

ANNUAL
REPORT
2022



MISSION

Creating the environment, through a commercially successful international calendar of events, that fosters the global growth of the game, connecting people across all continents and cultures with our exciting sport.

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FROM THE CHAIR



HON. TROY GRANT

On behalf of the Board of International Rugby League (IRL), I am delighted to present the annual report for 2022.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE 12 MONTHS MAKES

After the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in recent years and the postponement of RLWC2021, it was so pleasing to see international rugby league restored to its rightful place as the pinnacle of our game in 2022.

There were more than 100 Senior International Matches played, the Golden Boot awards for the Men's, Women's and Wheelchair international player of the year were presented for the first time since 2019 and France was officially awarded the 2025 World Cup.

Of course, the most significant event was the staging of the biggest, best and most inclusive Rugby League World Cup yet, in England last October and November.

It was also the most watched, with attendance and broadcast records smashed as 32 men's, women's and wheelchair teams from 20 nations captured the imagination of fans around the world.

Who will ever forget the remarkable scenes across the Pacific, in North America and other parts of the world as Samoans united behind their history making team, who stunned the host nation in London to book a place at Old Trafford for the world cup final against Australia.

Or the thousands of schoolgirls inspired by the England and Brazil teams in the opening match of the Women's Rugby League World Cup at Headingley Stadium in Leeds.

Or the excitement and tension at Manchester Arena during the drama-charged final of the Wheelchair Rugby League World Cup, which attracted so many new fans to rugby league because of the competitiveness and awe-inspiring ability of the players and teams.

The success of RLWC2021 and the interest generated by the wall-to-wall coverage of all 61 games across the three disciplines on BBC, Fox Sports and other broadcasters has created unprecedented opportunities for the game.

On behalf of the IRL, I would like



Inspiring the next generation: England v Brazil Women's RLWC2021
Photo: Getty Images



Above: Golden Boot winners Sebastien Bechara, Joey Manu and Raecene McGregor **Below and right:** RLWC2021 wheelchair final in Manchester
Photos: Getty Images



to congratulate the Australian Kangaroos, Australian Jillaroos and England Wheelchair teams for winning their finals at the world cup.

I'd also like to thank RLWC2021 CEO Jon Dutton, chairman Chris Brindley, his fellow directors and the team of staff and volunteers who delivered a tournament that the game can be proud of.

THE PHYSICAL
DISABILITY WORLD
CUP, WHICH RAN
CONCURRENTLY
WITH THE OTHER
TOURNAMENTS IN
ENGLAND, WAS
ANOTHER HIGHLIGHT
THAT SHOWCASED THE
INCLUSIVITY OF OUR
GAME, AND THE SKILL
AND RESILIENCE OF
OUR PLAYERS

There were many stars on the international stage during 2022 but none shone brighter than New Zealand's Joey Manu.

The Kiwis fullback demonstrated the prestige with which the Golden Boot is held within the game by flying back from Greece to accept the award at a ceremony in Manchester ahead of the World Cup final.

New Zealand's Raecene McGregor won the Women's Golden Boot, while England's Sebastien Bechara received the Wheelchair Golden Boot.

All three had starred in the mid-season internationals and continued that form in the world cup to be voted the best player in their discipline by judging panels which includes the likes of Cameron Smith, Honey Hireme-Smiler, James Graham, Karyn Murphy and Ruben Wiki.

Thank you to the former greats involved in the Golden Boot awards, along with members of the international media and others.

There is, of course, much more to running the international game than the on-field action most people see, and much work has been done internally to restructure the IRL's accounting and strategic arrangements as we overcome some legacy issues.

Frustratingly, the long-awaited international calendar has not progressed due to circumstances out of the IRL's control but that does not restrict confederations or nations organising international matches until the calendar can be finalised.



Resilience and skill: England win the PDRL World Cup
Photo: Getty Images



Above: Greece compete in their first world cup match in a year the sport was declared "legal" after years of lobbying. Photo: Getty Images Below: Prime Minister Mr Jean Castex announces France as the host country of the Rugby League World Cup 2025



There were 39 sanctioned Senior International Matches in 2022 outside RLWC2021 and a number of other fixtures involving nations yet to obtain IRL membership or played as world cup warm-up games.

The game continues to expand, with North Macedonia and Slovakia the latest nations to apply for IRL Observer status, while we all rejoiced when rugby league was declared "legal" in Greece after years of lobbying.

The decision was announced ahead of the world cup, in which Greece debuted along with Jamaica, Brazil Women and the USA Wheelchair team.

In January 2022, France was officially announced as hosts of the 2025 World Cup – a return to the birthplace of the Paul Barrière Trophy in 1954.

In October, Federation Francaise de Rugby a XIII (FFRXII) president Luc Lacoste was elected as IRL Deputy Chair.

I congratulate Luc and would also like to welcome Australian Rugby League Commission chair Peter V'landys, NRL CEO Andrew Abdo, Wales Rugby League chair Brian Juliff and Rugby League Commercial managing director Rhodri Jones onto the IRL Board.

Thank you to outgoing directors Ralph Rimmer, Graeme Thompson, Peter Beattie and Wayne Pearce for outstanding contributions to the international game, and also to my colleagues on the Board and across the membership for their support.

A lot of vital work is done behind the scenes without fanfare and my thanks also go to IRL secretary-general Danny Kazandjian and the small team of staff and volunteers involved in the governance of the international game.

Of particular significance has been the work to introduce USARL governance reform and this important process continues.

As we look ahead to 2023 and beyond, there are so many great opportunities in international rugby league for the game to capitalise on.



MANAGEMENT REPORT

DANNY KAZANDJIAN
SECRETARY GENERAL

The Chair, in his report, has, quite rightly, focused on the wonderful spectacle that was Rugby League World Cup 2021 and I would like to reiterate, on behalf of the IRL management team, our congratulations to the four newly crowned world champions, all the participating teams that contributed to such a historic event, and colleagues in the world cup organisation itself, some of whom are nearing the end of a seven year odyssey to bring a concept to the pitch. Lots has been written on the topic, but when one considers what they have coped with – the pandemic, a postponement, the need to rehire a majority of the management team just a year out from kick off, four prime ministers, a European war, an economic crisis leading to the worst cost of living crisis in decades and two monarchs – the results of the world cup and the opportunities it has given IRL and its members in the forthcoming years are all the more notable.

Much of the year was also focused on continuing preparations for France 2025 with the Local Organising Committee and the French government. We go from a seven-year build up to a three-year one. Looking at the qualification competitions in the men's and women's events offers a snapshot of the spike in rugby league's popularity. In the 2021 edition, 18 men's teams participated in qualification compared to 26 for France – a 44% increase. There was no women's qualifying tournament pre-2021 but 20 nations are scheduled to participate in qualification in 2023-24 – not including the eight finalists who automatically progress to France. The Board signed off the qualification framework in June, signalling an unprecedented amount of meaningful men's and women's games across all four regions – truly a celebration of the sport's diversity and growth.

Women's development is a strategic priority and IRL has commissioned the creation of a toolkit that will serve as a resource to nations seeking to start or grow their women's programme. The year also saw the game's first ever continental women's championship, in Europe, while Tonga and New Zealand women played in front of a full house in Auckland.

IRL's 2022 mantra was to ensure, during an extended period of very limited revenue, the most efficient administration possible while ensuring we continued to play our role as an international federation; in short, to grow the game globally and support our members' efforts to do the same locally. Throughout the three years of the pandemic – 2020-22 – we have continued to fund our full members, albeit at a slightly reduced level compared to pre-pandemic levels, and I am pleased to report that we will be in a position to increase the funding in 2023. In reviewing our finances, one of the adjustments we made was the introduction of the High Capacity Member scheme, whereby our biggest members voluntarily forewent their grants in 2022-23, with a review at the end of next year. This has a two-pronged effect: firstly, it alleviated our financial burden; and secondly, it gives the IF more capacity to invest in genuine development programmes, most notably technical education. It is important to recognize the collegiate act from the Australian Rugby League Commission, the French Federation, New Zealand Rugby League, Papua New Guinea Rugby Football League and the Rugby Football League.

The four regional reports below include details of the technical education that occurred in 2022, but thanks to the High Capacity Member programme 2023 will see, for the first time in

IF history, a substantial budget to support this fundamental area. We are embarking on a multi-year project, delivered in the field by the confederations, to ensure every IRL member has the tools to authentically grow the sport through coach and match official development deliverable in four languages.

An important layer of governance in any organisation is an expert committee structure, and I would like to pay tribute to the many volunteers who give up their time and contribute so effectively to those committees and advisory groups (see below for more details). Some of the work they accomplished in 2022 was historic, such as the completion of the game's first ever physical disability classification framework (started in October 2020), and the painstaking confirmation of every single senior men's international ever played since England took on Other Nationalities in April 1904. In December, the Board approved the creation of two new committees – a world cup committee, to seek hosts for the four events between 2027-33 – and an Olympics Committee – to seek IOC recognition and position rugby league as a demonstration sport at the Brisbane 2032 Games.

As mentioned by the Chair, several Directors rotated out of the Board and their steady hand on the tiller through such choppy waters was always highly appreciated, with acute scrutiny never more important than in tough times. I thank them and look forward to working with their replacements. International Rugby League also lost its first ever Match Officials Manager, Stuart Cummings, in July, and Media Manager Niel Wood, two highly respected and capable colleagues. Stuart's work in setting up a three-tiered match official squad and evaluating every performance augmented the professionalism of the IF and accelerated the development of many referees in non-traditional areas. Brad Walter joined the team, bringing a wealth of experience and access to the role.

In closing, IRL is looking forward to a period of stability, a period in which we must confirm a multi-year calendar that enables us to grow the sport's economy through exploitation of the international game. Stability will not mean respite; far from it. Supporting our members to become more productive, augmenting our technical education output, implementing the calendar and strategy are all massive projects, and we can already see the next world cup on the horizon.

RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP

2022 was the year that the delayed Rugby League World Cup finally got underway.

Following postponement, navigating a global pandemic, and contending with geopolitical instability, socio economic crisis and other adversity, the long-awaited tournament began in Newcastle in October 2022.

Thirty-two teams, representing twenty nations assembled in England with the men's, women's and wheelchair tournaments being staged together for the first time ever. The tournament featured sixty-one games being played across twenty-one stadia.

A moment in history:
Men, Women and Wheelchair Champions lift the World Cup trophies at Old Trafford.
Photo: SWPix



Hosts England got off to a flying start overcoming Samoa in the opening men's game whilst Jamaica and Greece made gallant debuts and were embraced by local communities across the north of England.

THE GROUP GAMES SAW HISTORY MADE WITH KASEY BADGER AND BELINDA SHARPE RESPECTIVELY BECOMING THE FIRST WOMEN TO REFEREE MEN'S RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP GAMES.

The Kangaroos and Kiwis quickly progressed through to an epic semi-final meeting in Leeds, with the green and golds overcoming their rivals in a sensational game of international rugby league.

Samoa recovered from their opening defeat to face Tonga in the quarter final with a memorable social media trending joint Siva Tau and Sipi Tau being performed ahead of kick-off. Samoa proved to be too strong their Pacific rivals in Warrington and progressed through to a mouth-watering rematch with England in London who beat Papua New Guinea in their quarter final tie, played in front of the Princess of Wales.

Another incredible semi-final delivered a golden point win for Samoa who made history, becoming the first ever Pacific nation to reach a Rugby League World Cup final.

Despite a dominant Australian first half performance at Old Trafford in the final, Samoa came back and gave a largely partisan crowd plenty to cheer about before the Kangaroos added to their record holding world cup collection, winning the final 30-10.

The women's tournament began in Leeds, and saw Brazil make their debut against England. Brazil provided to be hugely popular and despite going home without a win, they gave their athletes an incredible life experience, whilst also making history as the first ever South American nation to play in a Rugby League World Cup.

England progressed through to the semi-finals unbeaten where they faced a strong New Zealand team in York. The Kiwi Ferns broke the hearts of the gallant hosts and progressed through to a repeat of the 2017 final against holders the Australian Jillaroos.

The Jillaroos had to overcome Papua New Guinea who made their first ever semi-final, before once again lifting the trophy in a dominant display at Old Trafford, beating the Ferns 54-4.



Left: Belinda Sharpe referees England v Greece men's match. Below: Australian Jillaroos triumphant defeating New Zealand Kiwi Ferns in the final 54 - 4. Photos: Getty Images



The wheelchair tournament saw a repeat of the previous finals with hosts England playing against holders France. This time the circumstances were vastly different.

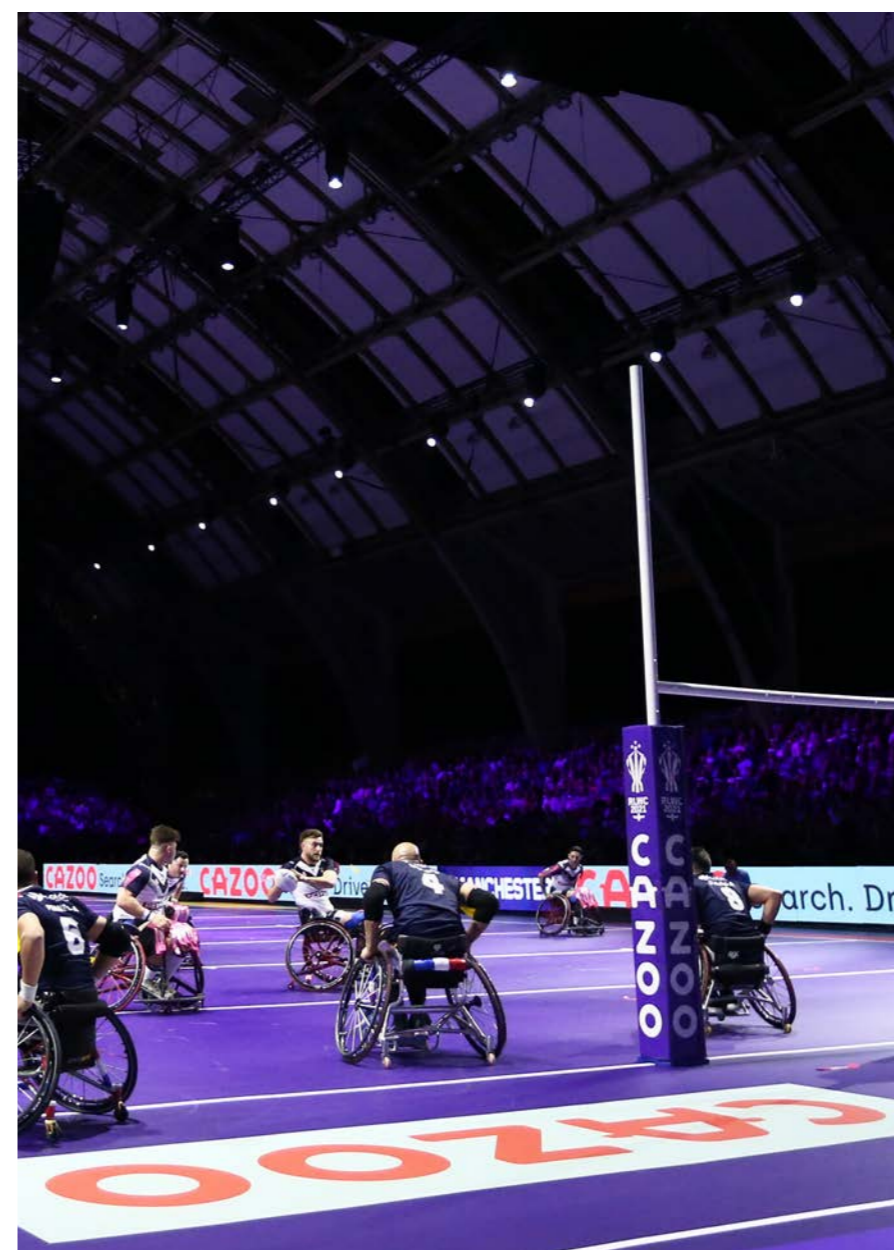
England started the tournament in London's Copper Box in front a record crowd, whilst debutants USA won their first game and came close to making the semi-finals in Sheffield.

France dominated their group, registering a record score as they progressed through to the final after beating Australia in the semi-finals. England overcame Wales to set up a final clash played in a bespoke venue in Manchester in front of a record crowd, exceeding 4,000 spectators.

FROM SPORTS HALLS TO SPORTS ARENAS THE TOURNAMENT SET NEW STANDARDS.

A clean court laid on a wooden sprung floor, LED boards, a digital screen, sports presentation, enormous viewing figures and large crowds where the backdrop as the sport's popularity grew as the tournament progressed.

An unforgettable night in Manchester saw England overcome their rivals in a fiercely fought contest with England edging in front in the final two minutes.



Left: England take on France in the Wheelchair final at Manchester Central. Above: Iconic - Tonga and Samoa perform the pre-match war dance together in Warrington. Photos: GettyImages

Below: Josh Addo-Carr stuns fans during the Kangaroo's semi-final triumph against New Zealand in Leeds. Photo: Getty Images

Overall, the tournament delivered a record crowd of 473,606 including the highest combined opening day attendance, highest men's and women's semi-finals, highest men's quarter final game, a world record wheelchair attendance, and the highest ever standalone crowd for a game of women's rugby league in the UK.

Most impressively was the domestic viewing audience with the cumulative figures reaching 30m, which included the highest peak audience of just short of 3m. Significant viewing figures were seen in Australia via Fox Sports and in New Zealand via Spark Sport. Distribution was made across the world for the first time either through liner, digital or direct to consumer means.

The organisers delivered against their commitment of being a tournament with a social purpose. RLWC2021's prioritisation of a social impact programmes and delivering with purpose was unprecedented and authentic with more than £27m invested into community rugby league projects across England.

Programmes featured an accessible volunteer initiative for people with support needs, 213 mental fitness workshops delivered to 11,922 young people and their parents, a multi-disciplinary cultural festival, an education resource programme focused on literacy and numeracy and a wide ranging international development programme with soft power and diplomacy outcomes including a first ever invitation to be part of a World Expo in Dubai.

The CreatedBy capital grants programme invested £22.7m into communities across the country, providing grants for community rugby league facility development, kit, and equipment. Thirty one large-scale grants transformed clubhouses, improved pitches, and built changing rooms, while 248 small-scale grants have supported clubs including the provision of 200 new wheelchairs, future proofing the growth in participation of the sport.



Samoa stun England winning with a golden point field goal at The Emirates Stadium, London. Photo: Getty Images

Top left: The Princess of Wales attends the men's and women's quarter finals in Wigan. Photo: SWPix

Middle left: Record crowds support England women in Leeds. Photo: Getty Images
Bottom left: CreatedBy Capital grants programme invests in Hull FC Wheelchair team amongst a wide variety of community rugby league projects. Photo: SWPix

Collaboration with local and international organisations was critical with Movember, Community Integrated Care and UNICEF enabling RLWC2021 to reach a far wider and more diverse audience than otherwise would have been possible.

RLWC2021's partners shared that vision. RLWC2021 brought fifteen new commercial partners to the sport with significant additional support from Sport England, DCMS, UK Sport, The National Lottery, the RFL and IRL.

The tournament was a long time in the making and just to get to the start line brought significant challenge which needed complex problem solving throughout.

The action was worth the wait and the athletes once again performed on the field, whilst off the field the tournament set many new records and made a stand to tackle inequalities through providing opportunities in some of the hardest to reach areas in the North of England.

Player welfare and athlete centricity was at the heart of the decision making as was reach and visibility through free to air domestic broadcast.

HISTORY WAS MADE
AND THE RUGBY LEAGUE
WORLD CUP BLAZED
A TRAIL FOR OTHER
EVENT ORGANISERS
IN DELIVERING
A PURPOSEFUL
TOURNAMENT THAT HAD
A POSITIVE IMPACT ON
PEOPLE'S LIVES WHILST
ALSO REMINDING THE
WORLD HOW INCREDIBLY
SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL
RUGBY LEAGUE IS.

RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP MOMENTS



Clockwise from this page:
Heartbroken: Jodie Cunningham and Emily Rudge after the England women's semi-final defeat against New Zealand. **Up in Lights:** the poetry commission that toured England as part of the Rugby League World Cup Cultural Festival. **Heroic for a cause:** RLWC2021 ambassador Kevin Sinfield completes his Ultra 7 in 7 Challenge for MND at Old Trafford. **Victorious:** England Wheelchair Coach, Tom Coyd, and Captain, Tom Halliwell, embrace after defeating France 28-24. **Pride:** Amanda Welter is brought to tears during the national anthem of Brazil's first ever world cup appearance. **Finalists:** The final six teams in the most inclusive world cup ever. **RugBee:** The Rugby League World Cup would not have been complete without its very own mascot! **Face-off:** Brian To'o of Samoa and Australia's Cameron Munster during the Siva Tau before the RLWC2021 men's final. **Reggae Warriors:** Jamaica make history competing in their first ever world cup. Photos: Getty Images unless watermarked.

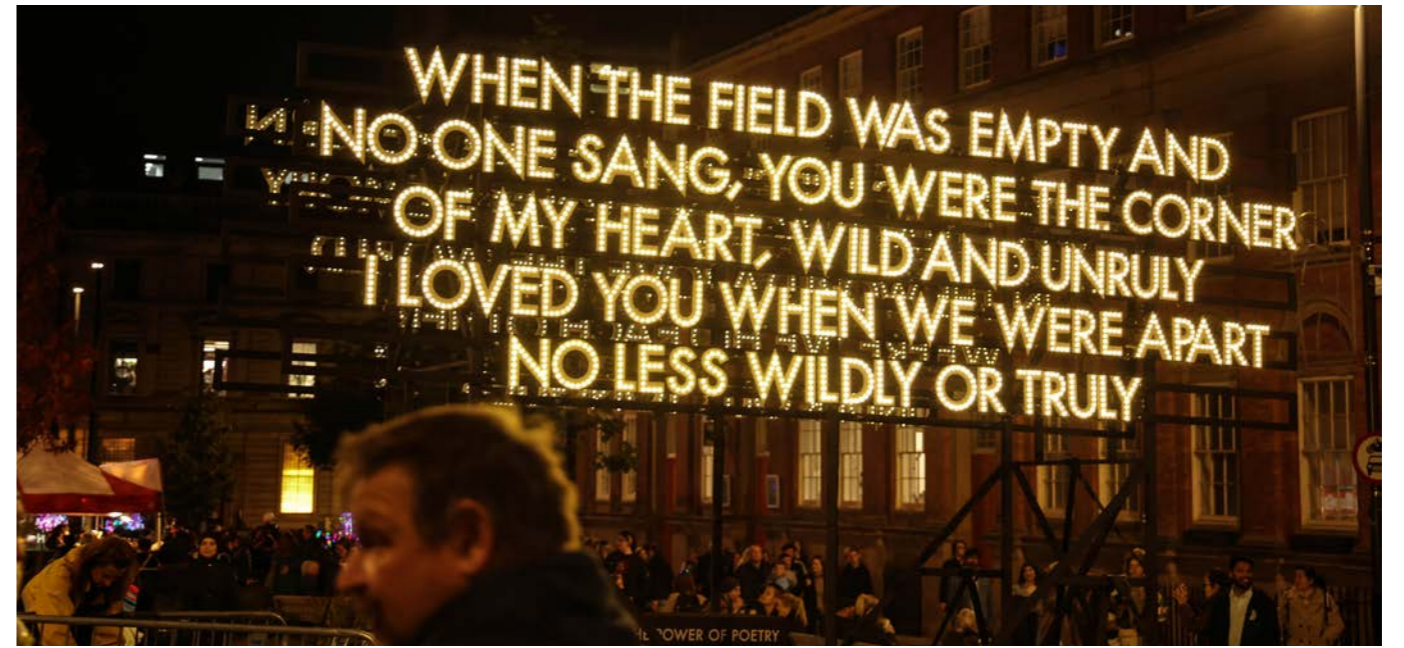


Photo: SWPix

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE (IRL) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board has 11 Directors comprising:

- three independent Directors nominated by the Board;
- one Director nominated by the Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC) and one Director nominated by the Rugby Football league (RFL), as the National Federations which operate the Major Professional Leagues;
- three Directors nominated by the European Rugby League (ERL), with one nominated by the RFL, this person being the RFL nominee to the ERL board;
- three Directors nominated by the Asia Pacific Rugby League Confederation (APRL), with one representing the ARLC and one nominated by New Zealand Rugby League (NZRL), these persons being the ARLC and the NZRL nominees respectively to the APRLC Board;



HON. TROY GRANT
Chair
(Independent)



BRIAN JULIFF
Director
(ERL)



GREG BARCLAY
Independent
Director



LUC LACOSTE
Deputy Chair
(ERL)



PETER V'LANDYS
Director
(ARLC)



GREG PETERS
Director
(APRL)



ANDREW ABDO
Director
(APRL)



REON EDWARDS
Nominated Board Observer
(NZRL)



SIMON JOHNSON
Director
(RFL)



RALPH RIMMER
Director
(ERL)



SANDIS TSAKA
Director
(APRL)



EMMA YOUNG
Independent
Director

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE (IRL) SUBCOMMITTEES

Effective governance and policy making is augmented by an appropriate subcommittee structure, with delegated responsibility to competent bodies, all of which are regulated by unique terms of reference and ultimately answerable to the Board of Directors, to whom they make recommendations and advise.

IRL committees include and are led by members of the IRL Board. Advisory groups are populated by a diverse blend of independent experts, IRL staff and membership personnel.

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

Chair: Reon Edwards (IRL)
Danny Kazandjian (IRL)
Mark Martin (IRL)
Emma Young (IRL)
Secretary: Charlotte Monkman

The Audit and Risk Committee, formed in late 2020, has been responsible for overseeing management's reorganisation of the IRL's financial discipline and practices. Chaired by former NZRL Chair Reon Edwards, ARC introduced robust short- and long-term reforecasting discipline that has been pivotal to the organisation's stability in a challenging environment. The committee's exhaustive work enabled the Board to receive clear and precise financial information throughout the year, allowing it to fulfil its fiduciary responsibilities and make well informed executive decisions.

COMMERCIAL COMMITTEE

Chair: Greg Barclay (IRL)
Andrew Abdo (ARLC)
Reon Edwards (IRL)
Luc Lacoste (FFR13)
Andrew Hill
Troy Grant (IRL)
Greg Peters (NZRL)
Ralph Rimmer (RFL)
Danny Kazandjian (IRL)
Secretary: Charlotte Monkman

The committee has an advisory and strategic remit to manage the preparedness of IRL in all matters relating to its income generating commercial activity including but not limited to global and competition sponsors and partners, media rights, event and competition titles and marks, retail and merchandise, and all online platforms as part of a commercial vision. Its key task is to recommend to the Board a multiyear, commercially successful international calendar.

CLASSIFICATIONS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Victoria Myers
(Independent)
Tom Hignett
Dinesh Palipana
(independent medical experts)
Sandra Michele-Hickey
Keith Povah (APRL)
Chris Godfrey
Scott Simon (ERL)
Secretary: Charlotte Monkman

The advisory group was responsible for creating and implementing the sport's first ever classifications framework, which is intended to minimise the impact of impairment and enables fair and equitable competition for players in all forms of disability rugby league. It produced the Physical Disability Rugby League Playing Conditions and the Classification Manual, as well as introducing training for evaluators in Europe and Oceania ahead of the Physical Disability Rugby League World Cup in November 2022. In addition, IRL appointed Jamie Blair, an experienced professional in disability sports, as its first Head of Classification, and Penny Broomhead as Chief Classifier.

HISTORY AND HERITAGE ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Niel Wood (IRL)
Tony Collins
Andrew Ferguson
Neil Ormston
Tas Baitieri
Danny Kazandjian

The History and Heritage Advisory Group is tasked with considering and categorising every international game played since 1904. The aim of the project is to create a list of senior international matches that are recognised by International Rugby League as "full" internationals. The group concluded its deliberations and has recognised over 1600 men's matches were being uploaded for publication in 2022. The group will now move on to consider women's and wheelchair games.

LAWS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair-elect:
Dave Rotheram (RFL)
Michael Maguire (APRL)
Graham Annesley (ARLC)
Ruan Sims (ARLC)
Danny Kazandjian (IRL)
Lyndsey Anfield (RFL)
Laurent Frayssinous (ERL)
Secretary: Charlotte Monkman

The Laws Advisory Group meets twice a year, to coincide with IRL Board meetings and to propose any amendments to the international Laws. The adopted schedule of recommendations will mean future amendments to the Laws are approved by the Board every December, for January implementation. The membership requested a review of a number of Laws in December 2022 for IRL to consider further in 2023.

MEDICAL SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair: Mick Molloy
(Independent)
Nathan Gibbs (APRL)
David Heslop (ARLC)
Chris Brookes (RFL)
Richard Lawrance (ERL)
Ed Middleton (ERL)
Secretary: Richard Egan

Set up to advise on a case-by-case basis (hence the subcommittee appellation), Medsco's initial task was to create, for the first time in the game's history, a minimum medical standard for application across all international matches. Inherent in this standard is the identification and codification of basic and mandatory pitch-side care and sport trauma competencies and skills.

WOMEN & GIRLS RUGBY LEAGUE ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Julia Lee
(Independent)
Tahina Booth (APRL)
Fiona Cerboneschi (ARLC)
Sara Piper (IRL)
Luisa Avaiki (NZRL)
Stuart Barrow (RFL)
Jovan Vujosevic (ERL)
Secretary: Joanna Lester

The advisory group met bimonthly and despite COVID severely impacting women's competition globally, the group continued to make progress building on a strategy to underpin the previously identified pillars; leadership, profile, coaching, match officials, domestic competitions, pathways and international opportunities. It was tasked to advise on IRL's transgender policy as well as the qualification pathway to Rugby League World Cup 2025.

WHEELCHAIR ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Pippa Britton
(Independent)
Niel Wood (IRL)
Ollie Cruickshank (ERL)
Martin Meredith (APRL)
Laurent Dupuy (FFR13)
John McMullen
(RFL and secretary)

The Laws of the Game require a review to reflect the changes and the developments within the sport. WHAG will establish an expert group to consider proposals for change and to make recommendations to the IRL Laws Committee. It was agreed that no changes will be implemented ahead of RLWC2021.

WHAG also considered a response to the proposal that RLWC2025 will feature 16 nations. The group has agreed a strategy and will implement in 2022 and beyond.

MATCH OFFICIALS

IRL's inaugural match officials manager, Stuart Cummings, departed the organisation in July after three years in post. During his tenure, Stuart led on the creation of the three-tiered IRL match officials squad and introduced a high performance evaluation system. One of those officials, International Match Official Squad member Andrew Pilkington from Spain, pushed new boundaries and exemplified the huge opportunities available to aspiring rugby league officials today. During his stay in Jerico, Colombia in November, where he refereed all three South American Championship games, Andrew also delivered a Level 1 Match Official course in Spanish to 20 candidates from the host country, plus Brazil, Chile, Argentina and El Salvador. The now certified attendees were selected as their national federations' educator candidates and will now work towards accreditation, then their Level 2 before passing out as L1 Educators. This pathway is central to the strategic goals of authenticity and sustainability. Earlier in the year, Andrew led a development camp in Kenya as part of IRL-ERL-UK Sport funded activity to develop educators across the MEA region, which was attended by South Africa, Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, Morocco and Burundi.

In a busy year, other highlights included:

Deployment of women referees for the very top tier of men's games, with Australia's Kasey Badger and Belinda Sharpe refereeing world cup games.

Performance Camp with eight officials – Aaron Golding Belafonte (England), Matty Lynn (England), Enzo Peyre (France), James Spencer (Ireland), Eamonn Whelan (Ireland), Jostein Ryan (Norway), Kristoff Young (Wales) and Robert Apsee (Wales) took place in Italy as part of the U19s European Championships. Led by European Rugby League's Phil Smith (England) and Steve Hogan (Ireland).

The most northerly course ever delivered took place in Sogndal, Norway

All fixtures in the men's and women's Pacific internationals and European Rugby League

Women's B Championship were refereed by neutrals. In addition, several bilateral Senior International Matches were refereed by neutrals, including Malta v Montenegro Men (Jarda Bzoch – Czechia), Wales v England Women (Eamonn Whelan – Ireland), England v France Women (James Jones – Wales), USA v Canada Men (Kemoy Whyte – Jamaica), Turkey v Bulgaria Men (Stefan Stamenic – Serbia) and Bulgaria v Malta Men (Lazar Zivkovic – Serbia)

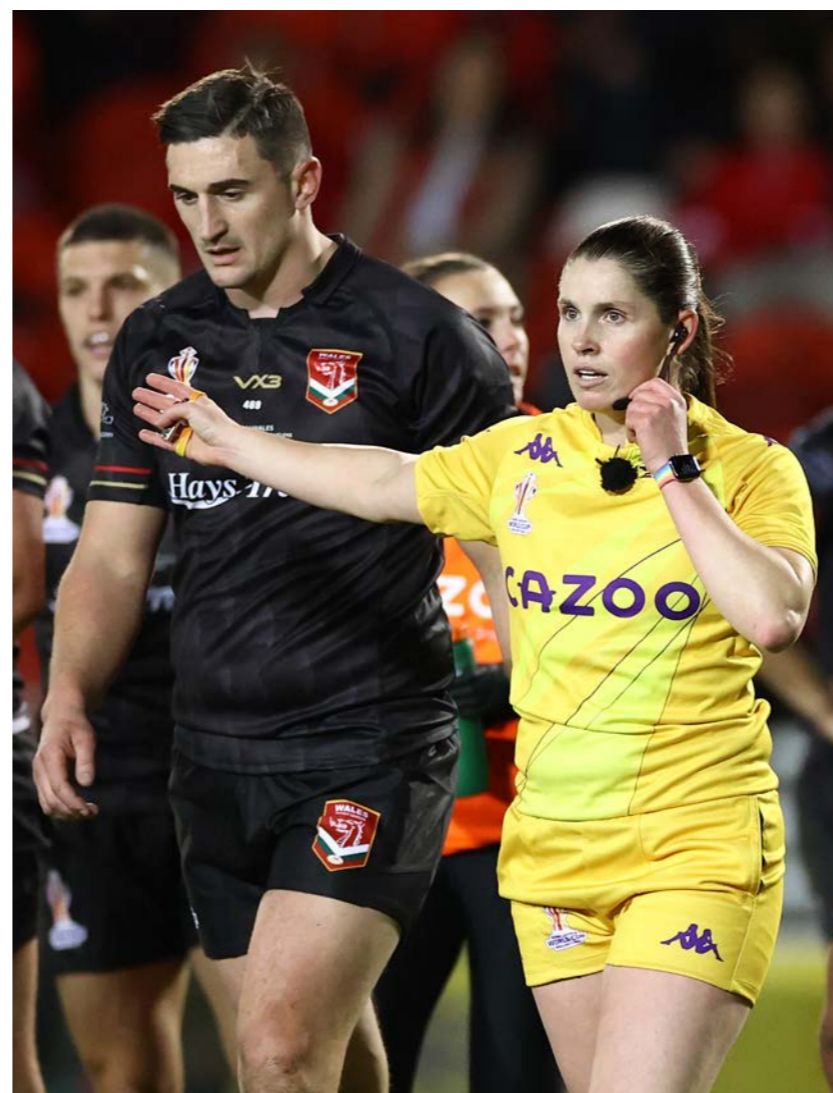
Wheelchair Match Officials appointments for international fixtures delivered centrally by European Rugby League, with the game recognised on the Match Categories Framework for the first time.

First time a multi-national wheelchair squad had been assembled and given the same access to training, facilities and coaching for a world cup as the running game.

Match officials development during the MEA Championships in Ghana.

Level 1 Officiating Course review completed. This is part of the project to implement a globally recognised technical education system

Top: Kim Abel referees England v Spain RLWC wheelchair match.
Bottom: Kasey Badger referees Wales v Tonga men's RLWC match.
Photos Getty Images



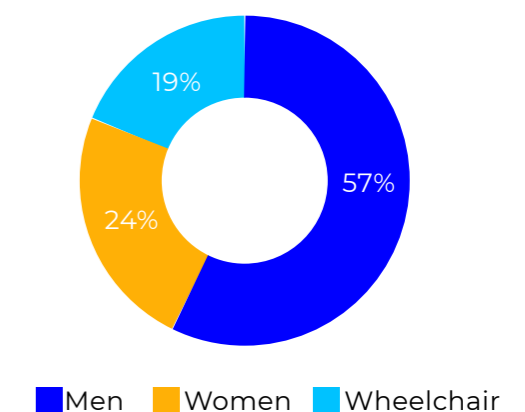
ANTI-DOPING

This year was the first time the IF had in-person representation at the world cup, through the presence of its anti-doping manager, Professor Nenad Dikic, in England. IRL used the opportunity to consider how to adjust its anti-doping activity in the future, especially around world cups.

IRL's anti-doping activity followed WADA guidelines with the majority of doping controls out of competition. Although there were no positive doping cases in 2022, there were three adverse analytical findings, none of which were processed due to proper use of seven therapeutic use exemptions (TUE) in total. One recommendation of the world cup report is that players require more education about TUE and the right to be medically treated.

Prior to the world cup, IRL was active in workshopping key areas of anti-doping, including rules and regulations, the list of prohibited substances and TUE. Online education was updated in 2022 with new facts, rules, and regulations. Another post-RLWC recommendation is to ensure the online education module is used by more players.

NUMBER OF DOPING CONTROLS CARRIED OUT DURING RLWC



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

As covid subsided globally and restrictions to domestic championships were lifted, the road to recovery began in earnest throughout the IRL's membership. The near future will see more numerous, more stable competitions in more countries than ever before as the game refocuses globally on fostering strong domestic foundations.

While many more members were able to comply with the membership policy than in 2021, IRL and the confederations continue to work closely with the membership to ensure good governance is applied and the global rugby league environment allows the members to develop the sport with stability. A full cohort of compliant members is our objective.

Three more African nations joined the IRL family, swelling the Middle East Africa region to 14 nations. One of them, Kenya, completed a seven-year odyssey by dint of its admission to the IRL as a fully recognized national sports organisation by its own government. Surprisingly, though, Kenya Rugby League Federation's efforts to achieve recognition could be considered relatively minor compared to another nation that achieved governmental legitimacy in the year. Thanks to close support from the Australian and British governments, and the indefatigable efforts of the industrious Greek rugby league community, in August the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports and its General Secretariat of Sports officially declared that rugby league has a recognised standalone governing body. The breakthrough came following a ten-year struggle, with the Greek Rugby League Federation (GRLF) finally recognised as the custodians of a unique and separate sport in the country. It was the perfect way for Greece to enter the world cup, where it went on to win so many friends.

FULL MEMBERS

JAMAICA	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	ITALY	WALES
AUSTRALIA	SAMOA	RUSSIA	LEBANON
COOK ISLANDS	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	SOUTH AFRICA
FIJI	FRANCE	SERBIA	
NEW ZEALAND	IRELAND	UKRAINE	

AFFILIATE

BRAZIL	CZECH REPUBLIC	NETHERLANDS	CAMEROON
CANADA	GERMANY	NORWAY	GHANA
USA	GREECE	SPAIN	MOROCCO
CHILE	MALTA	TURKEY	NIGERIA

OBSERVER

COLOMBIA	VANUATU	HUNGARY	DR CONGO
EL SALVADOR	ALBANIA	LATVIA	ETHIOPIA
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	BELGIUM	MONTENEGRO	IVORY COAST
JAPAN	BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	POLAND	KENYA
PHILIPPINES	DENMARK	SWEDEN	LIBYA
SOLOMON ISLANDS	GEORGIA	BURUNDI	PALESTINE
			UGANDA

REGIONAL KEY

AMERICAS	ASIA PACIFIC	EUROPE	MIDDLE EAST AFRICA
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AMERICAS RUGBY LEAGUE



In 2022 the Americas members continued the slow march towards normality of operations in most countries. By and large, all NGBs who were playing rugby league prior to the outbreak of Covid, were able to stage games and activities in their countries.

The Canadian domestic championship was executed on the West Coast, unfortunately, there was no club competition in Ontario. In the United States, there were domestic competitions on the East and West Coasts. Significantly, the USARL invited the IRL to oversee a governance reform process within the country, which is ongoing.

In the Caribbean, Jamaica returned to play with junior, men and women competitions. In Central America, El Salvador continues to develop organically; they are yet to start a domestic championship.

All North American countries saw international action in one arena or another. El Salvador played their first official IRL sanctioned match in October against Japan, doing themselves proud with a narrow 24-26 defeat. Canada participated in the Women's Rugby League World Cup whilst Jamaica made their debut in the men's category. USA and Canada men closed the international activities for the year with a friendly match in Tampa.

The 2022 season was another landmark year for rugby league in South America, building on the back of 10 years of uninterrupted and concerted efforts in the region.

Chile began the year with one of the biggest IRL upsets seen for some time – defeating a Philippines men's team containing several former NRL players by a comfortable margin of 36-20. That win propelled Chile up the rankings to an unprecedented standing of 32nd, and it was also notable for the fact that Cronulla Sharks forward Daniel Vasquez represented his Latino heritage. Vasquez's appearance was the first time an eligible player of that stature had pulled on the colours of a South American nation, signifying unprecedented confidence and support for the structures in place. Canterbury Bulldogs-contracted Diego Bravo Graham also wore the colours of the Weichafes.

Brazil's men were less successful in an 82-0 mid-year defeat at the hands of a rampant South Africa, but they had several victories away from the field, flying seven Brazilian-born

players to Australia for the experience. Among those players was teenage prop Renato Amaro Silva, contracted to French Super League club Catalans Dragons.

Fellow Brazilian teenager Otavio Dias – the standout athlete from Brazil's 4-team youth competition – remained in Australia after the Senior International Match to play with the Noosa Pirates for the rest of 2022 and has been signed by the club again for 2023.

Elsewhere, Brazilian Ramon Silva spent 2022 perfecting his craft with the Wigan Warriors and Widnes Vikings in England. Although yet to represent his country of birth, he remains a shining example for others of his background. Countrymen Jorge Cabral (Whitehaven/Salford) and Mateus Heslin Silva (South Sydney Rabbitohs) are other Brazilians emerging in professional pathways, a pattern that was not seen even two years ago.

Of course, the big talking point for South America in 2022 was the appearance of the Brazil Amazonas at the Women's Rugby League World Cup in England. This was the culmination of years' worth of promotion and selection camps which helped further ingratiate the sport to domestic players.

Despite being well-beaten by semi-finalists England and PNG, Brazil made plenty of highlight reels with their exuberance and daring, and also pushed Canada in a tense match that was 16-all until a kick on the final play of the game.

Brazil has appointed two-time NRLW champion coach Kelvin Wright to take their female team forward to the France 2025 world cup.

Colombia hosted the men's South American Championship in the final weekend in November, a first for the Observer Member. The event at Jerico, high in the Andes Mountains, was feted with a street parade that lasted 30 minutes and culminated with a celebration in the town's central plaza. The largest paying crowds for a South American game were also seen at the championships.

Ultimately Brazil triumphed 20-18 versus Chile, with Colombia battling bravely in losses to Chile (34-14) and Brazil (56-0). Colombian domestic clubs Bogota Armadillos and Samaland contested a series of matches as curtain-raisers to the main event.

The championships coincided with a technical education event, upskilling more than 20 match officials from around Latin America. As well as the competing nations, Argentina and El Salvador also sent representatives, which was significant for the unified development of the region.

As this report was being finalised, Argentina had returned to men's domestic competition for the first time in four years, hopefully predicating their admission to IRL member status. Pockets of activity in Uruguay, Venezuela and Peru continue, but need greater coordination and incentivisation with a strategic approach to the region.

Rod Millar was elected Chairman of the Americas Steering Committee, that continues to meet and contribute to the direction of the game in the region.



ASIA PACIFIC RUGBY LEAGUE



New Zealand Kiwis celebrate a mid-year win against Tonga in Auckland. Photo: NRL Imagery

With COVID behind us, season 2022 started with a great deal of excitement, as we returned to some semblance of normality.

Not only was 2022 an opportunity for Asia Pacific teams to contest the Rugby League World Cup, but it was also a chance to host a number of other great tournaments such as Pacific Test matches, the South American Championships, the Prime Minister's XIII v PNG game, and a number of Australia-based heritage matches.

In preparation for the world cup, a great deal of work was conducted around team selections and player heritage. From an Asia Pacific point-of-view, this work was detailed and time-consuming, however necessary to provide a smooth pathway for players to participate in the game's showpiece.

With the return of the Pacific Tests, traditionally held in June, we saw Tonga men travel to New Zealand to play the Kiwi men's team. A great deal of excitement surrounded this fixture as we also saw Tonga's women's team play the Kiwi Ferns. These matches were managed by New Zealand Rugby League and the Tonga Interim Management Group.

Greg Peters and Scott Clark worked diligently together to deliver an incredibly successful event.

Other Pacific Tests held in 2022 on the same June long weekend were the PNG Kumuls v Fiji Bati, and Samoa v the Cook Islands. These matches were held in Campbelltown in western Sydney. The weekend was a great success, with a full house generating great excitement for the Rugby League World Cup later in the year.

The NRL, New Zealand Rugby League and Tonga IMG worked together to ensure these Senior International Matches were delivered in a successful manner.

In September, Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane hosted the PNG Kumuls v Australia PM XIII, and the PNG Orchids v Australian Jillaroos. A number of Australian political dignitaries attended this match, including the Australian Prime Minister and the PNG Prime Minister. A crowd of more than 20,000 attended.

In October, over 400 players and officials departed Australia to attend the Rugby League World Cup in England. A number of people assisted the Rugby League World Cup organising committee in ensuring all players and staff departed Australia on time, notably Andrew Hill, Gareth Holmes, Leesa Pogson and Jeremy Edwards.

The teams from the Pacific who participated in the world cup all performed incredibly well.

Australian Kangaroos and Jillaroos won their respective world cups in what was truly a brilliant effort as was the Samoan men and New Zealand women runners-up.

The fortunes for the Asia Pacific nations during the world cup were nothing short of superb, with 6 men's teams and 3 of the women's teams qualifying for the quarter finals or semi finals, gaining automatic qualification to the 2025 world cups in France. Two further Asia Pacific nations qualified for the 2025 Women's World Cup. These results do highlight the quality of players that represent the Southern Hemisphere.

Joanna Lester continued working on IRL's Women and Girl's Rugby League Working Group (WGAG). Joanna is a dedicated rugby league administrator who works tirelessly for the development and the growth of the women's game. Tahina Booth has stepped down as the Asia Pacific representative on WGAG. Tahina has been a great contributor and a valued member of this group.

As APRL looks towards 2023 and beyond there are a number of projects that we continue to work towards achieving, such as:

- Qualifying two more nations that will have women's teams in the 2025 world cup
- The Pacific Games that will be held in the Solomon Islands in November 2023. This is a men's and women's 9s tournament.
- The first Asian Rugby League Championships, to be held in the Philippines.
- The development of a MOU with the NRL Pacific. This MOU will see our two organisations working together in the Pacific to form a much stronger and robust group that will grow rugby league in this region, ensuring all Pacific nations are involved and contributing.

EUROPEAN RUGBY LEAGUE

2022 saw European Rugby League continue to lead the way with innovation, launching the game's first continental women's competition, Women's European Championships B with Wales fending off Ireland and Italy to win the North Group, whilst Greece took the title in the South Group, which also featured Serbia and Turkey.

The six games gave each federation valuable game time as preparations commence for women's Rugby League World Cup qualifying in Europe in 2023. The structured competition gave some of the national federations a framework with which to lever funding from central governments, whilst all of the national federations used the opportunity to raise the profile of women's rugby league domestically.

Seven nations – England, France, Ireland, Italy, Serbia, Ukraine and Wales – came together in Lignano Sabbiadoro to contest the biennial U19s European Championships, which saw England triumph over France in a fiercely contested final, with Wales collecting the bronze medal after eventually overcoming a very spirited Ukraine side who were the tournament's surprise package, finishing fourth overall.

The event was a huge success in the true spirit of rugby league saw all of the teams come together to demonstrate the values of Rugby League, with all of the competing teams rallying to support both the Ukraine team, which had travelled from the country embroiled in war, and to the England team, who endured tragedy at the tournament with the sad passing of assistant coach Gary McMahon following the first round of games.

A further 26 bilaterally arranged internationals at senior level were played in Europe with 12 men's games, 5 women's and 9 wheelchair games taking place, demonstrating the depth of the international game in Europe and the passion the member federations have for the international game, with several teams improving their world rankings positions significantly and using the opportunity to prepare for the world cup which concluded the playing season.

Off the field, European Rugby League continued to make strides with technical education, completing an overhaul of its Level 1 Coaching and Level 1 Match Officials courses, with the former being translated into French, Spanish and Russian in the non-English

speaking market and the latter seeing its most northerly course in the world (so far) delivered in the fjords town of Sogndal, Norway as rugby league continues to break new ground on the continent.

2022 also saw European Rugby League embed actions arising from its governance review the previous year, completing the recruitment of three new independent directors and undertaking elections for a further member-elected position as part of an expansion of its Board, ensuring that it remains a well run and transparent organisation, fit for governing sport in the modern era.

The continent celebrated the awarding of the 2025 Rugby League World Cup to France, which will see the tournament staged in Europe for consecutive cycles, an exciting prospect for the European membership to take advantage of a second staging on the continent and the benefits that it brings, as well as an opportunity to see the world cup return to its birthplace.



MIDDLE EAST AFRICA RUGBY LEAGUE

The MEA Region has shown substantial growth despite the pandemic and began implementing the roadmap to forming an independent confederation.

The MEA Steering Committee, which is a part of the Confederations Roadmap, appointed its new, extended representatives for the next 12 months with personnel from the two full members: Dr Frans Erasmus (South Africa) and Nayef Abi Said (Lebanon), plus elected affiliate member representative Andy Gilvary (Ghana) and observer member representative Fortunate Irankunda (Uganda). Three independent members have also been added to the committee: Vuyolwethu N. Bokwe, Bolu Fagborun and Saad Boujmal. Remond Safi was appointed as secretary of the Steering Committee.

MEA region capacity continues to grow with Uganda and Ivory Coast admitted as observer members, while Ghana, Cameroon and Nigeria continue to develop to achieve full member status. The biggest obstacle is meeting the national team requirements, with travel in Africa offering no cost-effective solutions.

Kenya showed its early promise by partnering with Leeds Rhinos and hosting a regional technical education program with participants from Burundi, DR Congo, Cameroon, Ghana and Nigeria. Kenya also stood in as late replacements for Morocco in the men's MEA Championship (Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya) which took place in Ghana, with Nigeria and Ghana advancing to the MEA Cup in 2023. The competition, which recommences after Nigeria 2019, attracted more high calibre players than three years ago, which is an encouraging sign that the sport's best African players want to play international rugby league.

Local championships were completed by Burundi, Cameroon, Lebanon, Ghana (women, men's and youth), Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa's season commenced over the winter period and running into 2023.



FINANCE

The international federation's business operations were historically conducted through Rugby League International Federation Limited, an Australian-based company. However, today the vast majority of financial transactions are processed and accounted for in the UK-based company, International Rugby League Limited.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

This finance report contains the full sets of accounts for both the UK and Australian companies.

In the case of International Rugby League Limited (UK Company) these are the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021. These have been independently reviewed by our professional advisers, Haysmacintyre.

In the case of Rugby League International Federation Ltd (Australian Company) these are the accounts for the year ended 31st October 2021. These have been prepared by our independent professional advisers, Newmerical.

Both sets of figures were presented and approved by the members at the 2022 Annual General Meeting.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED – UK COMPANY

The overwhelming majority of income over any four-year financial cycle is generated from the staging of the Rugby League World Cup. Given that, at the time of preparing these accounts, no world cup had taken place since the UK Company scaled up its operations, it has historically had modest income levels compared to its operating costs. In 2021, as the world started to emerge from the Covid pandemic, a modest number of international fixtures were staged, generating only £3k of levy income.

In the financial year ended 31st December 2021, the company had £493k of operating costs. This produced an operating loss of £490k. This compared to an operating loss of £1.2million in the previous financial year.

The principal categories of administrative expenditure are the costs of the IRL management team and the costs of third-party professional advisers. Considerable savings were achieved in both of these areas

which contributed the bulk of the reduction in operating costs. Additionally, grants payable to full members and confederations are now being administered through the Australian Company rather than the UK Company.

Interest of £152k was paid during the year at a commercial rate on the loan from the Australian Company. This means that overall the UK company made a trading loss of £642k.

The company's balance sheet shows that it has relied on financing from the Australian Company (out of the profits from previous world cups) and also on advances received on its 2021 Rugby League World Cup rights fee. Following the deferred staging of the 2021 event, in 2022 the profits from the competition resulted in the company having a healthy, positive balance sheet going forward.

RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED – AUSTRALIAN COMPANY

In the financial year ended 31st October 2021, the company had A\$277k of income and A\$487k of operating costs. This produced a pre-tax deficit of A\$211k, which after tax adjustments was reduced to A\$194k. The pre-tax surplus for the previous year was A\$129k.

The income for the year came principally from interest receivable on the loan to the UK Company. The reason for the creation of the deficit as compared to the surplus in the previous year is the decision to account for the grants in this company.

The company's balance sheet shows that it has A\$3.2million of net assets. Approximately A\$2.7million of this it has been advanced as financial support to the UK Company.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

UNAUDITED

**DIRECTORS' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

COMPANY INFORMATION

Directors	P D Beattie G Peters R W J Rimmer W J Pearce G N Thompson S D Tsaka E J Young T W Grant S Johnson G J Barclay L Lacoste (appointed 21 October 2021)
Company secretary	M R Martin
Registered number	10274920
Registered office	10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1AG

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

DIRECTORS' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

The directors present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Directors' responsibilities statement

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the profit or loss of the Company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the Company's financial statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Directors

The directors who served during the year were:

P D Beattie
P G Nicholson (resigned 21 November 2021)
G Peters
R W J Rimmer
W J Pearce
G N Thompson
S D Tsaka
E J Young
T W Grant
S Johnson
G J Barclay
R Edwards (resigned 31 March 2022)
L Lacoste (appointed 21 October 2021)

Small companies note

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

This report was approved by the board on 30 July 2022 and signed on its behalf.



Troy Grant

Director

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
Turnover	3,346	-
Administrative expenses	(492,649)	(1,127,921)
Operating loss	(489,303)	(1,127,921)
Interest payable and expenses	(152,225)	(107,583)
Loss before tax	(641,528)	(1,235,504)
Tax on loss	-	-
Loss for the financial year	(641,528)	(1,235,504)

There was no other comprehensive income for 2021 (2020: £nil).

The notes on pages 6 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10274920

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	4	705	1,380
Investments	5	17	17
		<u>722</u>	<u>1,397</u>
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	6	513,488	650,907
Cash at bank and in hand	7	697,912	964,410
		<u>1,211,400</u>	<u>1,615,317</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	(4,225,327)	(1,953,791)
Net current liabilities		<u>(3,013,927)</u>	<u>(338,474)</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>(3,013,205)</u>	<u>(337,077)</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	9	-	(2,034,600)
Net liabilities		<u>(3,013,205)</u>	<u>(2,371,677)</u>
Capital and reserves			
Profit and loss account		<u>(3,013,205)</u>	<u>(2,371,677)</u>
		<u>(3,013,205)</u>	<u>(2,371,677)</u>

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10274920

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

The directors consider that the Company is entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 and members have not required the Company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 Section 1A - small entities.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board and were signed on its behalf on 30 July 2022.



Troy Grant

Director

The notes on pages 6 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1. General information

International Rugby League Limited is a private company incorporated in England and Wales (registration number 10274920) under the Companies Act. It is a company limited by guarantee. The address of the registered office is 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention unless otherwise specified within these accounting policies and in accordance with Section 1A of Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland and the Companies Act 2006.

The following principal accounting policies have been applied:

2.2 Going concern

Although the company has net liabilities as at the balance sheet date, it is supported by loans from its sister company incorporated in Australia, Rugby League International Federation Limited and by advances it has received on the hosting rights for Rugby League World Cup 2021, which have been disclosed in the financial statements as deferred income falling due within one year.

The directors have prepared the accounts using the going concern concept on the basis that the Rugby League Cup World Cup will now be staged in October and November 2022. The revenues received from this tournament will allow it to repay its loans to its sister company. Once this event has taken place the deferred income will be accounted for in the statement of comprehensive income, along with the balance of the hosting rights income and any other profits generated by the tournament.

As the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic recedes, it appears unlikely that the Rugby League World Cup 2021 will be postponed again. The directors have endorsed a plan provided by management which has reviewed future income and expenditure streams and are satisfied that the company will remain solvent in the next twelve months. A contract has been signed to secure the hosting of Rugby League World Cup 2025. Later in 2022 the company anticipates launching its long-term competition calendar which is intended to generate future revenues for the company.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Foreign currency translation

Functional and presentation currency

The Company's functional and presentational currency is GBP.

Transactions and balances

Foreign currency transactions are translated into the functional currency using the spot exchange rates at the dates of the transactions.

At each period end foreign currency monetary items are translated using the closing rate. Non-monetary items measured at historical cost are translated using the exchange rate at the date of the transaction and non-monetary items measured at fair value are measured using the exchange rate when fair value was determined.

Foreign exchange gains and losses resulting from the settlement of transactions and from the translation at period-end exchange rates of monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are recognised in profit or loss except when deferred in other comprehensive income as qualifying cash flow hedges.

All other foreign exchange gains and losses are presented in the Statement of Comprehensive Income within administrative expenses.

2.4 Revenue

Revenue is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the Company and the revenue can be reliably measured. Revenue is measured as the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes. The following criteria must also be met before revenue is recognised:

Rendering of services

Revenue from a contract to provide services is recognised in the period in which the services are provided in accordance with the stage of completion of the contract when all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- the amount of revenue can be measured reliably;
- it is probable that the Company will receive the consideration due under the contract;
- the stage of completion of the contract at the end of the reporting period can be measured reliably; and
- the costs incurred and the costs to complete the contract can be measured reliably.

2.5 Finance costs

Finance costs are charged to profit or loss over the term of the debt using the effective interest method so that the amount charged is at a constant rate on the carrying amount. Issue costs are initially recognised as a reduction in the proceeds of the associated capital instrument.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets under the cost model are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Fixtures and fittings	-	20%
Computer equipment	-	33%

The assets' residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted prospectively if appropriate, or if there is an indication of a significant change since the last reporting date.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing the proceeds with the carrying amount and are recognised in profit or loss.

2.7 Valuation of investments

Investments in subsidiaries are measured at cost less accumulated impairment.

Investments in unlisted Company shares, whose market value can be reliably determined, are remeasured to market value at each balance sheet date. Gains and losses on remeasurement are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income for the period. Where market value cannot be reliably determined, such investments are stated at historic cost less impairment.

Investments in listed company shares are remeasured to market value at each Balance Sheet date. Gains and losses on remeasurement are recognised in profit or loss for the period.

2.8 Associates and joint ventures

Associates and Joint Ventures are held at cost less impairment.

2.9 Debtors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment. Loans receivable are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

2.10 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in no more than three months from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.11 Creditors

Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price. Other financial liabilities, including bank loans, are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

3. Employees

The average monthly number of employees, including directors, during the year was 2 (2020 - 2).

4. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 January 2021	591	2,129	2,720
At 31 December 2021	<u>591</u>	<u>2,129</u>	<u>2,720</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2021	157	1,183	1,340
Charge for the year on owned assets	118	557	675
At 31 December 2021	<u>275</u>	<u>1,740</u>	<u>2,015</u>
Net book value			
At 31 December 2021	<u>316</u>	<u>389</u>	<u>705</u>
At 31 December 2020	<u>434</u>	<u>946</u>	<u>1,380</u>

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

5. Fixed asset investments

	Investments in subsidiary companies £
Cost or valuation	
At 1 January 2021	17
At 31 December 2021	<u>17</u>

Investments in associates comprise one third of the share capital of GB Oceania Ltd, a company limited by shares and registered in New Zealand.

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

6. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	249,854	356,306
Amounts owed by associated companies	208,820	255,284
Other debtors	1,975	13,801
Prepayments and accrued income	52,839	25,516
	<u>513,488</u>	<u>650,907</u>

7. Cash and cash equivalents

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash at bank and in hand	697,912	964,410
	<u>697,912</u>	<u>964,410</u>

8. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Other taxation and social security	379	3,178
Other creditors	1,635,262	1,874,663
Accruals and deferred income	2,589,686	75,950
	<u>4,225,327</u>	<u>1,953,791</u>

9. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Accruals and deferred income	-	2,034,600
	<u>-</u>	<u>2,034,600</u>

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

10. Company status

The company is a private company limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation.

11. Related party transactions

The Company entered into the following related party transactions in the year:

RLIF Australia

At the year-end, International Rugby League Limited owed RLIF Australia £1,388,393 consisting of £1,634,279 shown in 'Other creditors' in note 8 less £245,886 shown in 'Trade debtors' in note 6 (2020: £1,626,878, consisting of £1,449,237 shown in 'Other creditors' less £245,886 included in 'Trade debtors'). RLIF Australia and International Rugby League Limited share common directors.

Australian Rugby League Commission

International Rugby League Limited made sales of £nil (2020: £nil) in the year to Australian Rugby League Commission, which owed £nil (2020: £106,540) to International Rugby League Limited at the year end. This figure is included in 'Trade debtors' in note 6. Australian Rugby League Commission and International Rugby League Limited share a common directors.

GB Oceania

As at 31 December 2021 International Rugby League was owed £208,630 (2020: £254,608) by GB Oceania Limited. International Rugby League Limited owns a one-third investment in GB Oceania Limited, a company incorporated in New Zealand.

12. Controlling party

The Directors consider that there is no ultimate controlling party.

**RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL
FEDERATION LIMITED**

ACN 091 594 777

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2021**

RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED**Directors' Declaration****For the year ended 31 October 2021**

The directors have determined that the company is not a reporting entity. The directors have determined that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The directors declare that:

- 1 the financial statements and notes present fairly the company's financial position as at 31 October 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements;
- 2 in the director's opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:



Troy Grant

28 April 2022

RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED
Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income
For the year ended 31 October 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
INCOME			
Interest - External		17	3,742
Interest - Related		276,772	195,601
TOTAL INCOME		276,789	199,343
EXPENSES			
Development Grants		(473,410)	(46,600)
Consulting		0	(5,000)
Legal Costs		0	(158)
Accountancy		(10,373)	11,630
Other Expenses		0	30,963
Bank Charges		(2,663)	(15)
TOTAL EXPENSES		(486,446)	(9,180)
OPERATING (LOSS)/PROFIT		(209,657)	190,162
Interest		(890)	0
Gain/(Loss) - FX		0	5,200
OPERATING PROFIT/(LOSS) BEFORE TAX		(210,547)	195,363
Income Tax	2	16,935	(66,502)
OPERATING PROFIT FOR THE YEAR		(193,612)	128,861
Retained Profits at 31 October		3,389,547	3,260,686
PROFIT AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATION		3,195,935	3,389,547
RETAINED PROFIT		3,195,935	3,389,547

RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED

Statement of financial position
For the year ended 31 October 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
PAID UP CAPITAL AND RESERVES			
Reserves			
Accumulated Profit		3,195,935	3,389,547
REPRESENTED BY			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash		457,253	493,472
Loan to International Rugby League Ltd		2,660,550	2,851,663
Prepayments		31,250	50,000
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Deferred Tax Asset	2	67,917	50,982
TOTAL ASSETS		3,216,970	3,446,117
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Other Payables		1,037	(35,388)
Tax Payable	2	(22,072)	(21,182)
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Deferred Tax Liability	2	-	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES		(21,035)	(56,570)
NET ASSETS		3,195,935	3,389,547

RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 October 2021

1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The directors of the company have prepared the financial statements of the company on the basis that the company is a non-reporting entity because there are no users dependant on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements are therefore special purpose financial statements that have been prepared in order to meet the needs of the directors and members.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below which the directors have determined are appropriate to meet the needs of members. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of these statements are as follows:

2 TAXATION

The company adopts the liability method of tax-effect accounting whereby the income tax expense shown in the profit and loss account is based on the operating profit before income tax adjusted for any permanent differences.

Timing differences which arise due to the different accounting periods in which items of revenue and expense are included in the determination of operating profit before income tax and taxable income are brought to account as either a provision for deferred income tax or an asset described as future income tax benefit at the rate of income tax applicable to the period in which the benefit will be received or the liability will become payable.

Future income tax benefits are not brought to account unless realisation of the asset is assured beyond reasonable doubt. Future income tax benefits in relation to tax losses are not brought to account unless there is virtual certainty of realisation of the benefit.

The amount of benefits brought to account or which may be realised in the future is based on the assumption that no adverse change will occur in income taxation legislation and the anticipation that the company will derive sufficient future assessable income to enable the benefit to be realised and comply with the conditions of deductibility imposed by the law.

RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED**Compilation Report****For the year ended 31 October 2021**

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Rugby League International Federation Limited, which comprise the Balance Sheet as at 31 October 2021, the Profit and Loss Statement for the period ended 31 October 2021 and other explanatory notes. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is set out in the Notes.

The Responsibility of the Directors

The directors of Rugby League International Federation Limited are solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements, the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information and for the determination that the financial reporting framework/basis of accounting used is appropriate to meet their needs and for the purpose that the financial statements were prepared.

Our Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the directors, we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting framework/basis of accounting as described in the Notes to the financial statements and APES 315 Compilation of Financial Information.

We have applied our expertise in accounting and financial reporting to compile these financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting framework/basis of accounting described in the Notes to the financial statements. We have complied with the relevant ethical requirements of APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants.

Assurance Disclaimer

Since a compilation engagement is not an assurance engagement, we are not required to verify the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information provided to us by management to compile these financial statements. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion on these financial statements.

The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the directors who are responsible for the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information used to compile them. We do not accept responsibility for the contents of the special purpose financial statements.



Newmerical Pty Ltd

ABN:87 645 226 786

28 April 2022

**END OF FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2021**

INTERNATIONAL
RUGBY
LEAGUE

A blue graphic element consisting of two right-angled triangles pointing towards each other, forming a larger right-angled triangle.

INTERNATIONAL
RUGBY LEAGUE LTD.

10 Queen Street Place
London
EC4R 1AG

INTRL.SPORT