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Planning

Developing an Approach to Groundwater DQRA for PFAS

Environment Agency

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Scope

Description

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a broad group of synthetic fluorinated chemicals which are persistent in the environment. Some are bio-accumulative and toxic, and/or highly mobile. PFAS are used in a wide variety of consumer products and industrial applications because of their unique chemical and physical properties, including oil, water and stain repellence, temperature and chemical resistance, and surfactant properties.

PFAS are widespread within the water environment because of the direct and indirect pathways into groundwater and surface water from various applications and activities.

The need for a consistent approach to assessing the risk of PFAS compounds to groundwater receptors is growing substantially due to increasing year on year attention to PFAS as an emerging contaminant, from the public, media, regulators, and industry. It is becoming more vital that we, as regulators, and industry, are able to understand the risks associated with PFAS and can provide robust and consistent regulation in this emerging field.

Detailed Quantitative Risk Assessments (DQRAs) are an important tool used to assist our understanding of the potential risks posed to receptors from PFAS. The National Groundwater Team at the Environment Agency has identified that as DQRAs with a PFAS focus are being undertaken more frequently by industry, there is a need to provide a consistent approach to our review process.

This project will be completed in two parts as follows:

1. Undertake a literature review of UK and international resources to identify evidence-backed robust physio-chemical data sources for the 16 PFAS identified as hazardous substances in the JAGDAG 2025 list of hazardous substances and non-hazardous pollutants (Table 1 - shown below) that could be used as inputs into a DQRA.
2. Produce a summary table of appropriate physio-chemical data and data sources for the 16 PFAS.

Table 1

Substance: CAS Number

Hexafluoropropylene Oxide Dimer Acid (HFPO-DA or GEN-X) : 13252-13-6

Perfluorobutane Sulfonate (PFBS): 375-73-5

Perfluorodecane Sulfonic Acid (PFDS): 335-77-3

Perfluorodecanoic Acid (PFDA): 335-76-2

Perfluorododecanoic Acid (PFdoDA): 307-55-1

Perfluoroheptane Sulfonic Acid (PFHpS): 357-92-8

Perfluorohexane Sulfonate (PFHxS): 108427-53-8

Perfluorohexanoic Acid (PFHxA): 307-24-4

Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS): 1763-23-1

Perfluorononane Sulfonic Acid (PFNS): 68259-12-1

Perfluorononanoic Acid (PFNA): 357-95-1

Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA): 335-67-1

Perfluoropentane Sulfonic Acid (PFPeS): 2706-91-4

Perfluorotetradecanoic Acid (PFTetraDA): 72629-94-8

Perfluorotridecanoic Acid (PFTriDA): 376-06-7

Perfluoroundecanoic Acid (PFUnDA): 2058-94-8

List taken from the 2025 updated JAGTAG table of confirmed hazardous substances:
https://www.wfduk.org/sites/default/files/2025_04_14_Confirmed_hazardous_substances_list.pdf

The literature review and summary table will be completed over a four-month timeline, using the Environment Agency's Literature Review Guidance document, which provides guidance as to how literature reviews should be completed to align with Environment Agency requirements.

Contract dates (estimated)

- 6 August 2025 to 31 March 2026
- 7 months, 26 days

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 90733700 - Groundwater pollution monitoring or control services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

6 June 2025

Engagement process description

Questionnaire responses will be used to inform our assessment of carrying out this requirement and how it might potentially be delivered, including the route to market. Responses will not, under any circumstances, be used as an evaluation tool.

If you'd like to request a copy of the PFAS list in tabular form please contact emma.mcanaw@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Please provide any additional feedback by 6 June 2025 by emailing emma.mcanaw@environment-agency.gov.uk

All responses and details of respondents will be held in the strictest commercial confidence and will not be shared wider.

Please provide examples in your responses to projects, programmes of work and international standards where necessary.

Questions

1. Contractor Name
2. Please provide two brief examples that demonstrate how your organisation's experience and expertise in PFAS and/or detailed quantitative groundwater risk assessment?
3. Are there any factors that may prevent you from submitting a bid for this project, such as capacity and/or expertise?
4. Given your understanding of the scope, are you able to provide the outputs for all of the requirements, including both deliverables?

5. Please set out what you foresee as key risks or challenges associated with delivery of the outlined services (including mitigations where relevant).
6. Given your understanding of the technical specification provided:
 - a. Do you believe the project tasks are adequately described with relevant information?
 - b. Is there any further information you would need about the specification?
 - c. Do you have any suggestions on how the specification could be modified to improve the project outcome?
7. What key information does the Environment Agency need to provide in the Invitation to Tender (ITT) documents to ensure that you can prepare a quality bid and price the work accurately?
8. Do you wish to express an interest in this project? If your reply is no, please provide a brief reason why you have opted out for monitoring purposes.
9. Any other comments or feedback?

Contracting authority

Environment Agency

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