

LE FEVRE PENINSULA

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

Issued December 2019, updated 12 October 2021

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances, known as PFAS, are human manufactured chemicals that have been used in a range of industrial and consumer products since the 1950s. PFAS have been used in domestic and commercial applications including the manufacturing of non-stick cookware, in stain protection for fabrics, furniture and carpet, in food packaging and predominantly in some types of firefighting foams.



Due to their wide use and persistence in the environment, PFAS can be found in soils, surface water and groundwater in low concentrations in many areas. All of us are exposed to small amounts of PFAS through exposure to dust, indoor and outdoor air, food, water, and contact with consumer products that contain PFAS.

The main sites where fluorinated firefighting foams have been used on the Le Fevre Peninsula are shown in the map overleaf.

Fluorinated firefighting foam banned in South Australia

The EPA amended the *Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2015* to ban the supply and use of fluorinated (PFAS-containing) firefighting foams from 30 January 2018. A grace period of two years to 30 January 2020 was granted to help industry make the transition to safe alternatives. Fluorinated foams are prohibited unless there is an EPA exemption.

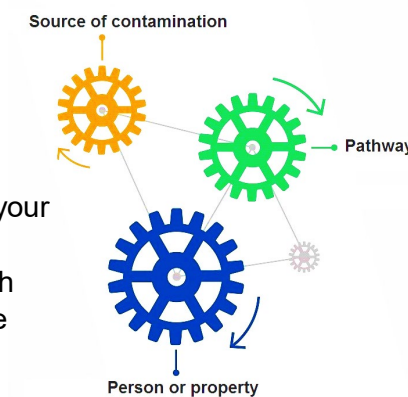
Several large sites with complex firefighting requirements, such as bulk fuel storage facilities on the Le Fevre Peninsula, have been issued with exemptions to implement longer-term transition plans. See overleaf map for the status of some of the main sites on the Le Fevre Peninsula that have used PFAS-containing firefighting foam.

What's the health risk?

It is estimated that up to 98% of the world's population would have PFAS detectable in their blood due to domestic (household) exposure. SA Health advises that early indications suggest PFAS exposure has a minimal impact on your health. However, because of the weaknesses in the scientific evidence, health effects cannot be completely ruled out.

There have been concerns interstate regarding PFAS found in groundwater which is used for drinking. Groundwater is not widely used for drinking in SA, so is not considered a major source of exposure here.

If you live in an area where PFAS have contaminated the soil or groundwater, SA Health may recommend not consuming fruit or vegetables produced in your garden as a precaution. Please contact SA Health for detailed health advice (see below).



The EPA's role

In 2019 the EPA reviewed industrial sites in South Australia where PFAS-containing firefighting foam may have been widely used, to identify any areas where further environmental assessment may be required.

This has led to several liable parties entering into voluntary site contamination assessment proposals (VSCAP) with the EPA. Section 83A of the *Environment Protection Act 1993* requires owners, occupiers, consultants and auditors to notify the EPA of the existence of site contamination (including PFAS) at or in the vicinity of a site that affects or threatens groundwater. The EPA does not have jurisdiction over Commonwealth land.

The EPA works with liable parties to ensure that the nature and extent of the site contamination (including PFAS) is understood.

National Environmental Management Plan for PFAS

The Commonwealth, state and territory environment ministers have endorsed the second version of Australia's [PFAS National Environment Management Plan](#) (NEMP).

The NEMP provides valuable guidance around storage, reuse and disposal of contaminated material which will facilitate proactive decision making for site contamination management including remediation. It recommends practices to assess sites and address contamination found. Please visit the EPA website or contact us if you would like a copy of the plan.

FURTHER INFO

For **further information** please contact:

Site Contamination Branch
Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607, Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone: (08) 8124 4216
Email: engage.epa@sa.gov.au
Website: www.epa.sa.gov.au (type 'PFAS' into the search bar)

For **health related information** please contact:

Scientific Services Branch, SA Health
11 Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: (08) 8226 7100
Email: public.health@health.sa.gov.au
Website: www.sahealth.sa.gov.au (type 'PFAS' into the search bar)



Le Fevre Peninsula

Australian Naval Infrastructure – ASC

The site supplies fluorinated foams to Defence vessels, which are exempt from the state legislated ban. There is no use of fluorinated foams onsite.

BP Australia – ATOM

The site holds fluorinated foams for use in the event of a tank fire. Any foam used would be contained within the tank or bunded area, then disposed of at an EPA licenced facility. When a suitable fluorine-free foam is identified, the system will be decontaminated and transitioned. BP therefore holds an exemption to the ban with an EPA-approved Environment Improvement Programme to transition to fluorine-free foams. It has an agreed Voluntary Site Contamination Assessment Proposal with the EPA to assess PFAS contamination on or off their site. Stormwater discharges (which include discharges to the Port River) are monitored for PFAS.

Flinders Ports

Compliant with the ban and has an agreed Voluntary Site Contamination Assessment Proposal with the EPA to assess PFAS contamination on or off their site.

Former Caltex Birkenhead Terminal

Has an agreed Voluntary Site Contamination Assessment Proposal with the EPA to assess PFAS contamination on or off their site.

Mobil Birkenhead Terminal

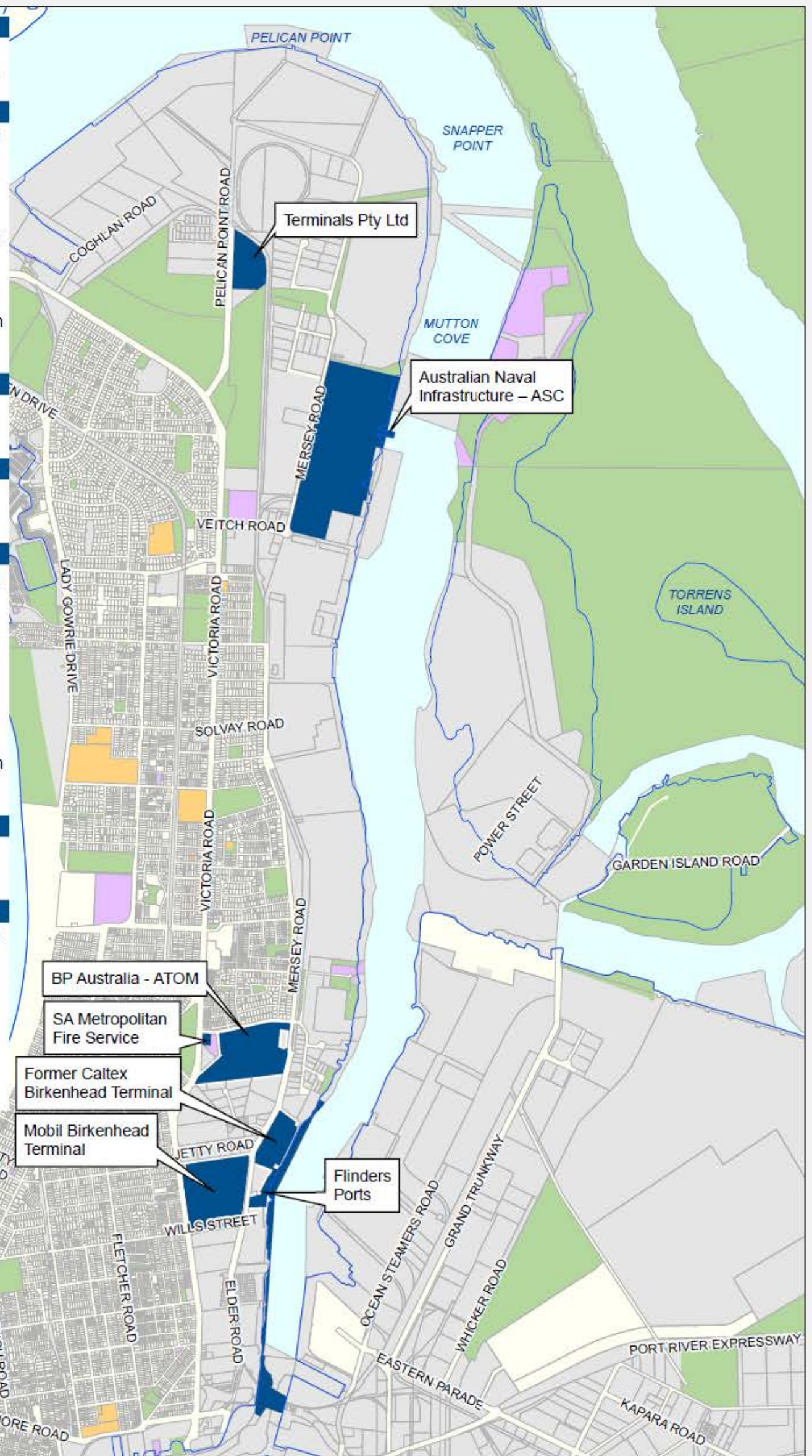
The site holds fluorinated foams for use in the event of a tank fire. Any foam used would be contained within the tank or bunded area, then disposed of at an EPA licenced facility. When a suitable fluorine-free foam is identified, the system would be decontaminated and transitioned. Mobil therefore holds an exemption to the ban with an EPA-approved Environment Improvement Programme to transition to fluorine-free foams. It has an agreed Voluntary Site Contamination Assessment Proposal with the EPA to assess PFAS contamination on or off their site. Stormwater discharges (which include discharges to the Port River) are monitored for PFAS.

SA Metropolitan Fire Service

Compliant with the ban and has an agreed Voluntary Site Contamination Assessment Proposal with the EPA to assess PFAS contamination on or off their site.

Terminals Pty Ltd

The site holds fluorinated foams for use in the event of a tank fire. Any foam used would be contained within the tank or bunded area, then disposed of at an EPA licenced facility. When a suitable fluorine-free foam is identified, the system would be decontaminated and transitioned. Terminals therefore holds an exemption to the ban with an EPA-approved Environment Improvement Programme to transition to fluorine-free foams.



- Residential
- Commercial/Industry/Vacant
- Parks and Reserves
- Education
- Public Institution

Main sites where PFAS has been used

Produced by Knowledge, Information & Strategy
 Environment Protection Authority
 GPO Box 2607 Adelaide SA 5001
 Web: www.epa.sa.gov.au

Data Source EPA, DEW
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 Datum Geocentric Datum of Australia, 1994

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