



**Mark Speakman**  
Minister for the Environment

**Niall Blair**  
Minister for Primary Industries

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Monday, 8 August 2016

### **RESPONSE TO HUMAN HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The NSW Government acknowledges the release of the Federal Department of Defence's Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) report into the offsite contamination resulting from RAAF base at Williamtown.

NSW Environment Minister Mark Speakman and NSW Minister for Primary Industries Niall Blair said the report confirmed the appropriateness of the precautionary approach taken by the NSW Government.

The NSW Government has been working closely with the community of Williamtown in order to deliver practical assistance and information for affected residents since October 2015.

The NSW Government's response is consistent with the "polluter pays" principle, which requires the polluter – in this case the Federal Department of Defence – to take responsibility for the effects of its contamination.

However, the NSW Government has also taken proactive steps to assist the Williamtown community.

These include funding reticulated water connections in the investigation zones, funding mental health support workers, enhancing the EPA's on-the-ground resources and establishing the Williamtown Expert Panel, led by NSW Chief Scientist Professor Mary O'Kane AC, as well as elected and community representatives groups.

The NSW Government has written to the Federal Government outlining its expectations with respect to ongoing management and community support.

NSW Government agencies have also outlined their response to the HHRA, including the continuation of precautionary guidelines that will remain in place until the Federal Government's independent review of the Enhealth drinking water interim guidelines is completed.

The NSW Government also confirmed current fishing closures will remain in place until further notice. Commercial fishers will be kept informed on how the ongoing closures will impact the implementation of the industry-wide Business Adjustment Program in

the local area.

The NSW Government will continue to work with the Williamtown community to ensure that public health remains the number one priority.

More information is available at [epa.nsw.gov.au/MediaInformation/williamtown.htm](http://epa.nsw.gov.au/MediaInformation/williamtown.htm).