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Key Visit Highlights Critical Mission Enablers

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Australian Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Simon Stuart, recently visited the 17th Sustainment Brigade (17 Sust Bde) during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025. His engagement with troops at Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA) and Rockhampton emphasised the critical role logistics plays in sustaining complex military operations.

Running from 5 July to 4 August 2025, Exercise Talisman Sabre is the nation's largest joint and combined military training activity. This year,

approximately 35,000 personnel from 19 nations participated in extensive operations across Queensland and the Northern Territory, testing interoperability and combat readiness.

The 17 Sustainment Brigade—alongside coalition attachments—was responsible for the seamless flow of mission-essential supplies, including food, water, fuel, ammunition, and engineering support. Operating across multiple training areas such as SWBTA, Rockhampton, Townsville, Charters Towers, and Bradshaw, the brigade enabled sustained, high-tempo operations under challenging conditions. Force Support Group (FSG) Commander, Colonel Clarke Brown, highlighted their mission by stating that the logistics teams are essential to maintaining operational momentum, often working under pressure and along contested supply lines.

During his visit, Lieutenant General Stuart observed both tactical and urban logistics operations. In urban environments like Rockhampton, logistics teams demonstrated their ability to conceal and operate their capabilities within built-up areas, adapting to the increasingly complex nature of modern warfare.

The visit also comes amid public debate around defence spending priorities. While the current government faces broader fiscal challenges, there is growing concern that essential defence enablers—such as logistics and sustainment capabilities—may be underfunded in favour of broader domestic programs. The ability of FSG units to perform under pressure reinforces the need for sustained investment in logistics infrastructure, personnel, and capability development.

Lieutenant General Stuart's interactions with soldiers reinforced the importance of maintaining a combat-ready force supported by robust logistics. As Colonel Brown aptly put it, logistics remains the backbone of the Army's ability to fight and win.

This visit served as a reminder that mission success relies not only on combat units but also on the dedicated personnel who ensure the Army remains supplied, fuelled, and operational—regardless of the environment or adversary.