





# INTERNATIONAL IRUGBY LEAGUE

#### 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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HON. TROY GRANT

On behalf of the Board of International Rugby League (IRL), I am pleased to present the annual report for 2024.

#### FROM THE CHAIR HON. TROY GRANT

On behalf of the Board of International Rugby League I am pleased to present the Annual Report for 2024 – a year in which rugby league can truly lay claim to being a global sport.

From the Wales Wheelchair team's tour to the United States, the Women's World Cup qualifying matches and tournaments in four continents, the incredible scenes in Sydney after Tonga qualified for the Pacific Cup final, and the SudAmericano in Argentina, 2024 was a year of many firsts.

France, Samoa and Wales secured berths at the Women's 2026 World Cup in Australia and Papua New Guinea, while the New Zealand Wheel Kiwis are now eligible for a place in the Wheelchair tournament after their international debut against the Wheelaroos.

There were more international matches played in 2024 than in any other year in the history of rugby league, with the exception of the last World Cup staged in England in 2022 – the first time that the Men's, Women's and Wheelchair tournaments had been held concurrently. The 72 sanctioned international fixtures in 2024 were played across all parts of the world and involved more countries playing than ever before. Exactly 50 per cent were men's fixtures, with the 72 Senior International Matches comprising of:

- 36 Men's internationals
- 25 Women's internationals
- II Wheelchair internationals

The number of Senior International Matches in 2024 exceeded the 64 played in 2023, which was the most outside of a World Cup year.

In addition to there being more international rugby league across 2024, the quality, standard, broadcast ratings and interest was also greater.

This is a credit to the IRL members who have collectively placed international rugby league in the most positive position for many years.

International Rugby League now has 58 member nations, and the game is growing rapidly in Africa, showing significant growth in the Americas and continuing to thrive in the Pacific and Europe.

There were many, many highlights but one of the proudest achievements for International Rugby League was staging the first ever Women's





Rugby League World Cup Qualifiers, with 16 nations across all four regions playing 15 games between April and October. Congratulations to France, Samoa and Wales for securing their places at RLWC2026 by winning qualifying tournaments in Europe and the Pacific.

Canada also won the Americas tournament, while Nigeria beat Kenya by the narrowest of margins to win a two-match African qualifying series.

Fiji and Ireland will now join Canada and Nigeria in the 2025 World Series to determine the final nation to join Australia, England, France, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Wales at RLWC2026.

The RLWC2026 qualifying process is unprecedented and is one of the benefits of the strategic decisions made by the IRL Board in Singapore in 2023 after the withdrawal of France as World Cup hosts.

The establishment of the IRL international calendar is also bearing fruit, with Samoa touring England in October and November – as Tonga did in 2023 – and the Men's and Women's Pacific Championships going

from strength to strength.

France hosted the men's RLWC2026 European qualifying tournament, and as the winner, France earned the right to battle it out with Cook Islands, Jamaica and South Africa for the two remaining World Cup spots.

A women's RLWC2026 Americas tournament also took place in Florida, with Canada triumphing against the United States and Jamaica.

The tournament was just one of the initiatives undertaken by the new USARL Board, which was elected in early 2024 after a lengthy reform process driven by the IRL.

The USARL also hosted Wales in two Wheelchair internationals in February – the first on American soil.



The inaugural USA youth team travelled to Serbia to play in the U19s European Championships in July, while the men's team toured South Africa in December for a twomatch series – winning both games against the Rhinos. It would be remiss not to mention the impact that the Australian Rugby League Commission's decision to take the opening two matches of the 2024 NRL Premiership to Las Vegas also had on the game in North America – and across the world.

I acknowledge and thank the ARLC, NRL CEO Andrew Abdo and, in particular, Chairman Peter V'landys for his significant investment in international rugby league. In addition to staging the Pacific Championships, which in 2024 was expanded to include seven nations playing men's and women's tournaments in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, the ARLC added a women's international between the Jillaroos and England to the 2025 Vegas schedule.



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This decision not only pits the two nations against each for the first time since the 2017 World Cup but exposes American audiences to the best athletes from any female contact sporting competition in the world.

I would also like to thank all other members of the IRL Board and management for their wonderful contributions to the international game.

I also welcome the support and ambition across the international rugby league community to rebuild after COVID closed borders and made it almost impossible for nations to play each other.

To be successful requires a strategic, measured and realistic endeavour, and I thank all those who have gone above and beyond in their contributions to rebuild the pathway for international rugby league. There is still a lot of work to do but the game is clearly on the right trajectory.

## THE GOLDEN BOOT AWARDS 2024



The Golden Boot Awards 2024 presentation was held on Friday 13 December in the Heroes and Legends Museum at Rugby League Central, Sydney. The IRL Golden Boot is awarded to the best players in sanctioned international matches each year for Men's, Women's and Wheelchair rugby league.









#### **Troy Grant, IRL Chair**

"On behalf of the IRL Board, I wish to congratulate all three winners Tarryn, Isaah and Rob for adding the 2024 IRL Golden Boot to the collection of awards and accolades they have each already received this season. International Rugby League is privileged to have such distinguished judges with their standing and experience and I wish to thank them for their continued support of the international game." Men's award judges - Darren Lockyer, James Graham and Petero Civoniceva. Women's award judges - Honey Hireme-Smiler, Danika Priim and Karyn Murphy. Wheelchair award judges - Malcolm Kielty, Phil Caplan, Niel Wood, Cyril Torres and Martin Coyd.



## Men's 2024 IRL Golden Boot Isaah Yeo

The award, as the international player of the year, caps the most successful season of the 30-year-old's career with Penrith winning a fourth consecutive NRL premiership, NSW triumphing in State of Origin and the Kangaroos beating Tonga in the Pacific Cup final. Yeo is the first Australian to receive the Golden Boot since former Kangaroos captain Cameron Smith in 2017.

## Women's 2024 IRL Golden Boot **Tarryn Aiken**

The award, as the international player of the year, caps a season in which Aiken helped Australia to victory in the Pacific Cup, Queensland to an historic State of Origin series win and Sydney Roosters to NRLW premiership glory. Aiken is the first Australian player to win the Golden Boot since Jillaroos and Roosters team-mates Jessica Sergis in 2019 and Isabelle Kelly in 2018.

## Wheelchair 2024 IRL Golden Boot **Rob Hawkins**

England wing Rob Hawkins has become one of the youngest players to win the IRL Golden Boot after being voted the 2024 International Rugby League Wheelchair Player of the Year. The 2024 IRL Golden Boot caps a stunning season for Hawkins in which he was named in the inaugural wheelchair Super League Dream Team, won the Super League Young Player of the Year award for the second time and helped Halifax Panthers to the grand final.

## MANAGEMENT REPORT

#### DANNY KAZANDJIAN

SECRETARY GENERAL



If last year was the proverbial year of two halves, 2024 was most certainly the Year of the ITT.

In addition to those ongoing Invitations to Tender for Rugby League World Cups 2028 to 2030, launched in November 2023, the company issued two new invitations to tender, one for a strategic commercial partner and another two for the men's and women's world series tournaments, as well as processing two midpoint reports for the future world cups.

All of these tenders take root from the fundamental strategic changes adopted by the Board in August 2023 and which were relayed in last year's annual report. The most important of them - the three tenders for the women's world cup in 2028, then the wheelchair and finally men's world cups in consecutive years provides the basis for the IRL's new commercial approach, as multiple events confirmed years in advance will allow IRL, for the first time, to acquire broadcast partners and sponsors for whom we will be creating an environment conducive to long term investment in our sport. Prior to the new strategy, a Local Organising Committee had control of all commercial activity around the world cup, but now all global partners – sponsors and broadcasters - can be directly contracted by IRL, thereby tripling the IF's world cup revenue streams from the previous one, the rights fee.

However, to achieve this, placing the world cups is all important, and that was the principal reason behind reducing the men's tournament size, and the host's burden by splitting the world cups up, to make staging a world cup as attractive, and feasible, to as wide a spread of potential countries as possible. The initial signs have been encouraging: in July we announced 13 confirmed tenderers from seven countries. Following a unanimous request from those seven countries, IRL pushed the bid submission deadline back from October to February 2025, following which a detailed evaluation process will commence before IRL announces the hosts who will join Australia and Papua New Guinea, which we announced as the hosts of Rugby League World Cup 2026 in July.

Our search for a strategic commercial partner or partners is grounded in the ambition to extract full value out of our under-exploited asset portfolio. Following the ITT process the Board is in a good position to decide once the future world cup hosts have been confirmed.

The final ITT - for the men's and women's Rugby League World Series 2025 – was in keeping with IRL's 2023 commitment to launch this new concept which we believe can, over time, become another valuable asset in IRL's competition portfolio.

The notion of our four regions playing off as a prelude to a world cup is compelling. Due to scheduling constraints stemming from the world cup qualifying competitions described by the Chair in his report, potential hosts did not have a great deal of time to put together bids, and it is a credit to those National Federations that did submit bids in December. The world series, along with the three IRL Golden Boots, the IRL World Rankings, our new technical education project, regional tournaments and of course blanket coverage across our suite of flagship world cups, will form the foundation of IRL's commercial offering - one we are confident will result in significant revenue, which will lead to record investment in the global game.

The Board, which has exercised its oversight role fastidiously while providing management with excellent support, approved a technical education budget for the first time, and I expect a systematic roll out of this allimportant service in 2025. This is another fundamental sporting duty that IRL has not performed in the past but will do so from now on. The year ended with confirmed plans for a groundbreaking African tour to Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya, to support those three nations' growth and ambitions. Part of this project will ultimately be a global technical education programme, not dissimilar to most other international sports, to ensure improved standards and recognition of equivalent qualifications around the world.

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> In closing, I'd like to personally thank the Board for its leadership in what is a really exciting and interesting time for the IRL; my management colleagues for all their hard work; and, above all, the countless number of officers and volunteers in our 58 member nations who continue to push the sport's boundaries through their resilience and passion.

I look forward to working with IRL's newest Director, Laurie Daley, on this technical project in the months to come. Laurie's addition to the Board, in February, provided IRL with unique insights into football-related matters and is a further sign of the Board positioning itself to be able to serve the best interests of the members. Another good example of that is the governance reform project, with the Board recommending a reduction in the size of the Board, from 11 to eight Directors, while at the same time increasing the ratio of independent Directors to elected Directors, in keeping with good governance best practice. In addition, the organisation is looking to streamline its corporate structure, moving to just one company rather than the current two, which is a legacy of previous IRL Boards' efforts to achieve the most tax-efficient position.

The federation bade farewell to its inaugural Head of Judiciary, Karim Khan, late in the year. Karim, who is now a full time judge, was a phenomenal leader and the robust and respected IRL judiciary is his legacy. We were fortunate enough to replace him with Geoff Bellew, in September, as well as recruiting two deputy committee Chairs, Juanita Maiden and Alistair Campbell. Geoff has an incredible judicial, arbitration and sports background and the judiciary will continue to be led by the very highest calibre of expertise. ....

## International Calendar

#### 'AT A GLANCE'

#### 2024 in review

- 72 Senior International Matches played 36 Men's, 25 Women's, 11 Wheelchair
- First IRL Women's RLWC Qualifying tournaments in Africa, Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific
- France, Samoa, Wales qualify for IRL Women's RLWC2026
- France host and win European Men's RLWCQ tournament
- Australia beat Tonga to regain Men's Pacific Cup; Australia beat NZ in Women's final
- England win historic two-match series against Samoa

#### 2025 looking ahead

- Australia to tour England for first Ashes Series since 2003
- Northern & Southern Hemisphere Men's RLWC2026 play-offs
- Canada to host inaugural IRL Women's World Series
- Three-tier nine nation European Championships
- Australia and England stage historic Women's international in Las Vegas
- New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga to play in Men's Pacific Cup



## International Calendar

AUSTRALIA WILL HOST THE MOST COMPETITIVE AND CULTURALLY RICH IRL RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP IN 2026, FEATURING MEN'S, WOMEN'S AND WHEELCHAIR TOURNAMENTS.

RLWC2026, which has been awarded to the Australian Rugby League Commission by the IRL Board, will be contested by a total of 26 teams – comprising of 10 men's, eight women's and eight wheelchair teams - in October and November 2026.

The tournament will include matches in Papua New Guinea, and will showcase the cultures of the Pacific, where the majority of men's and women's teams are set to hail from.

Matches will be staged at first class rugby league venues in Australia and Papua New Guinea. The schedule is expected to include double-headers and triple-headers to give fans added value for ticket prices.

With the IRL Board making the decision to reduce the number of men's teams from 16 to 10, the 17th iteration of the Rugby League World Cup promises to be the most keenly contested yet.

First held in France in 1954, the Rugby League World Cup is the second oldest sporting world cup after the FIFA World Cup and has followed a variety of formats, with the number of teams ranging from four to 10 in 2008, 14 in 2013 and 16 in 2017 and 2022.

With Tonga's emergence as a Pacific powerhouse in 2017, Samoa creating history by qualifying for the final of RLWC2021 at Old Trafford, Fiji having been semi-finalists in 2008, 2013 and 2017 and losing narrowly to New Zealand in the quarter-final of the last World Cup, and PNG being on the rise, the international game has never been more competitive.

IRL Chair Troy Grant said: "The Rugby League World Cup is the pinnacle of the sport and RLWC2026 promises to be the best and most competitive ever staged.

"On behalf of the IRL Board, I would like to congratulate ARLC Chair Peter V'landys, the ARLC Board, NRL CEO Andrew Abdo and his team on the quality of their bid and I have every confidence that they will deliver the best World Cup on record.

"We have all been impressed by the ARLC's ventures into Las Vegas, led by Peter and Andrew, and have no doubt that they will elevate the Rugby League World Cup to a new level. "Rugby League has never been stronger in Australia and the Pacific, with sold-out stadiums, record television ratings and much excitement about Pacific expansion.





"The 2026 World Cup in Australia, with matches to played in Papua New Guinea, will see the rise of the game in the Pacific reach greater heights and ensure Rugby League is the No.1 sport in the region. Australia has a proud history of hosting successful World Cups in 2008 and 2017, which featured the women's tournament being played alongside the men's tournament for the first time.

"The condensed format at RLWC2026 will mean every single match is competitive, while the possibility of some games being played as double or triple headers represents great value for fans wanting to see the best rugby league talent on the planet.

"The culture, diversity and competitiveness of the nations involved will capture the attention of global audiences and grow the game ever further."

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> The three tournaments will again be staged together in 2026 in a celebration of inclusion and culture that will cement rugby league's position as the No.1 sport of the Pacific.

The Wheelchair World Cup was also played simultaneously with the Men's and Women's World Cups at RLWC2021 in England and generated huge interest due to the skill, speed and intensity of the game and players.

#### ROAD TO RLWC2026

Australia, Samoa, New Zealand, England, Lebanon, Tonga, Fiji and Papua New Guinea have already qualified for the men's tournament after reaching the quarter-final stage of the last World Cup in England in 2022.

The remaining two berths are set to be decided by Northern and Southern Hemisphere playoffs, with France (Europe) to host Jamaica (Americas) in Albi on October 25 and Cook Islands (Asia-Pacific) to meet South Africa (MEA) in a match to played alongside the Pacific Championships.

France won the European RLWC Qualifying tournament in 2024, which included Serbia, Wales and Ukraine.

There is one spot to be decided in the Women's IRL 2026 World Cup after France, Samoa and Wales won berths in 2024 qualifying tournaments to book their places alongside Australia, New Zealand, England and Papua New Guinea. France beat Greece and Serbia, and Wales beat Ireland and Netherlands to finish top of their pools in European RLWC Qualifying tournaments, while Samoa edged Fiji in the final of the Pacific Bowl, which doubled as a qualifying tournament for RLWC2026.







The eighth and final spot will be determined at the inaugural IRL Women's World Series to be played in Canada, with the support of the City of Brampton, Ontario.

Ireland have a second chance after winning a European play-off against Serbia, as do Fiji as the Pacific runners-up.

Canada won November's Americas RLWCQ tournament in Florida, featuring USA and

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Jamaica, while Nigeria beat Kenya in a twomatch series, which was determined on forand-against after the nations won one match apiece, to claim the MEA World Series berth.

Fiji will play Canada and Ireland will meet Nigeria on October 21 at Terry Fox Stadium, Brampton, with the two winners to play-off for the final RLWC2026 berth at Lamport Stadium, Toronto on October 26.

## IRL World Rankings

Fetu Samoa skyrocketed up the women's IRL World Rankings after their successful Pacific Championships campaign, while Tonga moved back into the top four men's teams and New Zealand featured for their first time in the wheelchair rankings.

Australia remains first in the men's and women's rankings following their Pacific Cup victories, while England are still the top wheelchair team – but only by the narrowest of margins from France after winning one match apiece in their 2024 series.

England are closing in on second-placed New Zealand in the men's rankings after beating Toa Samoa 2-0 in their historic series, while the Kiwis failed to qualify for the final of the Pacific Cup.

Tonga's epic 25-24 triumph over New Zealand saw Kristian Woolf's men leapfrog the Toa into fourth spot, while Papua New Guinea climbed from seventh into six place – trading positions with Fiji – after winning the Pacific Bowl for a second consecutive year.

In the women's rankings, there was significant movement after 2026 World Cup Qualifying tournaments and matches in Africa, Europe, North America and the Pacific.

Fetu Samoa's rise from 24th position to 11th is based on the Pacific nation being rewarded for playing regular matches in official IRL competitions and winning against higher ranked opponents.

The Fetu beat Cook Islands and Fiji to claim the seventh berth at RLWC2026 in Australia and Papua New Guinea, and then climbed higher by toppling PNG Orchids in a promotionrelegation play-off for a place in next year's Pacific Cup against Australia and New Zealand. Before their 2023 Pacific Championships defeat of Fiji, Samoa had not won a women's international since 2008. Samoa has also played more matches in the past 12 months than they had in the previous 12 years - winning all four under the coaching of Jamie Soward.

The IRL World Rankings are calculated on each nation's performance over the current season and the three preceding seasons.

Points are awarded to each team for each match based on:

The result of the match - win, lose or draw. The margin of victory (or defeat) - the larger the winning margin the greater the value to the rankings.

The relative strength of opposition faced - if you play a higher ranked team that is of greater value than playing a lower ranked team. The date of the match – more recent matches are weighted more heavily - a result in the most recent two years is worth double a result three years ago and four times a result that is four years old.

The importance of the match - World Cup matches are ranked top followed in order by World Cup Qualifiers, Regional Championships and one-off international matches.

The points are then used to create the Official World Rankings by ordering the teams by virtue of the points gained over the four-year period. Only officially sanctioned matches played at senior level between two approved members are considered as part of the rankings.

The 72 sanctioned international matches in 2024 was the most in a non-World Cup year and second only to 2022, when the men's, women's and wheelchair World Cups were staged together for the first time. It was also an increase on last year's record 64 international fixtures.

#### MEN

Tonga and PNG were the notable movers near the top of the IRL World Rankings ladder, with Serbia, Wales, Ukraine and USA being the other nations who climbed significantly in 2024. Serbia is now ninth, just ahead of Cook Islands and Netherlands, after claiming third place in October's European World Cup qualifying tournament in France.

Wales, who were runners-up to France in the tournament to decide the European nation in the 2025 World Series, rose from 17th to 12th, while Ukraine climbed from 20th to 14th place. The United States Hawks moved up seven places from 31st to 24th spot after beating South Africa in two match series in Pretoria.

Argentina are 34th after hosting the South American Championships and winning the final match against Chile, who took out the tournament based on for-and-against after beating Brazil in the other match.



# Top 10 World Rankings



Besides Samoa, who rose 11 places, Fiji were the other big mover in the women's rankings after winning the Pacific berth at the 2025 World Series.

The Bulikula are another team rewarded for playing more regularly, with their two matches in the 2026 World Cup Qualifying tournament doubling the number of international fixtures they have played since 1998.

As a result of their win against Cook Islands and a gripping 16-12 loss to Samoa in the World Cup play-off at Auckland's Eden Park, Fiji moved from 26th to 16th place.

Ireland, who are also in the World Series, climbed from 10th to seventh spot.

#### WHEELCHAIR

New Zealand feature in the wheelchair World Rankings for the first time after the international debut of the Wheel Kiwis against Australia.

Despite the Wheelaroos winning both matches in Auckland, Ireland leapfrogged Australia into third place following November's clash with France and their Celtic Cup triumph against Wales and Scotland.

The trans-Tasman series was the first time the Wheelaroos had played since the World Cup in England in 2022.

Spain also played their first international match since the World Cup when they faced England in France to leapfrog USA into seventh spot.



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## Complete World Rankings Overview

#### MEN

1. AUSTRALIA 2. NEW ZEALAND 3. ENGLAND 4. TONGA 5. SAMOA 6. PAPUA NEW GUINEA 7. FIJI 8. FRANCE 9. SERBIA 10. COOK ISLANDS 11. NETHERLANDS 12. WALES 13. MALTA 14. UKRAINE 15. GREECE 16. LEBANON 17. ITALY 18. IRELAND 19. JAMAICA 20.CZECHIA 21. CHILE 22. SCOTLAND 23. PHILIPPINES 24.USA 25. POLAND 26. SOUTH AFRICA 27. GERMANY 28.NORWAY 29. BRAZIL

30. KENYA 31. CANADA 32. MONTENEGRO 33. NORTH MACEDONIA **34.ARGENTINA** 35. ALBANIA 36. BULGARIA 37. GHANA 38. NIGERIA 39. TÜRKIYE 40. CAMEROON 41. JAPAN 42.SPAIN 43.COLOMBIA 44. EL SAVADOR 45.RUSSIA 46.BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA 47. HONG KONG 48. SOLOMON ISLANDS 49.VANUATU 50.NIUE 51. LATVIA 52. DENMARK 53. BELGIUM 54.ESTONIA 55. SWEDEN 56.MOROCCO 57. HUNGARY

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#### WOMEN

1. AUSTRALIA 2. NEW ZEALAND 3. ENGLAND 4. FRANCE 5. PAPUA NEW GUINEA 6. WALES 7. IRELAND 8. GREECE 9. CANADA 10. COOK ISLANDS 11. SAMOA 12. SERBIA 13. NETHERLANDS 14. USA 15. TONGA 16. FIJI 17. NIGERIA 18. KENYA **19. PHILIPPINES** 20.BRAZIL 21. ITALY 22. UGANDA 23. JAMAICA 24.GHANA 25. MALTA 26.TÜRKIYE 27. LEBANON





#### WHEELCHAIR

- 1. ENGLAND
- 2. FRANCE
- 3. IRELAND
- 4. AUSTRALIA
- 5. WALES
- 6. SCOTLAND
- 7. SPAIN
- 8. USA
- 9. NEW ZEALAND
- 10. ITALY

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## 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)



SIMON JOHNSON Deputy Chair (RFL)



**RHODRI JONES** Director (ERL)



**BRIAN JULIFF** Director (ERL)



**GREG PETERS** Director (NZRL)





**DEAN ANDREW** Director (ERL)

LAURIE DALEY Independent Director



SANDIS TSAKA Director (APRL)



PETER V'LANDYS AM Director (ARLC)



**ANDREW ABDO** 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: Peter V'landvs (IRL) Emma Young (IRL)

The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for overseeing the IRL's financial discipline and practices, in addition to high-level risk management and making recommendations to the Board. Chaired by ARLC Chair Peter V'landys, ARC's annual focus was on efficiency measures to strengthen the organisation's stability in what continues to be a challenging environment.

#### LAWS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Graham Annesley (ARLC) Michael Maguire (APRLC) Phil Bentham (RFL) Ruan Sims (ARLC) Danny Kazandjian (IRL) Lyndsay Anfield (RFL) Laurent Frayssinous (ERL) Charlotte Monkman (IRL)

The Laws Advisory Group (LAG) meets twice per year. These meetings coincide with IRL Board meetings so that any law amendments can be proposed to Board in a timely manner. Throughout the two meetings in 2024, suggested law amendments from Member Nations and Women's and Wheelchair sub-groups are discussed. Key features of both meetings in 2024 were discussions over proposed international law amendments, women and girls playing conditions and updates from representatives from the player safety advisory group.

#### **HISTORY & HERITAGE ADVISORY GROUP**

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

The group continued to assess the historic results from the women's game. This project has now concluded and the results have been sent to members for comment and approval.

A part of the ongoing work of the group is to continually assess and review new evidence provided for games. This year a great deal of effort went into a query raised about a tour by Australia to Fiji in 1993. The evidence was reviewed, additional research carried out until we concluded that, whilst the tour took place and should be recognised as pioneering, it did not meet the criteria to be a senior international match.

The complete men's results are now available on the IRL website.

#### WOMEN AND GIRLS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Julia Lee (IRL) Charlotte Monkman (IRL) Peggy Matapo (APRLC) Fiona Cerboneschi (ARLC) Nadine Conlon (NZRL) Stuart Barrow (RFL) Rebecca Stevens (MEA) Katie Grudzinski (Americas) Joanna Lester (Secretary)

In 2024, WGAG set itself a clear mandate to create and launch a new online digital resource aimed at supporting the global growth and development of women's and girls' rugby league -

"A Toolkit for Growing Rugby League for Women and Girls Globally". It is hoped that this resource will be the first of many in a bid to promote women's participation and encourage and nurture new female talent both on and off the field. The toolkit was launched in December 2024 and WGAG is assisting IRL to plan the delivery of several virtual workshops in 2025, linked to toolkit topics and facilitating sharing of knowledge and experience of the women's game. The toolkit is readily available to access and download online on the IRL Portal. Others areas of work for WGAG included law consultations and playing conditions, evaluating case studies and sharing regional updates from the women and girls' rugby communities around the world.

#### WHEELCHAIR ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Niel Wood Ollie Cruickshank (ERL) Martin Meredith (ARLC) John McMullen (RFL) Jeremy Edwards (APRLC) David Butler (ERL and Secretary) Dominique Baloup (FFRXIII) In 2024 the Group continued its mission to grow wheelchair rugby league in the Southern Hemisphere and to create a new competition to be played between world cups. In received, the group was able to support Australian Wheelchair Rugby League on a visit to New Zealand. The visit included coach and match official education plus two senior international matches. As a result of this intervention, New Zealand is eligible to participate in RLWC2026. The planning and preparation for a new international competition continued and at the end of 2024, we were able to seek expressions of interest to host the event in November 2025. Two expressions of interest were received and we are working with the successful bidder to stage an event in 2025 and with the unsuccessful bidder to host the second iteration.

#### CLASSIFICATIONS ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Chris Godfrey (RFL) Jamie Blair (Independent) Che Fornusek (NZRL) Penny Broomhead (Independent) Melissa Peters (Independent) Scott Muttdon (Independent) Harrison Timbrell (Independent) Charlotte Monkman (IRL) Richard Egan (MEDSCO)

The Classification Advisory Group (CAG) continues to refine the classification system to ensure equity and competitiveness and promote inclusivity in disability sport. The new composition of CAG members reflects an ongoing commitment to specialisation, incorporating classification experts and a player representative. Key areas of discussion in 2024 were around minimum levels of amputation, impairment profiling and sports class distributions.

#### **MEDICAL SUB-COMMITTEE**

Chair: Mick Molloy (Independent) Nathan Gibbs (APRLC) David Heslop (ARLC) Chris Brookes (RFL) Richard Lawrance (ERL) Ed Middleton (ERL) Richard Egan (Independent) Medsco continues to convene adhoc to advise on a case-by-case basis, under last year's creation of a minimum medical standard for application across all international matches. Inherent in this standard is the identification and codification of basic and mandatory pitchside care and sport trauma competencies and skills. Medsco is also represented on the Classifications Advisory Group providing relevant medical insight and knowledge where required.

#### PHYSICAL DISABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

Chair: Colin Moore (Independent) Niel Wood (IRL and Secretary) Chris Godfrey (RFL) Neil Lynch (ERL) Sandra Hickey (NZRL) Paul Tubridy (APRLC) Keith Povah (ARLC and Match Officials)

PDAG have spent the last 12 months working through support for the Classifications Group who continue to work towards refining the system which will allow for effective classification and ensure future International players are in an appropriate category.

A review of the laws is currently underway and the advisory group continues to work towards organising a World Cup in 2026.



## ANTI-DOPING

#### 2024 was very busy regarding antidoping activities:

- 1. The main issue was the WADA Code Compliance questionnaires, which required work since there are some shortcomings from the past. 170 Doping Control Forms were missing from the IRL World Cup 2017, which we found after several weeks of communication with different antidoping organisations. Just a few are left to be entered in ADAMS. That means the primary task is finished, and IRL will be Code-Compliant.
- 2. The second issue was connected with the Athlete Biological Passport, which was tied to IRL in many situations despite no reason for that. We spent several months communicating with the laboratory and NADO of UK, New Zealand, and Australia to solve the problem, and in that way, we reduced the lab invoice.
- 3. At the end of the year, due to the understanding of the IRL Executive Board, we performed 16 doping controls, 8 in competition and 8 out of competition. In this way, IRL showed goodwill towards WADA and planned to conduct at least some controls in 2024. The monthly antidoping fee covers part of the financing for the doping controls.
- 4. Two Therapeutic Use exemptions are approved, and one application from Jamaica is still open.
- 5. Accompanied more than 20 doping-positive cases from different NADOs.

#### The main tasks in the 2025:

- 1. increase the number of doping controls due to preparations for the World Cup 2026 to at least 50 in and out of competition to be prepared for 200 in 2026 during the World Cup
- 2. Organise an educational workshop for all World Cup 2026 participants.
- 3. Work on implementation and understanding of the TUE service.



Above: Prof. Dr. Nedad Dikic, IRL Anti Doping Officer



# anti-doping agency world

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2024 saw a record number of senior international matches played outside of a Rugby League World Cup year and also saw advancement of the game globally at domestic level.

Wales continued its participation boom, recording over a 30% increase in the number of registrations as playing numbers soared 4,334, an increase of 1,031 on 2023's figures, with the majority of new participants being in youth categories, moving club rugby league to an even firmer footing in the country.

IRL's highest capacity members continued their upward trend in participation, with Australia approaching a quarter of a million registrants with 246,84 registered players in 2024, up from 217,757 in 2023 with almost 8,000 new players playing the women and girls game. England showed a small increase (97,958 / 97,317) whilst France's participation increase in participation (9,742 / 8,767) of almost 1,000 registered players included over 600 new female players in youth categories. New Zealand (35,101 / 30,268) recorded a further progress, building on 2023's significant progress as more young people take up the game.

Kenya continued its positive trajectory, having been promoted to Affiliate Member in 2023, it increased its playing numbers significantly to 1200 in 2024 from 850 in 2023, with healthy increases across the board, but predominantly in youth categories. Elsewhere in Africa, Ghana (501 / 338) also continues to grow interest in youth rugby league. Canada (534/350) continues to increase after the introduction of youth activity and USA (819/707) increased the number of men playing by over 200, despite a drop off in junior players.

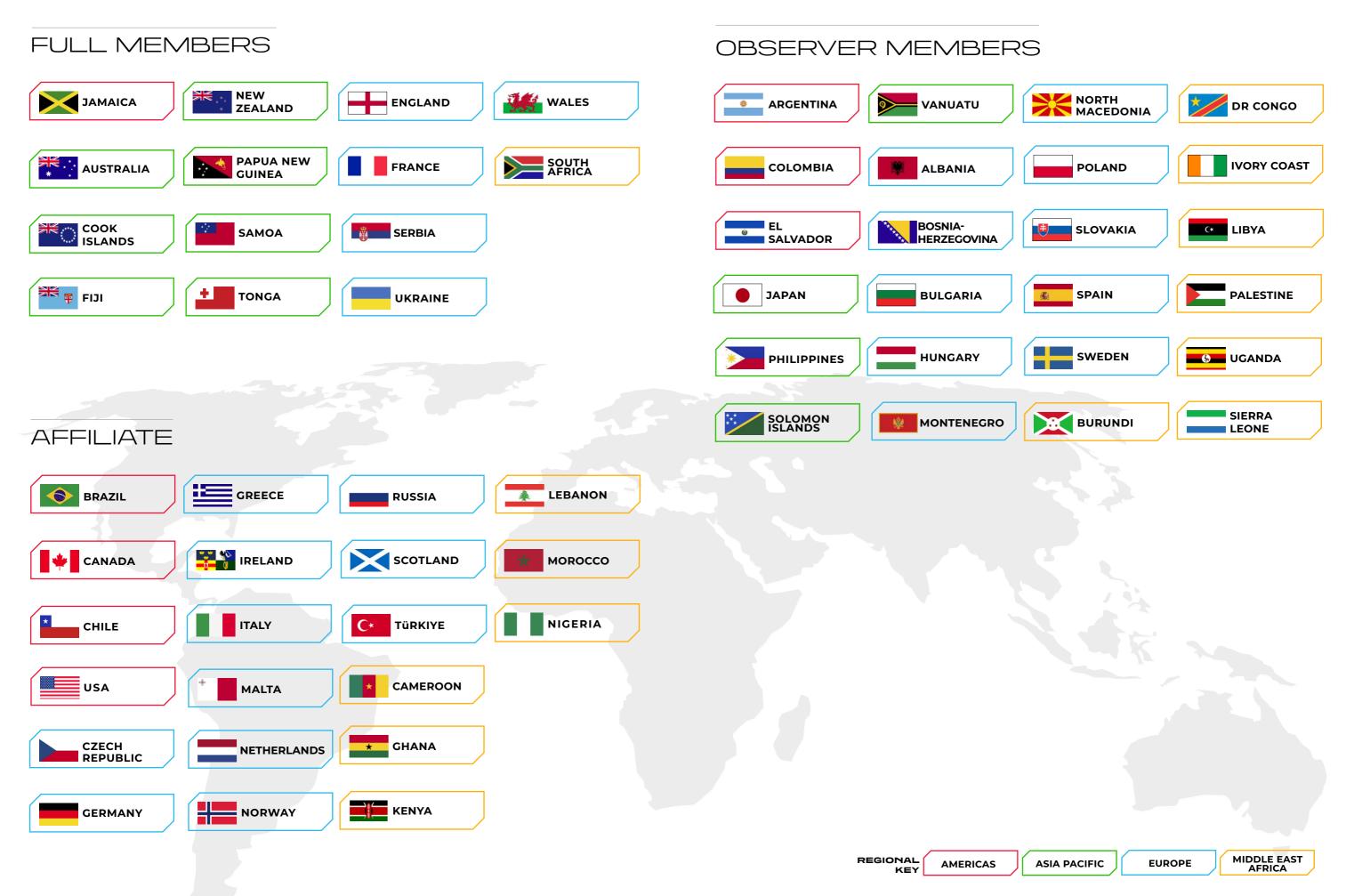
In Europe, domestic competition continues to grow in Czechia, Greece, Netherlands and Norway, with the latter recording over 500 registered players for the first time. The wheelchair game also continues to expand domestically, with England, France and Wales' respective competitions continuing their expansion and the introduction of a new domestic competition in Ireland. The current membership policy was introduced in 2019, which initially allowed for a two-year transition period to allow members time to adjust to the new policy. The global pandemic delayed compliance deadlines and nations were afforded a Covid-free two year corrective action period following non-compliant status.

As a result of the 2023 Annual Membership Audit at which deadlines for corrective action expired, Ireland, Italy, Russia and Scotland were downgraded to from Full to Affiliate Member status and Spain was downgraded from Affiliate to Observer Member status.

As part of the reclassification process, the national federations for Belgium, Denmark, Ethiopia, Latvia, Saudi Arabia and Trinidad & Tobago were all expelled from the company following several years of inactivity in line with the Membership Policy.

Argentina became the latest country to gain Observer Member status and is already showing promise to progress quickly as the game expands in South America and the Asociación Argentina de Rugby League is already running a five-team competition, known as the Argentina Super League.

FULLMEMBER	PARTICPATION 2024	PARTICIPATION 2023	VARIANCE
AUSTRALIA (ARLC)	246,984	217,757	29,227
COOK ISLANDS (CIRLA)	438	476	38
FRANCE (FFRXIII)	9742	8767	975
FIJI (FNRL)	not supplied	not supplied	
JAMAICA (JRLA)	742	626	116
NEW ZEALAND (NZRL)	35,101	30,268	4833
PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNGRFL)	11,893	9540	2353
ENGLAND (RFL)	97,958	97,317	641
SAMOA (RLS)	592	1260	668
SOUTH AFRICA (SARLSA)	504	821	317
SERBIA (SRLF)	859	766	93
TONGA (TR13)	3042	N/A	3042
UKRAINE (UFRL)	data not requested	data not requested	
WALES (WRL)	4334	3303	1031



## AMERICAS RUGBY LEAGUE



IN 2024, THERE WERE ROBUST DOMESTIC CHAMPIONSHIPS AND SEVERAL REPRESENTATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL GAMES.

Canadian Provincial domestic championships were executed in both British Columbia and Ontario. The Launch of the youth program in USA and Canada, along the vibrant Jamaica youth marked a major milestone in the region. The USA organised four regional club championships on the East and West Coasts under the banners of the USARL Championship, with Pacific Coast Rugby League, Utah Rugby League, North Rugby League, and USARL South Rugby League. The winners from each conference competed for the National Championship, with DC Cavalry emerging victorious over the Provo Broncos. In the Caribbean, Jamaica once again delivered a full calendar of competitions across U14, U16, U19, intercollegiate and community club National Championships. The women's domestic game continued to grow with playing of the nation's first domestic 13s Championship.

The Americas Region embraced its first ever Americas Women's Championship which doubled up as the RLWC2026 qualifier, with USA hosted Canada and Jamaica. Canada will be progressing to the Women's World Series in 2025 representing the region, whereas Jamaica will proceed in the men's qualifiers uncontested from the region. Several international matches took place in the region, with Canada and Jamaica played bilateral fixtures. The NRL launched the Las Vegas events with NRL teams playing on USA soil and a 9s festival with Canadian and local USA teams participating, USA defeated South Africa in a two match series in South Africa and the USA II9s participated in the European Youth Championship held in Serbia.

The USA governance reform, which spanned two years, has been successfully concluded. The new structure includes 9 directors from an 11-member elected board, representing 7 voting clubs and one voting league. The elected officials are: Chairperson: Matt Goshnick Board Members: Chris Martin, George Tupou, and Dustin Zerrer Directors nominated by the 11 member clubs and one league: Billy Neilson, Darren Piggins and Drew Slover, Individual Female Member: Miranda Barnard, Individual Male Member: David Abo. This new governance structure aims to enhance the leadership and strategic direction of the organisation.







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## ASIA PACIFIC RUGBY LEAGUE



#### 2024

2024 was another great year for Rugby League within the Pacific.

Many of the Pacific nations are building very strong domestic competitions, that include men & women as well as boys & girls. This is extremely pleasing to see the growth of domestic rugby league within the Pacific nations.

Along with this growth also comes the need for more referees and coaches. It is firmly Asia Pacific Rugby League's responsibility to provide accredited course so we can adequately train these new referees and coaches.

Asia Pacific Rugby League has partnered with New Zealand Rugby League to provide these courses. Currently our first referees training course is under way and it's being delivered in the Cook Islands. Following the completion of this course, we are planning to offer the newly qualified referees the opportunity to travel to New Zealand to referee in junior competitions to gain further experience.

Asia Pacific Rugby League continues to work closely with all its members across the Pacific and Asia. This report gives further details on the activities of our members. I would also take this opportunity to thank the board of Asia Pacific Rugby League for their continued support.

#### **New Membership**

**Tonga Rugby XIII** has become the new IRL member for Tonga. The new board will be responsible for the development of all Rugby League played within Tonga – Men, Women and Boys & Girls.

It is very exciting to finally have a new rugby league board especially one with a lot of experience, with regards to government processes, the laws in Tonga and of course, rugby league knowledge.

The Asia Pacific Board wishes the new Tonga Rugby XIII board good luck in the coming years.

#### Events of 2024

#### **Pacific Championships**

The Pacific Championships were held again in 2024.

Matches were held in Australia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand. Record crowds and TV viewing audiences. Asia Pacific Rugby League continues to support the Australian Rugby League Commission and the National Rugby League with this exciting tournament. A special thanks to New Zealand Rugby League for their hosting and management of a number of matches that were played in New Zealand.

#### Samoa tour to the UK

The 2024 Samoa rugby league tour of England was a two-match tour by the Samoa national rugby league team to England in October and November 2024.

The tour was Samoa's first tour to a European Rugby League nation, and only the second of a Pacific Island Nation, after Tonga's 2023 tour. This tour was extremely important, not only to Samoan rugby league but to all the Pacific nations. Both Tonga and Samoa have toured the UK and hopefully more Pacific nations will follow in the footsteps of these nations.

#### Tonga U16 Boys & Girls tour to Australia

2024 has been a great year for Rugby League in Tonga.

A tour to Australia in June for the Tonga School Boys and Girls Under 16s Team. This tour saw the girls play 3 matches in Sydney and the boys playing 3 matches in Brisbane. Four boys and one girl from the Australia Under 16s Tour were awarded school scholarships overseas due to their outstanding performance in the Tonga Secondary Schools Representative Teams.

#### Sudamericana South American tournament. Argentina

The tournament was the fourth iteration of the South American/Latin American Championship and featured Brazil, Chile and hosts Argentina, who were recently admitted as an International Rugby League member under the leadership of ARL President Pablo Aguilera.

Argentina Rugby League is part of the Asia Pacific Rugby League Confederation. APRLC and the IRL worked very closely with Argentina Rugby League to support them with hosting the South American Championships.

#### Growth in Asia Pacific

#### Papua New Guinea to join the NRL in 2028

After working on the Bid for nearly three years, the PNG and Australian Prime Ministers, along with the ARLC Chairman, Mr Peter V'landys, announced on the 12 December 2024 that the PNG NRL Bid had been successful and a new team based in Port Moresby would participate in the NRL competition from 2028.

The PNG Hunters have successfully played in the Queensland State Cup competition for over ten years, winning the competition in 2017, the same year that PNG co-hosted the RLWC2017.

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#### Asian Cup

Asia Pacific Rugby League has been working very closely with the Philippines Rugby League during 2024 on the first Asia Rugby League Championship Tournament that will be held in 2025.

The Asian Rugby League Championships is proposed to be scheduled as a yearly tournament in the international window of Oct/Nov.

With the growth of Rugby League within Asia, currently the IRL Asian members are The Philippines and Japan. Asia Pacific Rugby League has been working very closely with the Hong Kong and Singapore Rugby League with regards to their membership applications.

## 2026 Rugby League World Cup Qualifying Events.

#### Men

The Cook Island men will play the South African men in Sydney during the International window in 2025.

#### Women

Fiji women with be playing in a 4-nation tournament in the international window in 2025.



## EUROPEAN RUGBY LEAGUE

Rugby League in Europe continued to lead the way with more senior international matches played involving European teams than ever before, with a total of 40 Senior Internationals played across the across the men's, women's and wheelchair game.

A major focus was on Rugby League World Cup 2026 qualification, with men's and women's tournaments taking place.

For the men, Wales eliminated Serbia in the first semi-final whilst France had the upper hand over Ukraine in a floodlit double-header in Carcassonne before France overcame Wales in the final on the following weekend in Perpignan to progress to the next stage of qualification.

The women's tournament served up feast of games throughout the year, with several nations taking huge strides forward. Netherlands eliminated Italy in the preliminary game to take their place in Group A alongside Wales and Ireland. Wales edged Ireland out in the opening group game in April, before Netherlands pushed Ireland all the way in Dublin the following month, narrowly losing by just a four-point margin. After a close first half, Wales eventually overpowered Netherlands in Amsterdam to qualify for RLWC26, with Ireland taking 2nd place in the group. France were the standout package in Group B, recorded comfortable wins over Greece in April and Serbia in June to book their place to Australia. Greece took second place after a 32-4 win over Serbia in Athens in May.

The final game of the competition saw Greece, who were awarded the home game due to their superior world ranking position, host Ireland in October for the play-off game, which saw Ireland victorious and progress to the second-stage of qualification in 2025.

Elsewhere in the running game there were several notable bilateral games played, including England hosting a two-match series against Samoa men, Wales hosting Jamaica in Neath, Scotland travelling to the Netherlands with a team made up entirely of players from their domestic competition and Czechia hosting both Ukraine and Poland for a bumper weekend of action in October.





The wheelchair game also continued to break new ground, with Wales undertaking a pioneering two-game tour to the USA in February before the annual Celtic Cup, played in June, was contested in Ireland for the first time and seeing the home side victorious for the first time in a decade, with Scotland taking the runners-up position and condemning Wales to last place.

The Autumn slot saw England host France in a thriller in Wigan, before the wheelchair season concluded in November with Spain pushing a fledgling England side all the way in Nantes in a double header that also saw France beat Ireland, before France had their revenge over England two days later in St Lo.

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Wales defended their U16s Four Nations title for the second year, with England coming second and Scotland and Ireland bringing up the rear, whilst at Student level England were victorious over Wales in both games of a two-match series after Scotland and Ireland withdrew from the annual Four Nations competition.

2024 saw several nations make progress with youth development, with Norway travelling to Czechia and to Serbia with U16s and U19s teams for the first time to play their first games at youth level. The main focus in Europe at youth level was the biennial U19s European Rugby League Championship which took place for the second time in Serbia having also hosted the 2018 event. Six teams contested the event – England, France, Scotland, Serbia, Ukraine and the USA who took their first steps to fielding a youth international side.

The format saw two quarter-finals take place with Scotland beating USA 32-10 hosts Serbia losing to Ukraine 4-24. 2022 finalists England and France were seeded into the semi-finals, with England facing Ukraine in a game which finished 58-4 whilst France laboured past Scotland in a bad tempered game which concluded 30-18. Serbia lost the 5th v 6th playoff 12-40 to USA played on the same day.

On finals day, USA held off Ukraine in a 26-22 game in a grading game which was played in the presence of both countries ambassadors to Serbia before Serbia were punished 0-56 by Scotland in the other grading game. In the Championship Final, England left it late to secure victory over France. A 7-0 lead at half time was overturned as Les Bleus fought back but Miller Dalton's 79th minute try secured England back-to-back titles with a 15-8 victory.





Alongside the U19s Championship, almost 30 coaches, including three women, and eight match officials were certified through courses which were staged as part of the event.

Delegates from ten nations attended across five days of activity, with accommodation and ground costs for the candidates covered by the Serbian Rugby League Federation who in turn were granted funds from Belgrade City Council towards the event.

The level 1 coaching course saw several different nationalities represented on the course, whilst the match officials course saw Greece's Maria Avzoti and Poland's Zuzanna Orlik appointed as interchange officials to games taking place in the last day of the Championship, while Malta's Lionel DaSilva was appointed as a touch judge for the USA v Ukraine game, giving him instant on-field experience.



## MIDDLE EAST AFRICA RUGBY LEAGUE

The MEA Region has shown continued growth in all categories with the increase in women's participation. The first ever MEA Women's Championship doubled up as the RLWC2026 qualifier, with Kenya hosting a two-match series against Nigeria.



Nigeria will be progressing to the Women's World Series in 2025 representing the region, whereas South Africa will proceed in the men's qualifiers uncontested from the region. Local championships were completed by Ghana (women, men, youth), Nigeria (women, men, youth), Kenya (women, men, youth), Uganda (women, men, youth) and South Africa's seasons concluding in 2025. Lebanon saw their season halted with the Israel and Hezbollah conflict (men).

MEA nations are expressing a growing desire for more input in the future of the game which demonstrates their growing capacity and confidence. The region saw its first cross Atlantic fixture between USA and South Africa take place in December 2024, Uganda hosted Kenya women's national team and Nigeria travelled to Ghana to complete the return fixtures from 2023. The MEA Steering Committee re-appointed its current committee for the next 12 months with representatives 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 Fortnuate Irankunda (Uganda). Three

independent members have also been added to the committee with Vuyolwethu Bokwe (Chair), Bolu Fagborun and Saad Boujmal. Remond Safi has been appointed as secretary of the steering committee. The Steering Committee has appointed Rebecca Stevens as the MEA representative to the IRL Women & Girls Advisory Group. Finally, the region continued to embrace the innovation initiated by Rugby League Federation Ghana's partnership with Salford Red Devils, with Jafaru Mustapha being the first appointed development officer in the region by a Super League club. The collective plan is to develop player pathways to the clubs and establishing academies to be led by local coaches in amongst various knowledge transfer activities between the pro club and their African partners.









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 2023. These have been prepared by and independently reviewed by our professional advisers, Haysmacintyre.

In the case of Rugby League International Federation Limited (Australian Company) these are the accounts for the year ended 31st October 2023. These have been prepared by our independent professional advisers, Newmerical.

Both sets of figures were presented and approved by members at the 2024 Annual General Meeting.

#### **INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED -UK COMPANY**

The overwhelming majority of income over any four-year financial cycle is generated from the hosting of the Rugby League World Cup. In 2023, the UK company reverted to modest income levels in relation to its operating costs, having reflected the staging of the World Cup in the previous financial year.

In the financial year ended 31st December 2023, the company received £225k of income and incurred £442k of operating costs. This produced an operating loss of £217k. This compared to an operating profit of £3.76 million in the previous financial year.

The principal categories of administrative expenditure were the costs of the IRL management team, match officials' costs and travel costs. The company is still vigorously committed to the recovery of debts outstanding from the 2021 World Cup. Savings in total operating costs were achieved for a third successive year. Grants payable to full members and confederations continue to be administered through the Australian Company rather than the UK Company.

Interest of £121k 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 £338k, on which it recovered corporation tax of £6k.

The company's balance sheet showed that management of its operating costs enabled it to have a healthy, positive balance sheet for the second consecutive financial year.

#### RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL **FEDERATION LIMITED - AUSTRALIAN** COMPANY

In the financial year ended 31st October 2023, the company had A\$222k of income and A\$360k of operating costs. This produced a pre-tax deficit of A\$138k, which after tax adjustments was reduced to A\$120k. The pretax deficit for the previous year was A\$485k.

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

The company's balance sheet showed that it had A\$2.72million of net assets. Approximately A\$2.47million of this it has been advanced as financial support to the UK Company.

## RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED

ACN 091 594 777

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 October 2023

RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED		RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL F
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	Directors' Declaration	
For the year ended 31 October 2023	For the year ended 31 October 2023	
Contents		The directors have determined that the company is not a r special purpose financial report should be prepared in accorda financial statements.
Directors' Declaration	2	The directors decare that:
Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income	3	
Statement of financial position	4	the financial statements and notes present fairly the comp performance for the year ended on that date in accordance financial statements;
Notes to the Financial Statements	5	2 in the director's opinion there are reasonable grounds to b
Compilation Report	6	and when they become due and payable.

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



Troy Grant 16 April 2024

## RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED

y is not a reporting entity. The directors have determined that this ed in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the

airly the company's financial position as at 31 October 2023 and its in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the

grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as

#### RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income For the year ended 31 October 2023

#### Note 2023 2022 PAID UP CAPITAL AND RESERVES \$ \$ Reserves INCOME Accumulated Profit Interest - External 33 Interest - Related 221,904 245,467 REPRESENTED BY TOTAL INCOME 221,937 245,467 CURRENT ASSETS Cash **EXPENSES** Loan to International Rugby League Ltd Development Grants (354,495) (720,690) Prepayments Accountancy (2,860) (10,062) Other Assets Insurance 148 0 Tax Receivable Other Expenses (2,545) 675 Bank Charges (270) (120) NON CURRENT ASSETS TOTAL EXPENSES (360,020) (730,198) Deferred Tax Asset **OPERATING (LOSS)** (138,083) (484,731) TOTAL ASSETS Interest --CURRENT LIABILITIES Tax Payable **OPERATING (LOSS) BEFORE TAX** (138,083) (484,731) Income Tax 18,337 133,301 2 TOTAL LIABILITIES OPERATING (LOSS) FOR THE YEAR (119,746) (351,430) NET ASSETS Retained Profits at 31 October 2,844,505 3,195,935 PROFIT AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATION 2,724,759 2,844,505 RETAINED PROFIT 2,724,759 2,844,505

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

Statement of financial position

For the year ended 31 October 2023

#### RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED

Note	2023	2022
	\$	\$
-	2,724,759	2,844,505
	26,939	427,709
	2,465,722	2,194,259
	12,500	12,500
	42	2,043
	21,181	6,776
	400.075	004 040
2	198,375	201,218
-	2,724,759	2,844,505
-		
2	-	-
_		
_	-	-
-		
-	2,724,759	2,844,505

#### RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED Notes to the Financial Statements For the year ended 31 October 2023

#### **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 brought to account where the realisation of the asset is probable. Future income tax benefits in relation to tax losses are brought to account unlss where it is probable this benefit will be relaised in the future.

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.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

## RUGBY LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION LIMITED Compilation Report For the year ended 31 October 2023

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Rugby League International Federation Limited, which comprise the Balance Sheet as at 31 October 2023, the Profit and Loss Statement for the period ended 31 October 2023 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 financials 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 16 April 2024

Registered number: 10274920

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### COMPANY INFORMATION

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)	Directors	T W Grant (Chair) A S Abdo B J Juliff E J Young G Peters D R Andrew (appointed P N V'Landys R W Jones (appointed S D Tsaka S Johnson L W Daley (appointed 1
	Company secretary	M R Martin
UNAUDITED	Registered number	10274920
DIRECTORS' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023	Registered office	10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1AG
	Accountants	Haysmacintyre LLP 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1AG

ted 6 July 2023)

ed 7 February 2023)

1 19 February 2024)

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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Directors' Report	1 - 2
Statement of Comprehensive Income	3
Balance Sheet	4 - 5
Notes to the Financial Statements	6 - 11

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

The directors present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

#### **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:

- consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent; •
- 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:

T W Grant (Chair) A S Abdo B J Juliff E J Young G J Barclay (resigned 19 December 2023) G Peters D R Andrew (appointed 6 July 2023) L Lacoste (resigned 6 July 2023) P N V'Landvs R W Jones (appointed 7 February 2023) S D Tsaka S Johnson

#### Future strategic plans

The Directors continue planning to restructure the business, to lessen reliance on the Rugby League World Cup which, to date, represents the only significant source of income for the company, and to further reduce operating costs, continuing the economising measures introduced in 2020. Concluding work on a settled multiyear international calendar and an underpinning commercial strategy are central to this plan.

#### DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

select suitable accounting policies for the Company's financial statements and then apply them

prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

#### 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.

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

T W Grant (Chair) Director

Date: 25 September 2024

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Turnover

Administrative expenses

Operating (loss)/profit Interest payable and similar expenses

(Loss)/profit before tax Tax on (loss)/profit

(Loss)/profit for the financial year

There was no other comprehensive income for 2023 (2022:£NIL).

The notes on pages 6 to 11 form part of these financial statements.

## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

2022 £	2023 £
4,805,077	224,516
(1,041,457)	(441,632)
3,763,620	(217,116)
(135,752)	(121,153)
3,627,868	(338,269)
(160,166)	5,970
3,467,702	(332,299)

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

#### BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Note		2023 £		2022 £
Fixed assets			-		~
Tangible assets	3		318		1,334
Investments	4		-		17
		-	318	-	1,351
Current assets					
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	5	649,125		2,171,327	
Cash at bank and in hand	6	990,147		60,755	
		1,639,272		2,232,082	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	7	(1,517,391)		(1,778,936)	
Net current assets			121,881		453,146
Total assets less current liabilities		-	122,199	-	454,497
Net assets		-	122,199	-	454,497
Capital and reserves		=		=	
Profit and loss account			122,199		454,497
		-	122,199	-	454,497

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

> BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED) AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

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 by:

T W Grant (Chair) Director

Date: 25 September 2024

The notes on pages 6 to 11 form part of these financial statements.

## REGISTERED NUMBER: 10274920

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

#### General information 1.

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 FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland' and the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The disclosure requirements of Section 1A of FRS 102 have been applied other than where additional disclosure is required to show a true and fair view.

The following principal accounting policies have been applied:

#### 2.2 Going concern

At the time of signing these accounts, having considered the economic climate, the Directors expectations and intentions for the next twelve months, and the availability of working capital, the Directors are of the opinion that the Company will remain viable for the foreseeable future and therefore these Financial Statements have been prepared on the Going Concern basis.

#### 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. Nonmonetary 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 gualifying cash flow hedges.

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

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

#### Accounting policies (continued) 2.

#### 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

#### 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.

#### 2.6 Taxation

Tax is recognised in profit or loss except that a charge attributable to an item of income and expense recognised as other comprehensive income or to an item recognised directly in equity is also recognised in other comprehensive income or directly in equity respectively.

The current income tax charge is calculated on the basis of tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date in the countries where the Company operates and generates income.

#### 2.7 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.

## (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

the costs incurred and the costs to complete the contract can be measured reliably.

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

#### Accounting policies (continued) 2.

#### 2.7 Tangible fixed assets (continued)

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.

#### 2.8 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.

#### 2.9 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.

#### 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.

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

3. Tangible fixed assets

Cost or valuation At 1 January 2023 Additions Disposals

#### At 31 December 2023

#### Depreciation

At 1 January 2023 Charge for the year on owned assets Disposals

At 31 December 2023

#### Net book value

At 31 December 2023

#### At 31 December 2022

Fixed asset investments 4

> At 1 January 2023 Disposals

At 31 December 2023

Investments in associates comprised one third of the share capital of GB Oceania Ltd, a company limited by shares and registered in New Zealand. This was disposed of in the year.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
591	2,703	3,294
-	357	357
-	(2,703)	(2,703)
591	357	948
393 118	1,567 510	1,960 628
-	(1,958)	(1,958)
511	119	630
80	238	318
198	1,136	1,334

Investments in	
subsidiary	,
companies f	
-	•
17	
(17	)
	•
-	

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#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Debtors 5.

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	249,068	251,288
Amounts owed by joint ventures and associated undertakings	188,658	193,285
Other debtors	4,711	1,397
Prepayments and accrued income	200,718	1,725,357
Corporation tax recoverable	5,970	-
	649,125	2,171,327

#### Cash and cash equivalents 6.

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash at bank and in hand	990,147	60,755
	990,147	60,755

#### 7. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Corporation tax	-	160,166
Other taxation and social security	385	2,021
Other creditors	1,425,956	1,445,484
Accruals and deferred income	91,050	171,265
	1,517,391	1,778,936

#### 8. 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.

#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LIMITED (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

#### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

#### 9. 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 £1,178,852 consisting of £1,424,738 shown in 'Other creditors' in note 7 less £245,886 shown in 'Trade debtors' in note 5 (2022: £1,198,628, consisting of £1,444,514 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 £80,595 (2022: £8,331) in the year to Australian Rugby League Commission, which owed £nil (2022: £nil) to International Rugby League Limited at the year end. Australian Rugby League Commission and International Rugby League Limited share common directors.

#### GB Oceania

As at 31 December 2023 International Rugby League was owed £188,658 (2022: £193,285) by GB Oceania Limited. International Rugby League Limited owns a one-third investment in GB Oceania Limited, a company incorporated in New Zealand.

#### New Zealand Rugby League

During the year ended 31 December 2023 the international Rugby League Limited made sales to New Zealand Rugby League amounting to £51,835 (2022: £41,451) which has common directors. New Zealand Rugby League and International Rugby League share common directors.

#### The Rugby Football League Limited

During the year ended 31 December 2023 the international Rugby League Limited made sales to The Rugby Football League (RFL) amounting to £45,544 (2022: £3,715) and purchases from RFL amounting to £1,800 (2022: £900), which has common directors. The Rugby Football League Limited and International Rugby League Limited share common directors.

#### 10. Controlling party

The Directors consider that there is no ultimate controlling party.



#### INTERNATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE LTD.

10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1AG

INTRL.SPORT