

The Labor logo features the word "Labor" in white, bold, sans-serif font on a red rectangular background. To the right of the red bar is a blue square containing four white stars, representing the Australian flag.

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PEOPLE FIRST

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SENATOR MALARNDIRRI MCCARTHY
SENATOR FOR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**

INQUIRY INTO GOVERNMENT'S MISHANDLING OF PFAS CONTAMINATION

The Turnbull Government's debacle of a response to PFAS contamination across 23 Defence sites will be under the spotlight after Labor yesterday [ordered an inquiry](#) through the Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade.

For 18 months, Labor has repeatedly called on the Turnbull Government to adopt a nationally consistent approach to PFAS management around these bases – but our calls have been ignored time and time again.

As a result, communities are uncertain about their futures, confused by mixed messages from multiple sources and deeply distressed.

In Katherine, the community first heard about the risk of eating locally caught fish from [Sky News](#) - not from the Turnbull Government's PFAS lead agency, the Department of Defence.

In Nowra, the community received one set of [advice](#) on contamination levels in locally caught fish from the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority and another from Defence.

In East Sale, it was the Victorian EPA, not Defence, [who told](#) hunters and fishers not to consume fish, eels and ducks from the Heart Morass wetland.

The chaos and dysfunction that is playing out at PFAS contaminated Defence sites across Australia shows the Turnbull Government has no control or oversight of this issue.

We haven't heard hide nor hair of the PFAS Taskforce since it was set up at the beginning of the year.

And the Turnbull Government's promised "solution", announced in May, has yet to materialise.

Labor will not allow this divided and dysfunctional Turnbull Government to fail Australians with its inadequate response to PFAS contamination.

Any solution must be a national solution and must address all 23 Defence sites.

The Turnbull Government cannot cherry pick a solution for just one or two.

Labor looks forward to the inquiry answering many of the questions asked by PFAS affected communities across Australia.

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