within the set of agencies assigned to the PFAS crisis
2. Identify any other agencies involved with health issues and their relationship to the lead agency
3. Request a briefing from the identified lead agency
4. Establish a communications path to the lead agency in order that queries on publications conflicting with the lead agencies position may be referred to it for comment.
5. The Group develop our own library of reports and references on health consequences of PFAS.

Property

There is considerable disquiet throughout the Katherine region about the loss of property value as a result of the PFAS crisis. The level of disquiet can be gauged from the attendance at the recent presentations of the Class Action lawyers. Since the property values issue affects all members of the Community Consultation Group to a greater or lesser extent, it may be difficult to establish a Group position. It should be practical to establish a data base on the Class Action firms, including name, contact details, capability statement and progress towards a Class Action for Katherine Region property owners.

Errol Lawson

10 November 2017

Katherine PFAS Community Consultation Group Meeting

Power and Water update - 14 November 2017

Current average test results to 31 October are now available on the Power and Water website – PFAS in the NT

Location	Description	Average PFAS ¹ Levels µg/L (ie micrograms per litre)	
		ΣPFHxS and PFOS	PFOA
Reference value	New FSANZ Health Based Guidance Values for drinking water quality²	0.07 µg/L	0.56 µg/L
Katherine Reticulation	Reticulation (tap) water	0.01	<0.01
Katherine	Raw bore water	0.2	0.01
Katherine	Raw surface water	<0.01	<0.01

- Sampling was taken every three days with the last end of month sample taken on 30 October. Current testing is to 10 November.
- There is a three working day turnaround from when the samples are received at the lab interstate.
- Water use in Katherine remains at 20% less than at the same time last year, which is ensuring the use of bore water is kept at a minimum.
- The new ECT2 treatment plant is now operational and producing 12.5 litres per second (1 million litres per day) of treated bore water with undetectable levels of PFAS. Samples are currently being taken daily.
- The amount of bore water used in the reticulated supply will be capped at 10%.
- Water conservation measures will remain in place to keep water demand down and manageable at the 90:10 blend ratios.
- The KTC pool water was emptied into the sewer system and will be contained at the treatment ponds. The sludge will be tested as per all other waste water facilities for PFAS residue. If levels are excessive, we will work with Defence and the EPA on appropriate disposal.
- Power and Water has commenced a comprehensive campaign through both traditional and social media to provide accurate information to the community about how we are responding to the PFAS situation.
- A community open day will be held at the water treatment plant on Saturday 2 December 9am – 12pm for interested members of the community to see how the new plant works.



New treatment plant delivers quality water for Katherine

POWER and Water is continuing to put into action a longer term strategic water management plan to ensure safe tap water is provided for Katherine residents and businesses.

Thanks to the efforts of the Katherine community, water use continues to remain down by nearly 20 per cent, or 2,000,000 litres, compared to this time last year.

This community effort ensured all water supplied to the community from August to November was sourced from the Katherine River. The current testing regime shows there are negligible concentrations of PFAS in Katherine River.

The new ECT2 water treatment plant supplied by Defence to remove PFAS from Katherine's ground-water supply is now successfully operating after being installed by Power and Water in October. Ongoing testing of the water confirms it meets the health guidance value.

The ECT2 treatment plant is producing 12.5 litres per second of high quality drinking water with undetectable levels of PFAS.

This means the ECT2 treatment plant is able to supply treated bore water with undetectable levels of PFAS at around 1,000,000 litres a

day. This is equivalent to 10 per cent of current overall water demand for Katherine. This treated water is now being blended with treated river water and incorporated into the town's reticulated water supply.

This provides further contingency capabilities for ensuring Katherine tap water remains safe for consumption.

The Katherine water treatment plant is designed to treat water all year round and this includes when the river water is affected by the first rains of the wet season.

Power and Water will open the new treatment plant to interested members of the public on **Saturday, 2 December**. Come along between **9am and 12pm** to see the treatment plant and find out how it works.

The current results of PFAS testing confirms that public drinking water is safe for consumption. These results, which are updated each month, can be found at powerwater.com.au/katherine. If you still have concerns about the water management strategy being put into operation by Power and Water, please call us on **1800 245 092**.

This is a Katherine community message from Power and Water.



Water treatment plant operator Steve Murphy takes a sample of the treated water for testing.

Katherine PFAS Community Consultation Group

Update on Action Items –

Date	Action	Responsibility	Status	Comments
14.11.17	4.1 Amend terms of reference to reflect that membership will be revoked if absent without apology for three consecutive meetings.	Secretariat	Complete	
14.11.17	4.2 Offer vacant position to May Rosas as a representative of the Aboriginal community	DCM PFASIASC Chair	In progress	
14.11.17	4.3 Follow up with Lisa Mumbin regarding appointment to KPCCG	KPCCG Chair	Complete	
14.11.17	4.4 Provide information related to contamination and spread of disease from bats	DoH		
14.11.17	4.5 Seek information relating to concerns raised about current levels of PFAS in blood stored the blood bank.	MG/Australian Red Cross		
14.11.17	4.6 Action item 'Seek feedback on any additional information that needs to be captured to keep messaging accurate, relevant and consistent' to be moved to agenda as a standing item	Secretariat	Complete	

14.11.17	7.1 Seek information regarding chlorination, fluorination and PFAS cocktail in reticulated water supply and whether there have been any studies undertaken to establish whether this is safe for human consumption	DoH		
14.11.17	8.1 KG, MG and AD to draft a letter of support for residents directly effected by the detection of PFAS on their properties.	KPCCG members		
14.11.17	8.1.2 Follow up EASA regarding their capacity and capability to deal with PFAS related queries and requests for counselling	Secretariat	In progress	
14.11.17	8.2 Request a response, in writing, from the PFASIASC Chair, to the following: a) identify each and every PFASIASC member; and b) advise terms of agreement of each PFASIASC member. c) request a member of the PFASIASC to attend the KPCCG meeting to be scheduled for late January 2018.	Secretariat	In progress	
14.11.17	8.2.1 Invite Senator Nigel Scullion to attend a future meeting of the KPCCG with the intention that :- (a) that HON NIGEL SCULLION (PERSONALLY) provide and present a detailed briefing relative to Senate Inquiry into PFAS	Secretariat	In progress	

	(b) that HON NIGEL SCULLION (PERSONALLY) provide and present a briefing relative to the PFAS effect on Katherine Aboriginal Community			
14.11.17	9.1 distribute member initiated Draft Katherine Region PFAS Information Management Plan to KPCCG members for consideration	Secretariat	Complete	
17.10.17	4.1 All agreed that a visual representation of the governance structure, relationship between KPCCG, PFASISC, PFAS Task Force and politicians needed to be developed.	DCM Strategic Communications and Engagement	In progress	To be discussed and approved at next PFASIASC. Request for feedback from KPCCG members
17.10.17	4.2 Recommendation to Chief Minister: All agreed that actions and information from KPCCG be disseminated to all politicians, independents and opposition.	DCM DepCE DCM Strategic Communications and Engagement	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministerial Correspondence being prepared - Portal on NTG website being developed for communique doc, links to PWC, KTC etc ; to be considered by PFASIASC
17.10.17	4.3 & 4.4 Follow up with members who did not attend or respond to invitation to join KPCCG and enquire whether they wish to accept their offer of appointment or not. Discuss membership appointments at next meeting and seek recommendations for community representatives.	DCM RED BRR	Complete	Correspondence and invites sent to all members. Seeking advice from KPCCG members.

Action Item Update

17.10.17	5.1 School Principals are seeking talking points and clear messaging suitable for inclusion in newsletters, around potable water supply.	DCM SCE in consultation with PWC and DoH	In progress	Waiting on interim health risk assessment. Will have aim to have completed for the next meeting
17.10.17	6.1 Members formally request that blood testing is made available as a priority to establish a baseline, particularly for those people living in a high risk area.	PFASISC Chair	In progress	KPCCG meeting minutes and request to be considered by PFASISC and a response provided. PFASISC meeting week of 13 November 2017.
17.10.17	6.2 Members request that further investigation be undertaken into causal effects.	DoD, DoH	Ongoing	Expert PFAS panel established.
17.10.17	4.5 Establish mailing list for out of session information Chair discretion to call out of session meeting if required Add acknowledgement of country Amend Schedule 1, XS title from Dr to Mr	DCM Secretariat	Complete	
17.10.17	5.2 Address concerns regarding the safety of water by providing and making available accurate and detailed information.	DoD	Complete	Results provided direct to PWC, KTC and residents.
17.10.17	7.1 Request to provide dates for when testing was conducted.	PWC	Complete	

	<p>Provide monthly statistics for tap and bore tests</p> <p>Use micro grams per litre instead of ppm as a unit of measurement to keep data consistent</p>			
17.10.17	<p>7.2</p> <p>Seek feedback on any additional information that needs to be captured to keep messaging accurate, relevant and consistent</p>	KPCCG members	Complete	Moved to standing agenda item
17.10.17	<p>8.1</p> <p>Request to provide details on KTC pool filtration system to members</p> <p>Request to provide weekly updates on pool testing will be made available to the public</p>	Katherine Town Council	Complete	<p>Filtration system is sand.</p> <p>Pool to open Thursday 16 November 2017. Testing results available on KTC website as they are received</p>
17.10.17	<p>9.1</p> <p>Chair requested that feedback on first meeting be emailed through to secretariat</p> <p>Chair requested that members consider providing suggestions on subject matter experts for presentations and priorities to the KPCCG.</p> <p>KPCCG members that didn't attend or respond to invitation to be contacted to gauge their level of interest and participation in the group</p>	KPCCG Chair & members	Complete	