

PFAS at Melbourne Airport

What are PFAS?

PFAS (short for per- and poly-fluorinated alkyl substances) are man-made chemicals used to make products resistant to heat, stains, water and grease. For more than 50 years, they've been used in things like:

- Non-stick pans
- Carpets
- Clothing
- Food packaging
- Pesticides
- Stain repellents
- Firefighting foams

PFAS are also found in soils, surface water and groundwater in most urban areas, and are often concentrated at places like airports because of historic use of firefighting foams that contained PFAS.

These chemicals don't break down easily, so they can stay in the environment for a long time.

PFAS at Melbourne Airport

Melbourne Airport monitors PFAS contamination in accordance with environmental regulations. We work closely with stakeholders on the management and phasing out of PFAS, including Airservices Australia, airport tenants, state agencies and the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts.

In the past, firefighting foam that contained PFAS was used at several places around the airport, mainly:

- the current and former fire training grounds located in the north-west corner of the airport
- the Melbourne Airport Fire Station, Learning Academy Hot Fire Training Ground and Smoke Hut located in the central portion of the airport, to the west of the current north-south runway
- maintenance hangars and fuel storage areas.

Third runway project and PFAS

The third runway project is being carefully managed to reduce environmental risks from legacy PFAS contamination.

A draft PFAS Management Plan has been developed and will be approved by the government. It includes:

- Safely reusing PFAS-impacted soil within the project as fill material, supported by appropriate controls to ensure it is managed safely and responsibly
- Preventing PFAS from getting into local creeks and rivers by diverting runoff from high-impacted areas and improving water quality runoff and sediment controls
- Managing known areas of past PFAS use.

Visit www.melbourneairportprojectshub.com.au/

Are PFAS harmful?

To humans: Most people come into contact with very low levels of PFAS from everyday items or food. According to the Environment Protection Authority Victoria, this is unlikely to cause harm to human health. Still, it's a good idea to limit exposure as a precaution.

To the environment: Some plants and animals can be adversely affected by PFAS, especially if they are exposed to high levels over a long time. PFAS can also build up in animals higher up the food chain.

To livestock and food: In farming areas, animals can take in PFAS through water or soil. Agriculture Victoria has found no evidence that PFAS is harming livestock or making their products unsafe.

Do you have any questions?

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Find out about the third runway by visiting our major project hub by clicking or scanning this QR code.



To learn more about PFAS click or scan this QR code and visit the Environment Protection Authority Victoria website.



Find Agriculture Victoria information about PFAS by clicking or scanning this QR code.

For further information contact newrunway@melair.com.au or call 03 9297 1597