

# RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE IN QUEENSLAND



# FIVE TIERS OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES EXIST

## QUEENSLAND RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE HIERARCHY

Not all Rugby League venues and facilities within each Tier are fully compliant with these elements

CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION
<b>TIER 1</b> ELITE	<p>Elite level facilities that provide match day venues for regular NRL seasonal fixtures and other major events. Usually major stadiums, with playing facilities suitable for NRL competition, as well as grandstand seating, amenities for spectators, lighting to support televised broadcast and facilities to support commercial operations and media.</p> <p><b>These facilities are managed by the NRL and State Government – not within the scope of the QRL Infrastructure Strategy</b></p>
<b>TIER 2</b> STATE	<p>State level facilities primarily service the QRL state league and elite underage competitions - also used for competition finals. These are maintained to a showcase level, offering a higher standard of amenities for players and spectators. Often of suitable standard to be used for NRL pre-season and occasional premiership season games.</p>
<b>TIER 3</b> REGIONAL	<p>Service a collection of suburbs, townships or geographic areas. Has adequate lighting on multiple playing surfaces to support night competition and participation.</p>
<b>TIER 4</b> LOCAL	<p>Caters for local level competition within individual suburbs, townships or municipalities – usually ‘home’ of a seasonal club. Facilities and playing surfaces are provided to home and away competition standard only.</p>
<b>TIER 5</b> COMMUNITY & REMOTE	<p>Supports local level competition in remote communities, with basic player, official and spectator amenities.</p>



1. THIS IS AN INITIAL CLASSIFICATION OF RUGBY LEAGUE VENUES BASED ON 2021 QRL RUGBY LEAGUE CLUBS AND VENUES DATA. 2. INCLUDES RUGBY LEAGUE VENUES WITH INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO CLASSIFY. SOURCE: 2021 QRL RUGBY LEAGUE CLUBS AND VENUES DATA (2021); GEMBA STRATEGY ANALYSIS (2022).

# EACH TIER HAS A SPECIFIC SET OF GUIDELINES

## INFRASTRUCTURE HIERARCHY GUIDELINES – KEY ELEMENTS

The detailed guidelines will also establish environmental sustainability expectations for each infrastructure tier

CLASSIFICATION	PLAYING SURFACE	FIELD LIGHTING	PLAYING AMENITIES	SPECTATOR AMENITIES
<b>TIER 1</b>	<b>MANAGED BY THE NRL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS</b>			
<b>TIER 2 STATE</b>	<b>AS PER TIER 3, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambered playing surface</li> <li>• 5m clearance to any perimeter fencing</li> <li>• Good surface and subsurface drainage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting to support night competition and training (200/100 lux)</li> <li>• Lux reading to be reviewed annually with submission required</li> </ul>	<b>AS PER TIER 3, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 coaches boxes</li> <li>• Referee room (male and female cubicles)</li> <li>• Drug testing room</li> <li>• Match Official Coach room</li> <li>• Media/Broadcast commentary box</li> </ul>	<b>AS PER TIER 3, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcast facilities</li> <li>• Separate canteen and bar facilities</li> <li>• Fixed and adequate car parking</li> </ul>
<b>TIER 3 REGIONAL</b>	<b>AS PER TIER 4, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium surface and subsurface drainage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting to support night competition and training:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New: (200/100 lux)</li> <li>• Existing: (100/50 lux)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>AS PER TIER 4, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 or more international fields</li> <li>• 4-6 male and female changerooms, or unisex</li> <li>• Referee room (male and female amenities)</li> </ul>	<b>AS PER TIER 4, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covered bench tiered seating</li> <li>• Canteen facilities</li> <li>• Disability access and toilet facilities with four cubicles for each and multiple wash basins</li> </ul>
<b>TIER 4 LOCAL</b>	<b>AS PER TIER 5, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No obvious undulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting to support night competition and training:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New: (200/100 lux)</li> <li>• Existing: (100/50 lux)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>AS PER TIER 5, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 international field and one warm up area</li> <li>• 2-4 male and female changerooms, or unisex</li> <li>• Elevated fixed broadcast platform for main field</li> <li>• Covered seating for benches</li> <li>• Scoreboard with digital timer</li> </ul>	<b>AS PER TIER 5, PLUS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covered bench seating</li> <li>• Perimeter fencing if possible</li> <li>• Disability access and toilet facilities with two cubicles for each and multiple wash basins</li> <li>• Adequate car parking spaces</li> </ul>
<b>TIER 5 COMMUNITY &amp; REMOTE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-5m clearance to any perimeter</li> <li>• Even turf coverage</li> <li>• Medium surface and subsurface drainage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No field lighting</li> <li>• (Any field lighting must be minimum 100/50 lux)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single field</li> <li>• Minimum two changerooms</li> <li>• 1x Medical/doctor room</li> <li>• Referee room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability access and toilet facilities</li> <li>• Ambulance access to field</li> <li>• PA system</li> </ul>



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# EXISTING RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE

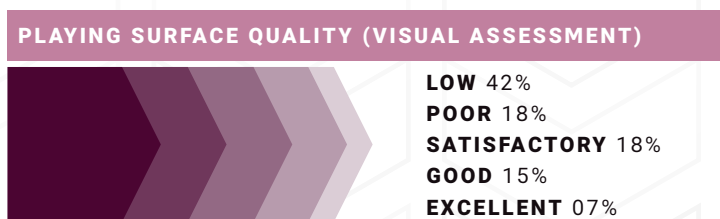
Queensland has 265 Rugby League venues with 520 playing surfaces, of which most are in the Local tier

RUGBY LEAGUE VENUES	NORTH	CENTRAL	S/E	TOTAL
	61	119	85	<b>265</b>

PLAYING SURFACES	NORTH	CENTRAL	S/E	TOTAL
	126	207	187	<b>520</b>

PLAYING SURFACES (PER PARTICIPANT)	NORTH	CENTRAL	S/E	TOTAL
	1:114	1:100	1:143	<b>1:119</b>

TIER	NORTH	CENTRAL	S/E	TOTAL
ELITE	1	0	2	<b>3</b>
STATE	3	2	8	<b>13</b>
REGIONAL	4	7	8	<b>19</b>
LOCAL	45	105	60	<b>210</b>
COUNTRY	8	5	7	<b>20<sup>1</sup></b>



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Average of 1.96 surfaces per Rugby League venue
- Most State tier facilities are in the South-East region (62% of State facilities)
- **28% of venues do not have any lighting** – this is concentrated in the North and Central regions
- Most Rugby League venues are managed by Local Government (78%) – but often includes **a strong reliance on volunteers and club officials to manage venues**
- **Only a quarter (26%) of venues have some form of external perimeter fencing** – this inhibits their crowd control ability and ability to raise admission revenue



1. INCLUDES RUGBY LEAGUE VENUES WITH INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO CLASSIFY. 2. PLAYING SURFACES WITH LIGHTING. 3. VENUES WITH ANY FORM OF FENCING. SOURCE: 2021 QRL RUGBY LEAGUE CLUBS AND VENUES DATA (2021); QRL CLUB HEALTH CHECK DATA (2022); GEMBA STRATEGY ANALYSIS (2022).

## › RUGBY LEAGUE IN QLD

### EACH QRL OPERATING AREA HAS A DIFFERENT SUPPLY OF RUGBY LEAGUE VENUES AND PLAYING SURFACES

#### EXISTING RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE – BREAKDOWN ACROSS QRL OPERATING AREAS

	OPERATING AREA	VENUES	INCLUSIVE FACILITIES	PLAYING SURFACES	PLAYING SURFACES WITH LIGHTING	PARTICIPANT TO VENUE RATIO	PARTICIPANT TO SURFACE RATIO
NORTHERN	FAR NORTH QLD	28	1	55	30	179	91
	TOWNSVILLE & MT ISA	22	1	42	30	259	135
	MACKAY	11	1	29	18	336	128
CENTRAL	CENTRAL QLD	28	0	53	34	218	115
	WIDE BAY	29	1	48	32	100	60
	SUNSHINE COAST	17	1	41	32	306	127
	SOUTH WEST	45	0	65	50	144	100
SOUTH-EAST	BRISBANE	55	0	106	85	293	152
	IPSWICH	14	0	33	25	307	130
	GOLD COAST	16	0	48	39	406	135
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>119</b>



1. INCLUSIVE IS DEFINED AS FEMALE OR UNISEX CHANGEROOMS THROUGH QRL CLUB HEALTH CHECK DATA. SOURCE: 2021 QRL RUGBY LEAGUE CLUBS AND VENUES DATA (2021); QRL CLUB HEALTH CHECK DATA (2022); GEMBA STRATEGY ANALYSIS (2022).

# CHANGING COMMUNITY, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ARE IMPACTING RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE DEMANDS ACROSS QLD

## KEY TRENDS INFLUENCING RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE DEMAND (1/2)



### INCREASING DEMAND FOR NIGHT TIME PARTICIPATION

- There is an increasing demand for night time Rugby League participation
- This is being driven by growing participation, limited greenspace and facilities and weather conditions in summer months

ENSURING THERE IS ADEQUATE LIGHTING COVERAGE ACROSS QLD'S RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK IS NEEDED TO UNLOCK ADDITIONAL CAPACITY IN THE EXISTING SUPPLY



### INCREASING FEMALE, CALD AND ALL-ABILITIES PARTICIPATION

- Non-traditional participant segments (both players and match officials) continue to grow
- Female participation in Rugby League has experienced strong growth
- Rugby League participants from CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) backgrounds and of all-abilities are also increasing

EXISTING FACILITIES NEED TO BE ADJUSTED/ UPGRADED TO ACCOMMODATE ALL PARTICIPANTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN GROWTH CORRIDORS FOR THESE SEGMENTS



### INCREASING COMPETITION FOR PUBLIC GREEN SPACE AND INVESTMENT

- Availability of greenspace is becoming more limited as multiple groups compete for the same space (i.e.. Sports clubs, schools, community facilities)
- Governments have appetite to invest in sports infrastructure (2032 Olympic Games), but is looking for wide-spanning solutions to meet the broad needs of the communities they serve

CO-LOCATING AND PARTNERING WITH OTHER PARTIES WILL BE A KEY FOCUS OF GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT AS IT SEEKS TO MAXIMISE COMMUNITY GREENSPACE INFRASTRUCTURE IN A TIGHT MARKET



### INCREASING INCIDENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS

- Environmental disasters (e.g. floods) are placing increasing pressure on existing Rugby League infrastructure
- Extreme weather conditions (e.g. heat) are also limiting the types of Rugby League infrastructure that are appropriate for upgrade and renewal projects (e.g. synthetic fields)
- Establish mitigation plans for environmental impacts

THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCY OF EXISTING FACILITIES NEEDS TO BE REVIEWED IN HIGH-RISK AREAS, AND FUTURE PROJECTS NEED TO CONSIDER THIS IN THE DESIGN



# CHANGING COMMUNITY, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ARE IMPACTING RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE DEMANDS ACROSS QLD

## KEY TRENDS INFLUENCING RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE DEMAND (2/2)



### INCREASING COMPETITION FOR LEISURE TIME AMONGST PLAYERS, CLUB OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS

- Potential Rugby League participants are increasingly faced with a broader range of leisure activities that they can participate in, beyond Rugby League
- Growing regulatory requirements on volunteers and club officials means supporting the delivery on local and community Rugby League competitions and activities is becoming less attractive

DELIVERING AN EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE AND PROPOSITION TO RUGBY LEAGUE PLAYERS, CLUB OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS WILL BE CRITICAL TO MAINTAINING THE ECOSYSTEM REQUIRED TO DELIVER RUGBY LEAGUE ACTIVITIES



### COUNCIL AND GOVERNMENT DESIRE TO SEE SPORTS FACILITIES UTILISED YEAR ROUND AND SHARED BY MULTIPLE SPORTS

- Councils and government have a growing preference to address and target multiple community sectors through funding grants
- Year round usage and utilisation of any new facilities is also a focus for funding partners as they seek to maximise usage and value for money

ACCEPTING THE NEED TO SHARE FACILITIES AND FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNERS FOR CO-LOCATION WILL BE A CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR



### INCREASING SOPHISTICATION AND COMPETITION FROM OTHER SPORTS FOR LIMITED AVAILABLE FUNDING

- Other sports are dedicating significant effort into infrastructure and facilities funding – this includes setting a clear strategic direction for the sport, and providing necessary support to seek and secure funding
- For example, the AFL has led the way in this space for many years
- This becomes increasingly critical moving forward as construction and development costs place increasing strain on the “benefit/impact equation” for recreational and sports infrastructure

QRL NEEDS TO ENSURE IT DOES NOT FALL BEHIND ITS FUNDING COMPETITORS IN AN INCREASINGLY CONSTRAINED INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES FUNDING ENVIRONMENT





# COMMUNITY CLUBS AND LOCAL COUNCILS HAVE HIGHLIGHTED KEY DEFICIENCIES AND CHALLENGES IN EXISTING RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE

## INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIENCIES AND CHALLENGES



### LIMITED RESOURCES TO MAINTAIN AND UPKEEP CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Community clubs are under increasing financial and resourcing constraints
- Maintenance and upkeep of playing surfaces and other infrastructure is critical, but is becoming increasingly difficult
- This is exacerbated in regional and remote communities, where there are very limited numbers of volunteers to maintain playing surfaces

COMMUNITY CLUBS NEED GREATER SUPPORT TO MAINTAIN THEIR PLAYING SURFACES TO ENSURE THE SUPPLY OF RUGBY LEAGUE INFRASTRUCTURE REMAINS FIT FOR PURPOSE



### DIFFICULT TO ACCESS AND SECURE INVESTMENT FUNDING

- Community clubs struggle to identify and leverage infrastructure funding opportunities
- Appetite for infrastructure investment exists across all levels of government, but it is currently not being fully leveraged
- Increasing competition from other sports
- No central QRL Infrastructure Fund to assist with funding

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT NEED TO BE PROVIDED TO COMMUNITY CLUBS TO IMPROVE AWARENESS AND CAPABILITY TO ACCESS AVAILABLE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



### INADEQUATE CROWD CONTROL, BROADCAST AND SPECTATOR AMENITIES

- Small scale Rugby League facilities lack adequate broadcast, crowd control and spectator amenities
- These aspects of infrastructure are often viewed as 'ancillary' but are critical to ensuring safe venues and ongoing financial health of local clubs through admission fees from spectators and sponsorship opportunities

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT ALSO NEEDS TO ENCOMPASS THE AMENITIES SURROUNDING THE CORE PLAYING SURFACE



### LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE GUIDANCE TO INFORM FUTURE INVESTMENT

- Community clubs and local councils do not know where to invest as there are no QRL infrastructure guidelines nor a list of key infrastructure priorities
- This inhibits investment decision making and inconsistent infrastructure and facilities across Queensland

CLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES, GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS WILL PROVIDE A 'TARGET STATE' TO INFORM FUNDING AND INVESTMENT DECISIONS AT COMMUNITY CLUBS AND LOCAL COUNCILS

