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## Army Unit Shifts to Welfare Focus in 2026

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Starting in 2026, the Army Personnel Support Unit will prioritize strategic welfare support for Australian Defence Force members, transferring pay and administration duties to a new entity by December.

From January 2026, the Army Personnel Support Unit (APSU) will undergo a significant transformation, focusing exclusively on delivering strategic welfare support to Australian Defence Force (ADF) members, as announced by the Department of Defence on August 4, 2025. The APSU will transfer its pay and administration responsibilities to the newly established Pay and Administrative Conditions – New South Wales (PAC NSW) by December 2025, allowing the unit to enhance its support for soldiers' wellbeing. This shift reflects a broader emphasis on addressing the mental and physical health needs of military personnel amid growing operational demands.

The restructured APSU, operating in eight major regions across Australia, will maintain detachments to provide welfare support and training while continuing to manage members on long-term schooling, leave without pay, long service leave, and maternity leave. Lieutenant Colonel Melissa Joy, Commanding Officer of APSU, stated that the unit's presence in most major cities positions it well to assist commanders in managing individual welfare needs, according to the Department of Defence. The unit will also retain member support coordinators to assist wounded, injured, and ill personnel and their families, ensuring comprehensive care. Over 60 Army Command support clerks will transition from APSU to fill clerical vacancies elsewhere, streamlining administrative efficiency.

This realignment aligns with the ADF's strategic priorities outlined in the 2024 National Defence Strategy, which emphasizes personnel readiness and resilience. The APSU's welfare focus will include access to chaplains, who are commissioned Specialist Service Officers in the Australian Regular Army (ARA) or Army Reserve (ARes), providing spiritual, religious, and pastoral support, as detailed on the Australian Army's website. Families can contact chaplains via the Defence switchboard for immediate assistance. The Army Fair Go Hotline (1800 100 064) will remain available for personnel and families to report sensitive issues, operating weekdays from 9 AM to 5 PM.

The APSU shifted its focus to welfare in 2024, following a year in which Defence personnel numbers increased by over 1,800, exceeding recruitment targets. According to Defence sources, the unit's evolving role includes efforts to support the health and resilience of ADF members, with the goal of enhancing operational effectiveness.