



Mike Baird
Premier of NSW
Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 23 December 2015

NSW GOVERNMENT HELP FOR WILLIAMTOWN RESIDENTS

The NSW Government announced today it will take action to help Williamtown residents affected by contamination from the RAAF base – including a plan to connect them to the town water supply.

“The contamination at Williamtown is deeply concerning and we recognise the enormous effect it has had on local residents and businesses,” NSW Premier Mike Baird said.

“We have been in discussions with the Department of Defence to stress we expect it to provide financial assistance to those affected.

“However, we believe the Williamtown community should not have to wait any longer for help, which is why the NSW Government is taking this decisive action.”

Under the package for the Williamtown community the NSW Government will;

- Connect affected developed properties within the investigation area to town water
- Invest in new contamination testing equipment
- Employ additional community liaison staff to help address concerns of the local community

Water Minister Niall Blair said affected properties, which are currently using bore and tank water will be connected to the Hunter Water water network.

“Town water will give locals confidence in the long-term integrity of their water supply,” Mr Blair said.

Environment Minister Mark Speakman said the NSW Government will also purchase a new Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectrometer, to speed up testing of soil, water, biota and milk.

“The sooner testing is completed, the sooner we will have the information needed to address both contamination and community concerns,” Mr Speakman said.

“The NSW Government will also establish dedicated local engagement officers in the Williamtown area to provide ongoing support to residents.

“The NSW Government is today repeating its call to the Department of Defence to expedite its efforts to help the community.

“This NSW Government action is filling a void that Defence has so far left. Defence is the polluter in this case and the polluter must ultimately pay.”

Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Scot MacDonald said the announcement today follows a meeting last month between the Premier and members of the local community.

"I am pleased the Premier and the NSW Government have listened following the meeting with Williamtown community members," Mr MacDonald said.