



## Rugby League Brisbane – Amalgamation to One Board of Management July 2017

The QRL is working with all clubs and their leagues across Queensland to implement a governance model that will streamline and simplify how our game is administered.

This new model will see all Rugby League in Brisbane governed by one Board incorporating A Grade, Juniors, Second Division, Girls, Women and Masters.

This is your Board, and how this Board is structured and who sits on the Board will be determined by you, the Clubs subject to an appropriate mix of elected and independent members.

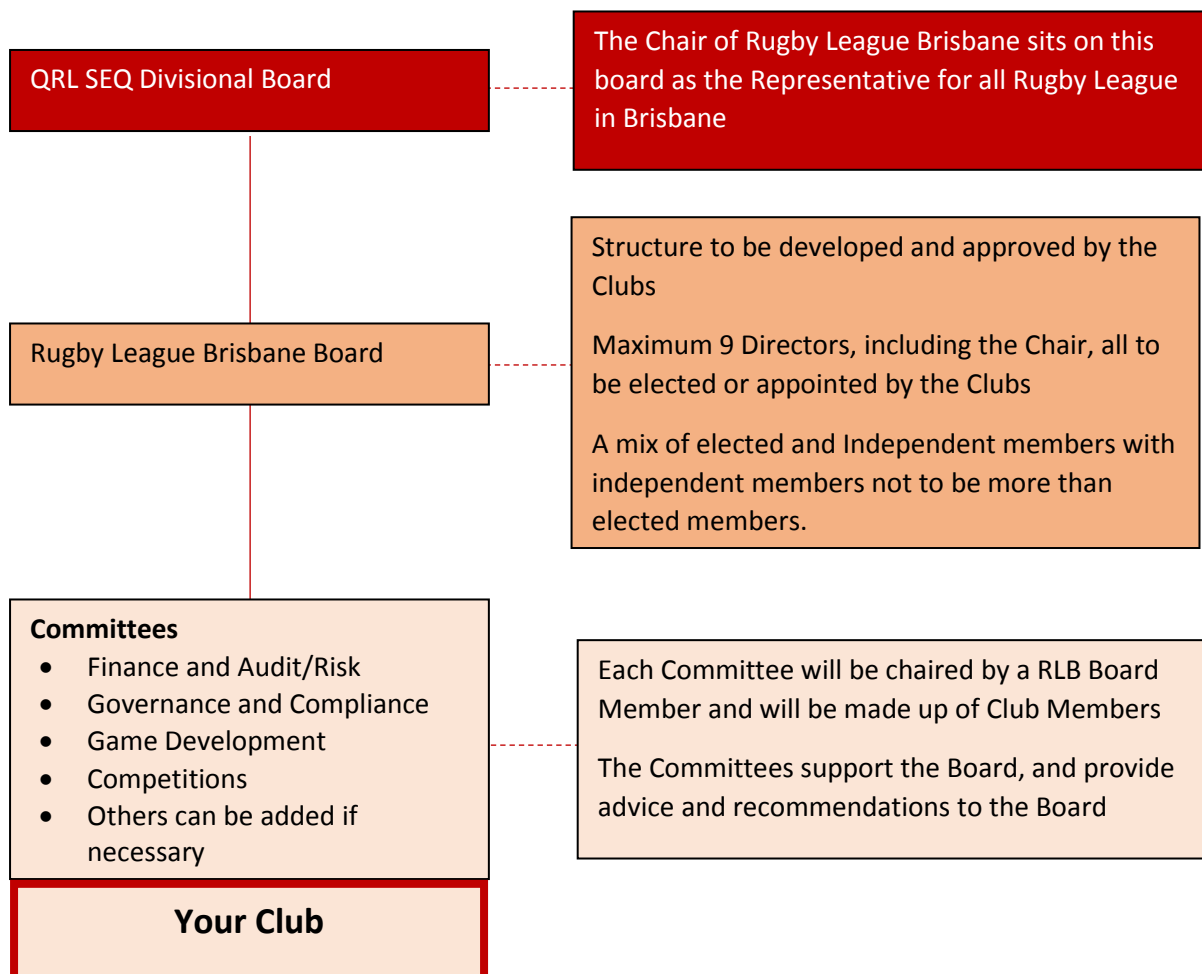
### Where did the model come from?

In June 2015, the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), the Commonwealth body responsible for developing and funding Australian sport, developed a set of six mandatory sports governance principles (MSGP). These principles call for sports, all Australian sports, to take a unified approach to behaviours, processes and supporting systems. The QRL supports these principles and as such, support the progression of Rugby League in Queensland towards a more streamlined and simplified approach across the state.

These Principles can be viewed here -

[https://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/governance/governance\\_principles](https://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/governance/governance_principles)

### How the structure could look – but it’s up to YOU to decide





## The Benefits

No.	Benefit	Why is this a good thing
1	Improved access to ASC Support	<p>Aligning our governance structures with the ASC's vision and demonstrating best practice governance, will ensure Brisbane Rugby League is well placed to receive funding and other assistance from the Commonwealth.</p> <p>Rugby league is facing increased competition from other sports to attract families and players. Other Australian sports associations have already begun operating under the new model. These sports are well placed to receive ongoing assistance from the ASC.</p> <p><b>ASC Website:</b> "Netball Australia demonstrates industry-best practice for governance in many areas, setting the benchmark in adopting the MSGP. Netball Australia is operating on a continuous improvement model for several implemented and established governance practices."  <a href="https://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/australias_winning_edge/sports_tally/2016/sports/netball">https://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/australias_winning_edge/sports_tally/2016/sports/netball</a></p>
2	Improved club administration process	<p>One board to govern all Rugby League in Brisbane will streamline administrative processes. One point of contact across Brisbane streamlines administrative processes, minimising paperwork and other requirements specific to each division.</p> <p>This will also minimise administration requirements within the Brisbane Office, reducing costs back to the clubs.</p>
3	Improved communication to the clubs	<p>Currently there are multiple sources of information and communication between the clubs and the management committees and the Brisbane Office.</p> <p>Under the new structure the Brisbane Office will issue all communications to the Clubs and will be the first point of contact. The Brisbane Office will act under the communication strategy set by Your Board to ensure the messages are consistent in in the best interest of Brisbane Rugby League.</p>
4	Simplifying game day	<p>Under one body, there will be opportunity for streamlining the draw for each club.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More games run on one day will attract larger crowds to the clubs improving the opportunity for fundraising and other community activities to take place.</li> <li>• Reduction in the number of volunteers, referees and other officials required</li> </ul>
5	Certainty and consistency in decision making	<p>Decisions made at board level will be made by Board officials appointed by the Clubs. This board is appointed to act in the best interest of all Brisbane Rugby League players, across all age groups and levels. Decisions made at board level must be recorded, communicated and implemented improving certainty and consistency across the region.</p>
6	Making life easier for busy families	<p>Streamlining the draw for each club will minimise travel for families with children playing across age groups and divisions.</p> <p>One source of information across the local league competitions for busy Club Executives, families and players will provide greater clarity and consistency week to week.</p>
7	More opportunity for everyone to be involved	<p>The Board and Committee structure allows multiple members of the football community to be involved in the decision making process and be heard.</p> <p>The structure provides for multiple committees to be formed which report and make recommendations back to the board for decision and implementation. This structure allows more people to have their say and ensure their club is represented in all decision making across Brisbane Rugby League.</p>
8	Improved player retention	<p>With the junior and senior competitions under one body, the pathways for players moving through the age groups will be more simplified and streamlined. Simplifying the transition from younger age levels to the teenage grades will assist in player retention and identifying and assisting those who may require greater support.</p>
9	Improved sponsorship and fundraising opportunities	<p>Combining the playing group in to one large entity will open up greater sponsorship and other fundraising and grant opportunities. This means more money back to the clubs</p>



### Engagement with the Clubs

The QRL South East Queensland Division is committed to continuing to engage with all clubs across Brisbane to continue to answer your questions and further clarify the amalgamation process. To ensure this engagement is planned and everyone has the opportunity to participate, the following Engagement Calendar is proposed.

### Why do we need a calendar?

There have been many questions around when voting on the new structure will occur. The below calendar is for discussion with all clubs and is flexible. The Calendar has been developed as a starting point to guide engagement.

The timing outlined below is preferred given the formal decision to amalgamation needs to be tabled at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of both the GBJRL and BSDRL. This timing also ensures that the majority of legal paperwork and other documentation can be completed in the off-season, allowing normal 2018 season preparations to continue and minimising the impact on usual League and Club operations.

### Brisbane Rugby League Governance Engagement Calendar

When/ Where	Meeting Topic	Meeting Purpose
<b>25 July 2017</b> 7pm Souths, Davies Park West End	BSDRL All clubs Meeting – Q&A on Governance Structure Junior clubs are welcome to join	Question and answer session with clubs
<b>22 August</b> 7pm Narangba JRLFC	Zone 1 Meeting	Question and answer session with Zone 1 clubs
<b>August</b> TBC	Zone 2 Meeting	Question and answer session with Zone 2 clubs
<b>2 August 2017</b> 7pm Carina Leagues Club	Zone 3 Meeting	Question and answer session with Zone 3 clubs
<b>August</b> TBC	Zone 4 Meeting	Question and answer session with Zone 4 clubs
<b>6 September 2017</b> Location TBC	All Clubs Meeting – Board Structure and Voting System	Clubs to discuss the optimal board structure to govern your game. Clubs to discuss how voting points will be allocated across the league. Further questions on the structure are always welcomed.
<b>27 September 2017</b> Location TBC	All clubs meeting – Agree Board Structure and Voting System	Clubs to agree the optimal board structure and how voting points will be allocated across the league. Further questions on the structure are always welcomed.
<b>18 October 2017</b> Location TBC	All clubs meeting	A final opportunity for questions on the new structure prior to the AGMs
<b>14 November 2017</b> Rugby League Central Queensland	2017 GBJRL AGM	General AGM which also includes the passing of a special resolution to amalgamate with the Brisbane Second Division to form Rugby League Brisbane
<b>14 November 2017</b> Souths, Davies Park West End	2017 BSDRL AGM	General AGM which also includes the passing of a special resolution to amalgamate with the GBJRL to form Rugby League Brisbane

Representatives from the GBJRL Management Committee, Second Division Management Committee and SEQ Divisional Board members will be present at each meeting.



## **Your Comments taken from All Clubs Meeting Tuesday 4 July 2017**

### **How is the board formed?**

You - the Clubs - decide how the Board is formed and who makes up the Board.

The size, complexity and operations of Rugby League across Queensland differs. To optimise individual performance, flexibility must be imbedded in the structures and systems that are to be adopted. This flexibility must be balanced against accountability, contestability and transparency.

The ASC state that there is an obligation for all sporting organisations to explain to stakeholders (internal and external to QRL) if an alternative approach to what is considered best-practice principles is adopted (the 'if not, why not' obligation).

### **What is the voting system?**

This is again decided by the clubs. Voting points will need to be allocated to each club and this may be done on a basis of the number of competitions in which they currently complete i.e. 1 vote for juniors, 1 vote for seniors etc

### **The Junior's are doing well, why change?**

Yes, the Junior competition is currently in a financially sound position. However, for clubs, players and families involved in junior Rugby league there are many benefits that will be achieved through amalgamation. These benefits are outlined in the table above and include improved administrative processes, better communication between families, clubs and the Brisbane Office, improved financial opportunities across sponsorship, fundraising and ASC support.

### **Juniors' money will just be used to 'prop-up' the senior competition**

This is not the intention of the amalgamation and any 'propping-up' of the seniors would be very difficult to administer under the new governance structure. Whilst the Juniors are in a positive financial position, Second Division is also financially sound. The Juniors' funds will not be taken by the Seniors.

All financial decisions must be made by the Brisbane Rugby League Board that you will appoint. You will appoint Board members who act in the best interest of the game, always. The Brisbane Office will be responsible for administering the financial decisions made by the Board ensuring these decisions are always in the best interest of Brisbane Rugby League.

### **This change will diminish the focus on Juniors**

The important role Junior football plays across Rugby League cannot be ignored. Without Juniors there would be no Seniors. The focus on Junior football will not shift as that would not be in the best interest of the game and our players.

The Board that you will appoint, will have Junior representation. The number of junior representatives on the Boards, and committees will be determined by you. If you feel the focus needs to be greater, then you can vote to appoint a greater number of Junior focused board members and join a committee yourself.

### **What is the risk of not implementing this new model?**

Whilst the current operating model works, it relies heavily on Club and League committees. There are many examples of duplicated effort across general administration, game day activities and in the Brisbane Office. Messages can become lost, misinterpreted or incorrect with multiple League bodies involved in administering the game. The real risk is that Rugby League Brisbane will be left behind as other Leagues and



other sports continue to grow, progress and receive funding and other support from the ASC, other government bodies, local communities and families.

**What does the QRL consider Grass Roots Football?**

Anything below Intrust Super Cup is grass roots football.

**There is a rumour that the Rugby League Brisbane Board has already been appointed?**

This is completely untrue. The Board must to be appointed by the Clubs. All members will receive a vote to appoint the Board.

**What are the outcomes from Gold Coast and Ipswich Amalgamations?**

Refer to structure in *Appendix A (page 9)* for Gold Coast and *Appendix B (page 10)* for Ipswich.

**We have heard Ipswich is having issues?**

Both Ipswich and Gold Coast have had some issues during the implementation of the new structure. These issues are generally related communication between the board and its committees. These and any other issues which may arise, will continue to be discussed and understood so that processes can be employed to ensure better communication between the Board and its committees.

Ensuring strong communication between the committee chairs and the Board is essential to ensuring the Clubs are engaged throughout the new governance model.

**Is this going to happen anyway? If so, then why ask?**

Yes, amalgamation will occur. The QRL are committed to engaging in best practice governance as determined by ASC to improve opportunities for all players and families in Queensland.

The purpose of engaging with clubs throughout this process is to give you the opportunity to make this your governance structure. One that best reflects how Brisbane Rugby League should be governed according to the clubs. You are the ones who will decide what the structure looks like.

It may take some time, but ideally the QRL and Brisbane clubs should continue to work together until all Clubs agree on a structure that can be implemented. Both the Gold Coast and Ipswich structures are slightly different to reflect the different requirements of their competitions. Brisbane's structure will be different again, so that it is tailored to your requirements.

**When does this need to happen?**

As outlined in the Engagement Calendar, the formal amalgamation must take place at the AGM of both the Junior and Second Division leagues. The QRL would like this to occur at the 2017 AGMs, but given the commitment made to giving Clubs every opportunity to shape the structure and Bard appointments, engagement will continue until a resolution is reached.

**What happens to our money?**

All money across Juniors and Second Division will be amalgamated into one bank account. However, both the Juniors and the Second Division can quarantine a percentage of funds accrued prior to amalgamation into a separate bank account.

New revenue will all go into the one joint account to be used on programs, administration and other activities across Rugby League Brisbane.



### **But the Juniors make more money than Second Division?**

Rugby League is **user pays**. Juniors have a greater number of players and so receive the greater number of fees. If a senior player is not paying their fees, then they shouldn't be allowed to play.

All financial decisions and payments must be made through majority board decisions, and with the advice of the Finance and Audit committee. You will be responsible for appointing the Board and you can nominate to be a member of the Finance and Audit committee. This will provide optimal oversight over all payments incoming and outgoing to ensure decisions are always in the best interest of the game.

### **Why aren't the referees engaged?**

The Referees Advisory Committee have been engaged in this conversation and are aware of the proposed amalgamation. We are not looking to amalgamate the Referee Advisory Committee with the league bodies, however as members of GBJRL and BSDRL they will be able to vote on the structure and the Board, just like any other club. Again, as the clubs have the power to decide what the Board make up is, they can choose to involve the Referees Committee in the more appropriate manner.



## **Other Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What does this mean for clubs structures?**

Club structures will not be affected. We are not asking clubs to change their administration and they will continue to elect their President, Secretary and Treasurer and run as normal. Current club activities such as selecting teams, appointing coaches and running games will not be impacted. Clubs will retain their independence over Club events and their finances. Club money will not be touched.

The new structure will however see increased support to Club Executives. The source of information on pre-season competitions, season draws and end of season events will be centralised from the one governance body through to the local League Office. This will improve certainty and consistency for Clubs. The Manager of the League Office (and staff) will work closely with the new League Board to implement their strategic vision and therefore be a key point of contact for Clubs and the community. Clubs will have multiple opportunities to become involved in the Committees which will support the work of this Board.

### **What are the Committees?**

The Committees are bodies made up of volunteers from the Clubs or other interested people. Anyone interested in the game may volunteer to serve on a Committee, you do not need to be a club executive. As a parent, you could make a real difference to the game by volunteering to be on the game Development Committee and helping to develop the game by working with other members on issues such as sponsorship, player pathways etc. Similarly, you might join the Finance and Audit committee and assist to write a Financial Guide for new Club Executives.

The four initial Committees will be: Finance, Audit and Risk; Governance; Competitions and Game Development. We have notes on the general functions of those Committees in the Board Charter and additional committees can be added by the Clubs if necessary.

### **Will we still have regular meetings?**

Absolutely. There will still be an opportunity for meetings which allow Clubs to come and hear about Committee and Board activity. If over time, Clubs may show a preference for communications via newsletters and less regular meetings on some issues, such as governance, but the frequency and model will be driven by the Clubs.

### **What does this mean for players?**

Players will continue to play games as scheduled with little to no impact on them individually. However, the improved governance will bring improved support structures and access to education and training for coaches and match officials. In addition, strategic planning of the entire competition from juniors to seniors will deliver improved pathways for players to transition through the game.

### **What does this mean for volunteers?**

There will be no change for our volunteers who support the game. The QRL and SEQ Board value all volunteers and one of the priorities of the review is to ensure their contribution is always recognised and supported by effective governance.

Volunteers can continue to be engaged in the administration of the game through their Clubs or via the Committees which will be established under the new League Board.

### **What does this mean for life members?**

Existing Life Members will be able to transfer their membership to the new entity so that their valued contribution to the game will continue to be acknowledged. Of course, new Life Members can be nominated as the new body continues to administer the game.



### **How will the local clubs be represented?**

Clubs are critical to the success of the game and their voice will be represented in the new structure via the Committees which will be established to support the new League Board.

There will be at least four Committees. Committee membership will be made up of volunteers from the Clubs and/or other interested people. This will ensure that the issues the clubs are dealing with are raised at Committee level by people from clubland. More committees can be added if the Clubs feel greater representation is required.

The process to form committees will include a formalised consultation process where the Clubs will also vote at the Annual General Meetings (AGMs) on any vacancy for elected Board members and so will continually have a say in who sits on the Board.

### **How do you get on a Committee?**

Any interested person can nominate to be on a Committee. The Board will consider all the applications and will make the final decision on who is appointed based upon the skills required to ensure the best outcomes for the game and also the need to get a fair representation on the Committees from a variety of interests. Information on what these Committees will be responsible for, the time commitment required and the skill set sought from Committee members is available. Nominations forms are available as well.

### **How do I get more involved?**

You can get involved by coming to the Club consultation session outlined in the Engagement Calendar and reading this information provided. We also encourage you to think about how you might support the change either by volunteering to serve on a Board Committee or by actively supporting the Board and Committees through your role as a Club Executive.

### **Where do I go for more information?**

Further Questions can be sent to Shane McNally [s.mcnally@qrl.com.au](mailto:s.mcnally@qrl.com.au).

### **Other sources of Information**

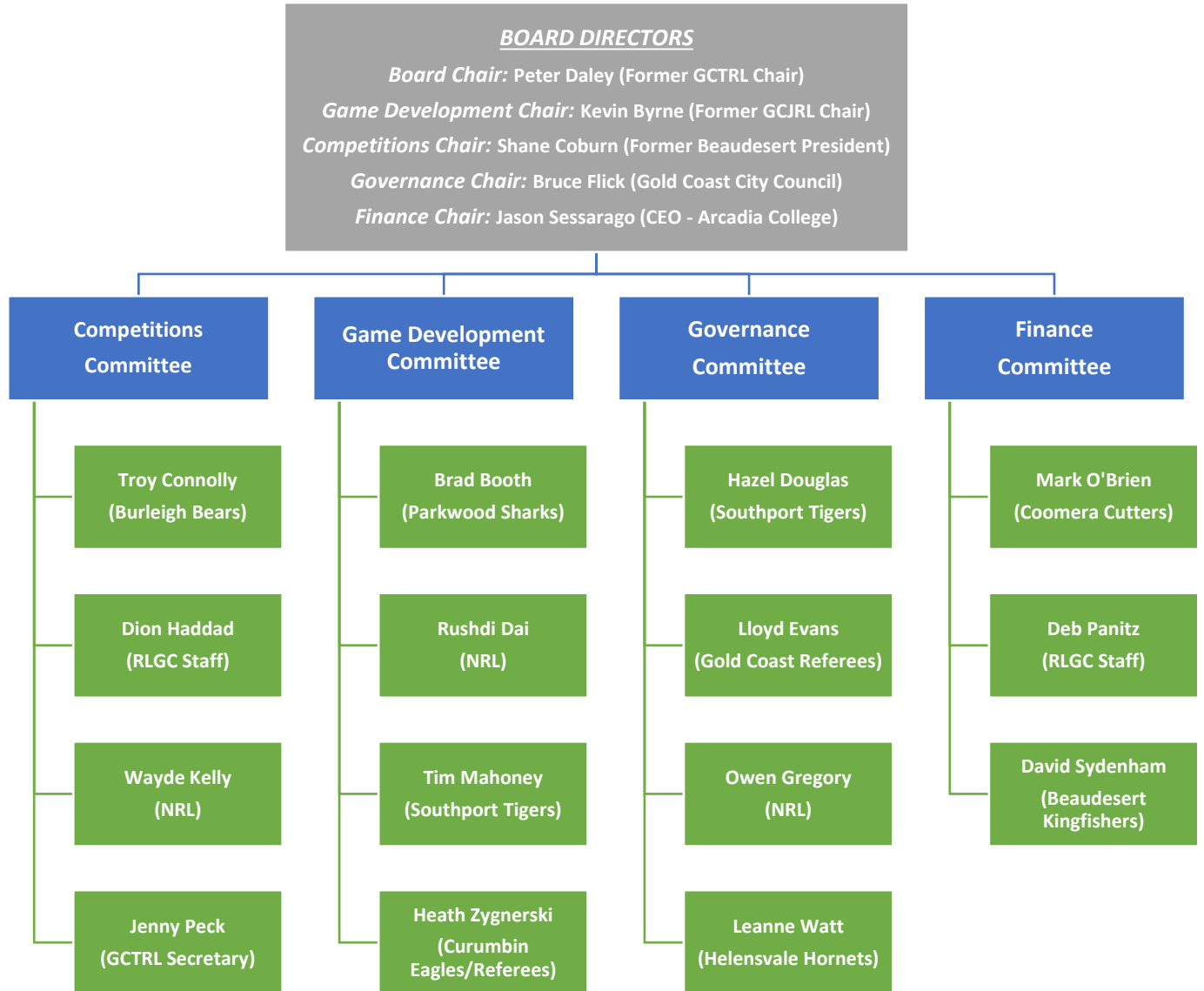
- Australian Sports Commission - <https://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/governance>
- QRL Website - [http://www.qrl.com.au/news/2016/08/24/new\\_governance\\_struc.html](http://www.qrl.com.au/news/2016/08/24/new_governance_struc.html)





# Appendix

## Appendix A – Rugby League Gold Coast Committee 2017





## Appendix B – Rugby League Ipswich Committee 2017

