daa publishes latest PFAS monitoring update for Dublin Airport

daa has published the latest results of the ongoing monitoring programme for historic PFAS contamination at the Dublin Airport campus. The publication of these results forms part of daa's commitment to transparency and to keeping local communities, stakeholders and regulators informed about campus operations and activities.

PFAS (per- and poly-fluoroalkylated substances) are a large group of synthetic compounds that have been used globally in a wide range of industrial applications and products since the 1950s, including consumer products such as carpets, non-stick cookware, waterproof clothing, personal care products and cosmetics. Due to their persistence in the environment, PFAS have been found in water and soil in almost every country in the world. The Forever Pollution Project, a collaborative investigation by journalists across Europe identified 44,500 sites in Europe where PFAS contamination has either been detected or presumed to exist, including up to 90 sites in Ireland. Sites include landfills, pharmaceutical plants and manufacturing sites in addition to fire stations and airports. PFAS is a complex environmental issue being addressed across Ireland, Europe and internationally, with scientific understanding, regulatory requirements and management approaches continuing to evolve.

Historically, one of the principal uses of PFAS at airports was in aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) used for firefighting. While these products were effective in suppressing fuel fires, their widespread use has resulted in legacy PFAS contamination at many airports internationally. Dublin Airport transitioned to fluorine-free firefighting foam in 2013 and the foam currently used by Dublin Airport Fire Service does not contain PFAS compounds.

The latest report presents the findings from the 2025 groundwater and surface water monitoring programme. Annual monitoring results may be affected by factors such as rainfall patterns, groundwater conditions and sampling locations. Consistent with previous years' results, the highest PFAS concentrations on site were detected in groundwater in areas known to be associated with historical firefighting foam use, including former fire training areas and operational locations where foam may have been used in the past. Surface water monitoring was undertaken at locations both within and beyond the airport boundary. The highest PFOS concentrations were detected in watercourses to the east of the airport, including Kealy's Stream, the Cuckoo Stream and the Sluice River. As observed in previous monitoring programmes, higher PFOS concentrations were recorded at certain downstream locations within the Mayne, Ward and Santry catchments than at locations closer to Dublin Airport, indicating that there may be additional sources of PFAS within the wider catchment. Monitoring will continue to track PFAS concentrations and assess trends over time.

The monitoring and assessment programme at Dublin Airport is being undertaken with the support of specialist environmental consultants and is focused on improving understanding of PFAS distribution in groundwater, surface water and assessing any potential environmental risks. daa continues to engage with relevant regulatory authorities and stakeholders as this work progresses to improve understanding of this complex issue and inform future management measures where required.

Published: August 2026

Document Classification: Class 1 - General