



Ms. Catherine Smyth  
Committee Secretariat  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2  
D02 XR20

26 February, 2024

**Re: Removal of PFAS at Dublin Airport**

Dear Ms. Smyth,

I refer to your letter of 16 February requesting a briefing in relation to the removal of per- and poly-fluoroalkylated substances (PFAS) from Dublin Airport.

As the Committee may be aware, PFAS are a very large group of synthetic chemicals widely used in industrial and consumer products since the 1950s. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) notes that PFAS are commonly used in fire-fighting foams, particularly foams which are used to combat flammable fuel fires. According to the European Environment Agency, over 4,700 PFAS are widely used across a variety of consumer products and industrial applications and PFAS has been detected in the environment across Europe.

daa has statutory responsibility for the management, operation and development of Dublin Airport. Due to their historic use in firefighting foam, the presence of PFAS chemicals were detected in low levels at Dublin Airport in an area where daa is constructing a new apron. daa has kept the Department regularly updated in relation to this matter and has confirmed they are engaging with the relevant environmental regulators - EPA and Fingal County Council - and taking all appropriate steps to manage and address this issue in full. This has included the removal of the soil affected. Disposal of any waste, including such soil, must be in accordance with all relevant national and EU legislation. daa has advised the Department that due to a lack of capacity in Ireland to deal with the volume of soil involved, the soil was removed to be treated in an overseas facility, in full compliance with regulations.

daa has also confirmed to the Department that fluorine free foams, a PFAS free alternative, has been used by the Fire Service at the airport since 2013.

As daa has statutory responsibility for the operation and management of Dublin Airport, they will be in a position to provide the Committee with a more detailed briefing on this matter. I have passed your correspondence to the Chief Executive and asked that he respond directly to you in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ethna Brogan'.

Ethna Brogan  
Assistant Secretary