



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON PFAS CONTAMINATION IN WATERWAYS AND DRINKING
WATER SUPPLIES THROUGHOUT NEW SOUTH WALES

MEDIA RELEASE

INQUIRY INTO PFAS CONTAMINATION – PUBLIC HEARINGS AND SITE VISITS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

31 January 2025

An Upper House select committee will travel to the Blue Mountains and Newcastle to conduct site visits and public hearings for its inquiry into PFAS contamination in waterways and drinking water supplies throughout New South Wales, before conducting a further hearing in Sydney at the Parliament of New South Wales.

Chair of the Committee, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, who recently returned from a study tour on PFAS 'forever chemicals' in the United States and Canada, said "Our visits to the Blue Mountains and Newcastle mean we can hear directly from local residents, local authorities and local academics about their specific concerns and experiences around PFAS, the contamination of local waterways, drinking water and the environment more generally, and appropriate responses to minimise harm including to humans and wildlife".

On Monday 3 February, the Committee will start with a public hearing at the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, Katoomba. Following reports in August 2024 that samples collected by Sydney Water at the Cascade Filtration Plant at Katoomba contained elevated levels of PFAS, the Committee will hear evidence from:

- Mr Jon Dee of Stop PFAS – Blue Mountains;
- Blue Mountains City Council; and
- A Fire and Rescue NSW Officer with appropriate local knowledge; as well as
- The Cadia Community Sustainability Network, which has raised concerns about PFAS contamination affecting the Belubula River in Central West New South Wales.

After the hearing, the Committee will conduct a site visit to the Cascade Filtration Plant, facilitated by Sydney Water. Ms Faehrmann stated "The Committee has received evidence about the discovery of elevated levels of PFAS at the plant, the possible causes, and what is being done to resolve matters and to manage the risk of these types of incidents occurring again. We welcome this opportunity to consolidate our learning on the ground assisted by those with local expertise".

On Tuesday 4 February, the Committee will hold a public hearing at the University of Newcastle's Q Building, hearing from a number of stakeholders including:

- Local residents;
- Officers of Hunter Water and the Hunter New England Health District;
- Local officers of the NSW Environment Protection Authority; and
- Professor Ravi Naidu of the Cooperative Research Centre for Contamination, Assessment and Remediation of the Environment (crcCARE).

This will be followed by a site visit to crcCARE hosted by Professor Naidu. "The Committee is particularly interested in consolidating its understanding around PFAS concerns with the region's Williamstown RAAF Base, another matter about which it has received important evidence, and we very much appreciate the assistance of these local stakeholders" said Ms Faehrmann.

The hearing will be webcast live:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/Pages/webcasts.aspx>

For further information please contact the secretariat on (02) 9230 2214

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On Wednesday 5 February, the Committee will round out its week of activities with a public hearing at Parliament House, Sydney for the fourth hearing of the Inquiry. The Committee will hear from a range of stakeholders including scientific experts, environmental groups, local government stakeholders and Government authorities including Sydney Water, Water NSW and NSW Health.

To view the hearing schedules please visit the [Select Committee on PFAS Contamination in Waterways and Drinking Water Supplies Throughout New South Wales](#).

*For further information or comment from Committee Chair, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, contact Ben Cronly on
0487 247 960 or (02) 9230 3771
-ENDS-*

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