

## Media release

### Airport takes action on water advice

Friday, 19 February 2016

Following advice from Hunter Water, Newcastle Airport Pty Limited (Newcastle Airport) has moved to ensure that its waste water is safe for its community.

Newcastle Airport was advised by Hunter Water on 28 January 2016 that waste water from the site showed measurable but not alarming levels of PFOS and PFOA (perfluorinated compounds).

The Airport understands that low levels of PFOS measured in the waste water range from below laboratory detection to a maximum of 0.67µl/litres. The Airport contributes about 38 kl of the 7,300 kl of water treated per day to Hunter Water's waste water facility at Raymond Terrace.

The Airport immediately moved to carry out its own testing and has already completed extensive pipe integrity examination with additional testing to be undertaken in the coming days. The Airport is also undertaking regular briefings with its tenants and stakeholders to implement an action plan and is engaging with land owner Department of Defence as part of the consultation process.

Newcastle Airport has also confirmed there are no processes that involve the use of PFOS and PFOA undertaken on the Newcastle Airport site.

Newcastle Airport CEO, Dr Peter Cock, said that the Airport began working immediately with Hunter Water to identify and isolate the source and is engaging with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

"We understand that low levels of these contaminants are only in waste water but, to ensure that we have covered all fronts, we have conducted analytical testing of the Airport's drinking water and can confirm that there are no measurable levels present," he said.

"It is our top priority to work with Hunter Water, the EPA, and industry specialists to manage this situation as part of a broader issue across the region and the nation," he said.

"We are now working with tenants to ensure that the source is identified and that appropriate environmental management systems are put in place. This means evaluating all options, including alternative disposal methods, and awaiting the direction and advice of Hunter Water and the EPA," he said.

**Ends.**

**Additional information:** *Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) are man-made chemicals belonging to the group known as perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs). PFCs have been used by numerous industries and have been contained in products such as in textiles, leather products, metal plating, protective coating, cleaning products, pesticides and fire-fighting foams. PFOS are stable chemicals that do not break down in the environment and can persist for a long time both in the environment and in humans.*

– source <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/pfos.aspx>

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**Notes for the Editor:**

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