



# QUEENSLAND RUGBY UNION FACILITY STRATEGY

FINAL PLAN – JUNE 2020



# Foreward



It is our pleasure to introduce you to the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy – a document that sets the future direction for rugby facility planning, provision and development across Queensland for the decade 2020-30.

Similar to the Reds to Regions tour held in 2019, which saw our professional players and coaching staff reconnecting in rural rugby heartlands, this Strategy has been developed by Queensland Rugby Union to support our broad rugby community. There are in excess of 27,000 registered players belonging to 240 clubs, at 129 sites, with 218 playing fields used for rugby every week with participation by all genders and age groups.

Queensland remains a participation heartland for Rugby in Australia, which is made possible through the hard work of our volunteers involved with sub-unions, club and school rugby. This strategy targets renewal of our existing facilities to support our grass roots rugby community and identifies locations for new facilities where our game is growing.

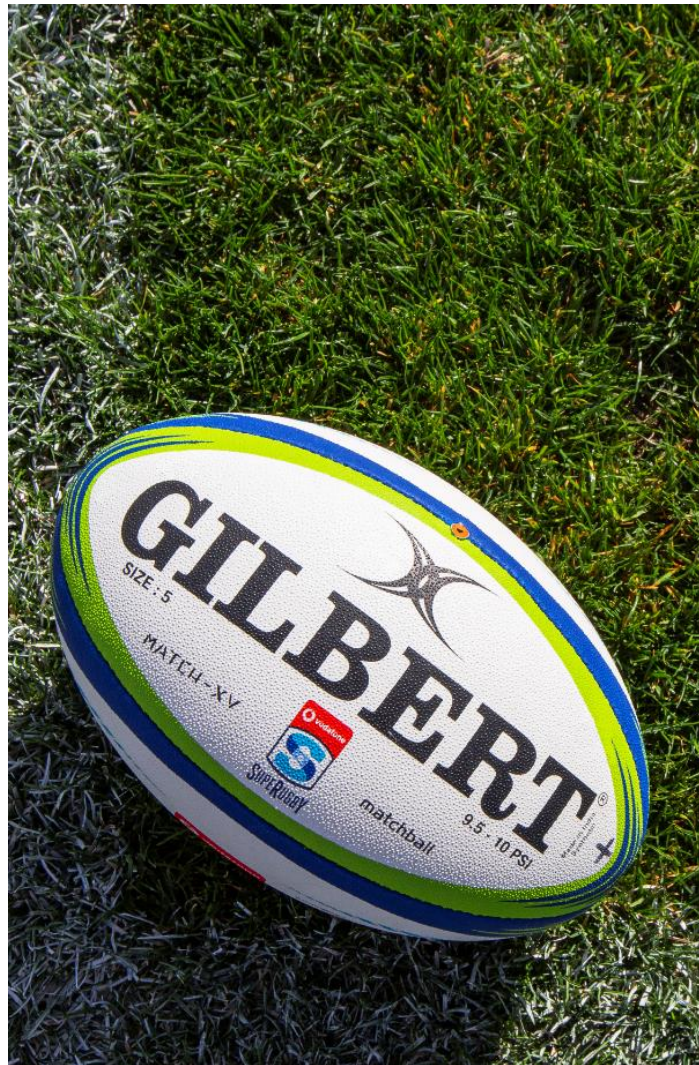
This strategy forms part of Queensland Rugby Union's transition from surviving to thriving and is helping to secure the long-term infrastructure our game requires.

Finally, to the rugby community, our clubs, our partners and our facility providers in local government -your ongoing support of Queensland Rugby Union is appreciated and we look forward to working with you now and into the future.

Sincerely

**David Hanham**

**CEO Queensland Rugby Union**



# Acknowledgements



## Table of contents

1. Executive Summary	4
2. Introduction and Context	7
3. Rugby Infrastructure Framework	12
4. Rugby Facility Hierarchy	21
5. Rugby Context	27
6. Participation Overview	32
7. Facilities Audit Overview	36
8. Consultation Findings	46
9. Demand Assessment	51
10. Strategy Implementation	59

## About this Document

The Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy provides the Queensland rugby community and its stakeholders with an assessment of the state's rugby facilities and participation across metropolitan and regional Queensland.

The Strategy identifies facility renewal priorities and future planning development of community rugby facilities to support the 27,000 active club participants across Queensland. The Strategy will provide a strategic framework that supports the principals of accessible, inclusive, sustainable and invested rugby facilities.

Specific facility and infrastructure priorities are provided by applying evidence based analysis of Queensland rugby in metropolitan and regional populations thus ensuring localised needs are considered. While this strategy will evolve over time it has been designed to provide the rugby community and government partners confidence to collaboratively invest in future rugby related projects.

Delivering improved health and wellbeing outcomes for all Queenslanders has been a cornerstone of the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy which has been led by the development led by the Community Rugby team at Queensland Rugby Union.



*The Queensland Government provided \$79,126 to Queensland Rugby Union for the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy to enable Queenslanders to participate in sport and recreation activities.*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# Executive summary

The Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy is focused on understanding and identifying the infrastructure required to support and sustain community rugby over the next decade. Audits of on and off-field infrastructure of all community rugby venues has been undertaken providing an evidence base to identify the levels of demand, identify infrastructure gaps and future requirements.

It will come as no surprise to the community rugby member, that audits undertaken show a clear trend of aging infrastructure, in many cases nearing end of life, that have historically been designed for male participation. To address this, the principals of accessible, inclusive, sustainable and invested rugby facilities inform the strategic framework to guide future investment recommendations.

All identified rugby facility renewal priorities contained within the strategy have applied these principals to support the 27,000 active club participants across Queensland. Increasing the capacity of existing venues, broadening the rugby participation base, while encouraging female participation has manifested as a key and consistent themes of the strategy.

Surveys, face to face workshops and one on one interviews were conducted in the preparation of the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy with local government, sub-unions and community clubs all contributing to inform the rugby union landscape. Land owners, delivers of community rugby activities and the users of the facilities, are all stakeholder points of view that provided essential intelligence to the formation of the strategy.

The audit research undertaken into existing facility provision, condition and capacity revealed a number of common challenges for stakeholders to collectively address, including

- Ageing nature of existing infrastructure
- Ability of change room amenities to provide inclusive environments
- Playing field lighting struggling to meet minimum standards
- Quality of playing fields with underlying irrigation and drainage issues
- Attracting shared investment into infrastructure projects that are rising in cost to maintain each year
- Relatively limited number of well-sized, quality community and social rooms

In parts of Brisbane, and surrounding areas where high levels of rugby participation is identified, additional stakeholder challenges include

- Extensive and overuse of playing fields
- Providing appropriate number of rugby venues in new open space and growing population areas
- Inadequate number of playing fields to cater for training and competition needs

The Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy identifies the following key pillars and associated objectives for guiding investment:

- 1. Improve existing venue capacity:** Maximise the carrying capacity and activation of existing rugby union playing fields and venues.
- 2. Inclusive rugby facilities:** Support the diversity of game participants and formats through inclusive facilities.
- 3. Planning for growth and demand:** Plan to maximise participation through innovative and new venue opportunities
- 4. Partnerships and investment:** Develop and maintain relationships with all levels of government and industry partners.

The pillars were developed in line with the sport and local government sector consultation, combined with review of Queensland Government strategic priorities for sport and recreation and Queensland Rugby Union's vision:

**“To develop lifelong connections to Rugby”**

# Executive summary

The Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy primarily focuses on participation in club fifteen and sevens community competition, and the venues that support rugby activity aligning with best practice rugby guidelines and standards.

Schools Rugby, Ballymore Cup, Get into Rugby, Rookies to Reds, special events, sub union activities and Indigenous programs plus the club volunteers and coaches, all contribute to overall rugby participation rates which should be considered when calculating total rugby union participation numbers.

A challenge for rugby that has been highlighted is related to broadening the participation base, while making the game more accessible and welcoming for all participants.

**This Strategy recognises that the majority of all rugby union facilities require renewal works to meet current day inclusivity standards.**

If action is not taken now to plan rugby infrastructure over the next decade, the inclusivity gap will widen and opportunities to increase participation rates from “new to the game” players will be lost.

There is a solid core of rugby players produced from traditional rugby families and established school systems, particularly in Brisbane, that will always play. To move from striving, to thriving, rugby needs to introduce new players to the game, by being welcoming, approachable and inclusive in a competitive sports market place.

Addressing existing on-field issues of sports lighting provision to Australian Standards, turf quality, presence of functional irrigation and drainage is required. When combined with rugby’s off-field issues of amenity support, changeroom upgrades to gender neutral standards and storage availability, this will continue to impact on rugby’s ability to deliver on the Activate Queensland Government Vision

**“To enrich the Queensland way of life through physical activity and provide more opportunities for Queenslanders, of all ages and all abilities, to be physically active”**

## Critical Actions

1	Continue to develop technology systems and share participation data and community rugby on-field and off-field venue condition information with stakeholders and investment partners.
2	Deliver a consistent and united rugby message through club, sub-union and state body communications
3	Support players, referees and officials of all genders by prioritising and supporting the upgrade and development of facilities at sites with identified and projected female participation.
4	Partner with identified stakeholders including, but not limited to, Federal, State and Local Government, sub-unions and clubs to contribute expertise and leverage funding (in a coordinated manner) to support rugby infrastructure initiatives.
5	Identify key strategic locations in new, growing and established communities to support rugby activity. Opportunities to collaborate with developers, growth areas councils, QLD Government, commercial partners and other sports should be explored.



# INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

# Introduction

## Introduction

Queensland is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest provider of rugby union participants in Australia. As a leading rugby participation state, Queensland Rugby Union have invested in the Community Rugby Unit to provide leadership and deliver the following key outputs:

- Act as a conduit to sub-unions and community clubs across Queensland
- Participation management which includes governance, planning, finance workforce, competitions and communication
- Stakeholder management and government liaison at all levels.

The Community Rugby team has managed the delivery of the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy and provides a framework enabling rugby and its strategic partners to better understand and prioritise its facility needs both now and into the future.

Key challenges for rugby this Strategy aims to address include

- **Improve capacity:** Is achieving more participation from existing rugby infrastructure. Existing on-field and off-field infrastructure has been inspected, rugby trends understood in different areas with targeted facility investment recommended. Improvement of ground conditions (above and below surfaces) combined with the introduction of sports lighting will have the biggest impact on increasing capacity at existing venues.
- **Outdated infrastructure:** Facilities are still very much valued by users, the majority are not contemporary in nature and do not meet community expectations, or best practice sport guidelines. All gender changeroom facilities with private lockable cubicle showers compared to open communal showering facilities is an example of outdated infrastructure.
- **Participation:** The Strategy identifies current and future participation hot spots.



Juniors – Surfers Paradise Rugby Union Club

## Project Deliverables

The Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy addresses enhancement and provision of community rugby facilities, while identifying the areas of greatest need for investment.

Project deliverables that inform key actions and recommendations in this strategy include:

- A detailed rugby facilities audit, data collection and GIS mapping was undertaken over 2019/20 to determine the current location, provision, condition and use of 129 community rugby venues across Queensland. \*
- Consultation with the rugby community, local government and facility providers via online surveys, workshops and one on one meetings. This provided an understanding of barriers to participation, user needs and facility challenges.
- Participation analysis of 2019 registered winter rugby players in club fifteen and sevens competition to define a current “State of Play” participation assessment. Participation “Hot Spots” are also identified showing areas where growth has occurred during 2017, 2018 and 2019.

**\*Note:** the rugby facilities audited provide community rugby access for training and/or competition.



# Research and consultation

**More than 100 government and rugby community stakeholders were engaged in the development of the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy.**



## Industry Consultation

Direct consultation was undertaken with the rugby community and government stakeholders in the development of the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy.

The aim of the consultation process was to create awareness of the project and to accurately capture facility issues to assist Queensland Rugby Union setting future aspirations for the sport.

Key stakeholders engaged included Australian Rugby Union, rugby associations, sub-unions, affiliates, Queensland Government and local government authorities. (LGA's)



**Gaven Head – General Manager Community Rugby introducing club consultation session**

The following consultation methods were used to collect information and provide the opportunity for stakeholders to have input into the development of the Strategy

- Dedicated web page
- Individual meetings with Queensland Rugby Union representatives
- Stakeholder workshops with clubs at Queensland Rugby Union state headquarters at Ballymore
- One on one meetings with Brisbane, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast LGA's
- Telephone interviews with Queensland growth Councils adjacent to Brisbane
- Online Survey of Queensland LGA's
- Club, association, sub-union and affiliate online surveys.

## Data Sources

Rugby participation numbers presented for 2017, 2018 and 2019 presented and analysed throughout this document were provided by Queensland Rugby Union and are based on unique registered club participants. Social players, school participants, elite programs, Get into Rugby, Rookies to Reds, Indigenous programs have not been counted as the detailed planning for these activities sit outside the scope of this Strategy. Various social, school and community sampling programs are delivered by community clubs each and every weekend which is in addition to the rugby participation measured within this Strategy.

Rugby Facility provision and condition information was collected by Queensland Rugby Union staff and affiliates using a customised Rugby Facility Audit Tool(SFA – Rugby Union). Every effort has been made to ensure the data is as detailed as possible, accessing 129 rugby venues located in Queensland that host community training and/or competition activities.

Facility audit data was collected in 2019 and 2020, with data quality testing and refreshing conducted as part of the analysis phase of the strategy preparation.

All population and demographic data (and associated analysis) was recorded sourced from Queensland Government population projections, 2018 Edition; Australian Bureau of Statistics.

# State government alignment

The Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy builds on the Queensland Government strategic priorities for sport and recreation. Future investment by the Queensland Government in sport and recreation projects and initiatives will be guided by a number of strategic priorities and initiatives, with examples provided below.

## Activate Queensland – Premier's Message

Physical activity and sport are vital to the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders and our communities. Activate! Queensland is a 10-year strategy to get more Queenslanders moving more often. Key commitments include:

- To keep Queenslanders healthy
- Give our children a great start
- Keep communities safe
- Be responsive to the needs of Queenslanders
- Create jobs in a strong economy

Over the next 10 years, breaking down barriers that prevent participation and create an active environment where all Queenslanders feel able and welcome to participate and play.



### Key actions include

- Making **school infrastructure** available for community use, opening them up as active community hubs to enhance participation opportunities across local neighborhood's
- Support **female participation** by investing in specific initiatives aimed at improving women's sport and physical activity experience.

## Case Study - Yatala Rams Junior Rugby Union Club

The Yatala Rams is a community club providing rugby opportunities for under 6 players through to 17 year old age groups. The club participates in both the Gold Coast and Brisbane rugby union competitions.

Based at Windaroo Valley State High School, the club has developed strong local community links, with many young people members of both the club and school community. Activating this space outside school hours helps imprint active lifestyles for life and has proven to reduce vandalism, while encouraging community pride.



## Brisbane Junior Rugby Union supporting girls rugby

# Key drivers for change

**Rugby in Queensland is currently connecting with its community. To ensure the sport continues to grow in popularity and participation the following drivers for change are emerging across the sector.**

## Participation

In May 2020, National Sports Survey (AusPlay) results indicate that Rugby Union has 207,783 participants Australia wide and that 322,225 nominated rugby union as the sport of physical activity they most strongly associate with. It was reported that 82,225 people were involved with the game in non playing roles including coaching, official, administrator/committee, team manager or medical support role. Ausplay advise Queensland provides 33% (43,926 participants) aged in the 15 plus demographic which is rated 2<sup>nd</sup> in participation across Australia.

Since 2017, Ausplay data report a 7% overall increase in organised rugby participation, up from 196,900 participants. This is line with Queensland Rugby Union and Australian Rugby Union estimates of a 7.5% increase in participation experienced in 2018 in the junior rugby age groups, female rugby and school programs. The 2018 Rugby Australia Annual Report set a target, and confirmed achievement of 300,000 participants playing rugby across Australia.

Reported Ausplay, Australian Rugby Union and Queensland Rugby Union participation data are considered to be generally in accordance and a consistent reflection of current participation rates.

## Broadening the participation base

Rugby is a game for everyone with Queensland Rugby Union driving participation growth by offering variants of the game to broaden the participation base by introducing “brand new” participants with no previous connection to the game.

Get into Rugby is a school program operated in 2019 in non-traditional rugby settings that had near 50:50 male and female participation, ensuring there are more opportunities for people to experience rugby.

## Role of sport is changing

Rugby Union plays an important role in communities, providing significant physical and mental health benefits, helping raise physical activity levels, promoting cohesion and fostering multicultural inclusion.

Opportunities to partner with third parties to deliver new participation programs to improve health and well being of local communities should be considered. Program initiatives targeting older Australians, inclusive and social rugby programs focusing on female participation and Culturally Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community programs could be considered.

## Impact of growth and change

In identified areas, particularly where rugby participation is growing, a range of barriers and challenges impacting facility provision become apparent, including:

- Historically established and ageing facilities not catering for all gender use, and not adequately supporting participation by women and girls.
- Further impact of ground closures due to climatic conditions and the potential over use of the existing available playing surfaces.
- Changes to best practice facility provision and additional participation, do lead to increasing costs. Amenity and field lighting upgrades often come with increased operational costs.
- Expansion of programs can create the opportunity to play all year round, rather than be limited to winter season, creating challenges for multi-sport use.





# RUGBY UNION INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK

# Strategic planning drivers

**The following strategic planning drivers were identified as having the greatest impact on the growth and sustainability of rugby union in Queensland. The Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy addresses the drivers and identifies where fit for purpose facilities are best located to meet the needs of current and future participants.**



## Broadening the participation base

Rugby Union has many appealing health benefits including fitness, endurance strength, self-discipline, teamwork, social skills, and is fun.

In 2019, the 8 to 12 year old demographic experienced the highest rates of participation with 8,568 registered competition participants. Senior players (with 7,251 registrations) and the 13 to 18 year old age group (with 7,743) recorded similar participant numbers. Participants aged under 7 contributed 3,589 of the total 27,151 people playing rugby union in Queensland.

Junior participants aged 18 and under totaled 19,900 in 2019. This equated to 73% of all registered competition participants, making it easily the most significant age cohort of players in Queensland.

There is significant potential for adult participation to grow in future as a “flow on” effect of today's juniors becoming tomorrow's adults.

Club fifteen competition represents 4 out of 5 participants, with seven's competition accounting for the remaining 20% of participants.

Participation numbers recorded in Schools Rugby (4,293), Ballymore Cup (650), Get Into Rugby (Sporting Schools 15,937), Rookies to Reds (3,555), Junior State Championships (712) and Indigenous Programs (81) are all designed to broaden the rugby participation base by introducing new players to the game.

## Female participation

A focus of QRU is developing strategies that embed female participation both on and off the field. 5% of registered club participants are female, equating to 1,272 competition participants in Queensland.

Junior girls aged 18 and under totaled 787 in 2019, representing 62% of all female competition players.

Along with the strategies to broaden the participation base, the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy highlights opportunities to create more accessible, sustainable and all gender rugby facilities.



# Strategic planning drivers



## Venues

Rugby Union uses 129 venues and 218 playing fields extensively for training and competition across Queensland. It is fair to say that across the suite of rugby venues, there are variations in operating capacity, given the quality of existing infrastructure. While participation capacity at many existing venues can be increased, locations particularly in metropolitan Brisbane are at maximum capacity.

Additional training space availability can be provided when accompanied by greater provision of playing field lighting. This is seen as the key facility issue to address to build the capacity of existing venues, particularly in regional areas.

With greenfield land in limited supply, (or non existent), it is understood that increasing the capacity of venues in metropolitan Brisbane is more challenging.

## Off-field facility condition

Off-field facility conditions predominately consider change room amenity, and to a lesser extent, social and canteen spaces.

While female participation in rugby activity has increased over the past there years, this is despite community rugby supporting amenity being unsuitable for use by all.

Historically for rugby, facilities have been primarily designed to meet the needs of male participants, but to encourage more women and girls to participate in sport today as a player or official, more user friendly facilities are required.



# Strategic planning drivers

## On-Field Facility Condition

### On-field rugby condition is effected by a range of different factors, including:

- grass type and coverage
- irrigation
- drainage
- surface level
- maintenance regime, budget and expertise
- over use
- original construction methods
- shared use
- floodlighting

Minimum requirements for a usable playing field are related to safety which requires an *'even playing surface and consistent grass cover'*. As players skills improve and children progress through to higher levels of competition, the quality of the playing surface has a direct correlation to the enjoyment derived from the game and standard of coaching able to be delivered.

## Of the 218 of full-sized rugby playing fields in Queensland

- **41** (19%) with no floodlighting
- **70** (32%) with no automated irrigation
- **20** (10%) with no irrigation
- **63** (29%) with no functional drainage

## Sports Lighting

Provision of playing field lighting is a key infrastructure requirement to build participation that allows rugby infrastructure to be used at its maximum capacity.

Of the 218 rugby union playing fields across Queensland, 41 (or 19%) do not have lighting. In addition, there are a further 41 (19%) fields where the lighting is present, but the lux levels are unknown.

After review of these audits, typically these sites are older installations (15 plus years) and as they are unmeasured, often do not meet the 50 lux Australian training standard level.

Collectively this means 38% of all rugby playing field lighting currently provided, does not meet the minimum training standards required.



"A global game for all ages, genders, sizes, and backgrounds played across Brisbane" **Brisbane Junior Rugby Union**

# Strategic planning drivers

## Irrigation and Drainage

The combinations of dry weather - no irrigation and wet weather - no drainage are proven conditions that ensure poor playing surfaces, and in the worst case scenario, unsafe to use.

When combined with significant participation demand, these rugby union surfaces are susceptible to damage that cannot be quickly or easily repaired.

Of the 218 community playing fields across Queensland, 63 (or 29%) do not have functional drainage infrastructure with 24 of those having no drainage at all.

1 in 5 playing fields (20%) has the combination of poor irrigation and drainage.

Combined, there are around one third (33%) of playing fields that don't have the necessary *below ground infrastructure* to cater for significant use, growing demands and climatic conditions experienced across Queensland.



"As of 1 March 2020, 67.4% of the land in Queensland has been drought declared" **Queensland Government**

## Activate! Queensland Strategy

The Queensland government has committed to **invest \$1.3 billion** over 10 years to improve opportunities for Queenslanders to participate in physical activity.

**Vision** – To enrich the Queensland way of life through physical activity and provide more opportunities for Queenslanders, of all ages and all abilities, to be physically active.

The funding model will ensure investment in sport and active recreation is directed where it is needed most. Importantly, the Department for Housing and Public Works will co-ordinate investment under a shared vision across Queensland Government agencies, and create opportunities for government investment for organisations and activities that meet government strategic objectives.



### Activate! Queensland wants to:

- Empower more Queenslanders to enjoy physical activity to improve their health and wellbeing
- Create partnerships that maximise the impact of the government and industry actions to benefit an active Queensland
- Inspire activity with places and spaces that invite an active lifestyle
- Drive elite success and deliver and promote world-class knowledge and facilities.

### The strategy will direct investment at

- Creating quality infrastructure to support physical activity
- Addressing barriers to participation

# Strategic planning drivers

## Activate! Queensland Action Plan

The 2019 - 2022 Activate Queensland Action Plan provides investment of \$40 million over three years to deliver up to 150 infrastructure projects in local communities throughout Queensland.

The Queensland Sport and Recreation Partnerships Office is responsible for project delivery.

Whether its new changerooms for sporting clubs or additional lighting for safety, community infrastructure solutions will help local sport and recreation clubs and organisations address barriers to physical activity participation.

---

**Connecting community, building capacity and providing access for all demonstrates alignment of the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy and Activate! Queensland.**

---

## Rugby Australia National Facility Guidelines

The guidelines have been developed to provide direction for the development of new facilities and renewal of existing rugby venues. The guidelines are focused on inclusivity for females, player safety and increasing capacity at existing rugby venues.

Creating a welcoming environment for all is a key focus, with the intent to offer support to local clubs on core, preferred and optional infrastructure requirements at rugby union venues.





# Strategic framework

The diagram below outlines the strategic framework for the future provision of rugby facilities and their development throughout Queensland for the period 2020 and 2030. Four key infrastructure pillars and supporting objectives have been identified and are underpinned by prioritised actions.

## PRINCIPLES: ACCESSIBLE, INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE, INVESTED

### ► QUEENSLAND RUGBY UNION INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

IMPROVE EXISTING  
VENUE CAPACITY

INCLUSIVE  
RUGBY FACILITIES

PLANNING FOR  
GROWTH AREAS

PARTNERSHIPS AND  
INVESTMENT

### ► STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Maximise the safety, carrying capacity and activation of existing venues

Support diversity of game formats and participants through inclusive facilities

Plan to maximise and support participation through new venues in Queensland's growing suburban, regional and remote areas

Develop and maintain relationships with all levels of government and industry partners

### ► STRATEGIC ACTIONS

### ► REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

The following pages provide a summary of QRU's key infrastructure priorities, their drivers and proposed strategic responses to address rugby facility planning and development across Queensland between 2020 and 2030.

# State-wide infrastructure pillars



## Improve existing venue capacity

### Maximise the safety, carrying capacity and activation of existing venues

- 1.1 Maintain SFA-Rugby and associated data in conjunction with clubs, associations and councils
- 1.2 Increase playing field lighting levels and introduce more LED lighting
- 1.3 Consider introduction of synthetic and hybrid training surface alternatives at strategic locations where site and funding conditions align and participation will be increased
- 1.4 Increase industry education on the importance of playing field drainage and irrigation
- 1.5 Investigate a preferred suppliers register to assist with capital projects including playing field renovations (inc. drainage, irrigation, surfaces), synthetic surfaces, lighting, player benches, scoreboards, goal posts



## Inclusive rugby facilities

### Support diversity of game formats and participants through inclusive facilities

- 2.1 Increase and improve gender neutral player and match official change room provision
- 2.2 Identify practical shared and multi-use design models for built facilities with alternate and compatible sports to unlock investment opportunities
- 2.3 Promote information on building and site planning for inclusive rugby activities
- 2.4 Identify opportunities for continued shared school-based facility and club models
- 2.5 Provide access to rugby programs, pathways and development services in regional and metropolitan areas.

# State-wide infrastructure pillars



## Planning for growth areas

**Plan to maximise and support participation through new venues in Queensland's growing suburban areas**

- 3.1 Continue to use data driven techniques to ensure there are enough facilities in the right locations to meet rugby's current needs and long-term aspirations
- 3.2 Engage with planners, developers, QLD Government and commercial sector to identify future sites to accommodate Rugby's current needs and long-term requirements
- 3.3 Develop sustainable rugby model venue designs and land area requirements to support precinct structure planning
- 3.4 Advocate for rugby through offering expertise (or review) of site master plans and precinct structure plans
- 3.5 Identify sites not yet accessed by rugby, where capacity may exist for future use (eg. school sites, multi-sport sites)



## Partnerships and investment

**Develop and maintain relationships with all levels of government and industry partners.**

- 4.1 Develop a *Stakeholder Engagement Framework* that, when applied, builds relationships with all levels of local and state government and is implemented by the rugby community
- 4.2 Develop relationships with partners that will better position rugby in QLD as a key influencer in sports facility provision and policy development (eg. Queensland Sport and Recreation partnerships Office, Local Councils)
- 4.3 Promote the *QLD Rugby Facility Hierarchy* to demonstrate venue priorities over 'desirable amenities'
- 4.4 Share rugby data with local government to drive and guide rugby's needs locally and to embed accurate data into local area planning
- 4.5 Develop facility planning and guidance materials and provide to facility operators and land owners





# RUGBY FACILITY HIERARCHY

# QLD rugby facility hierarchy

## HIERARCHY LEVELS

The QLD Rugby Facility Hierarchy considers a number of strategic documents and planning frameworks that guide and influence the provision of sport and recreation facilities in QLD.

The competition structure of rugby in QLD (including Premier Rugby) and the governance of rugby in metropolitan suburbs, regional cities and rural Queensland also play a key role in defining the relative levels and hierarchy of facilities.

The following Rugby Australia National Facility Guidelines have been applied

### Elite/National

Elite/National Facilities and venues can host under 16's Schoolboys/Schoolgirls and Women's national Championship and other major National Competitions.

### State Regional

State/Regional facilities and venues can host Club Competition Finals, Intra-State competitions and minor national Competitions (e.g. State Challenge)

### Club Level

Club facilities and venues are designed to cater for local club competitions within individual municipalities, usually a home ground for an individual club.

HIERARCHY LEVEL	EXAMPLE	CURRENT PROVISION	TARGET
NATIONAL	A future redeveloped Ballymore Stadium that operates as a National Rugby Training Centre	0	1 in Brisbane
STATE HQ	Ballymore Stadium	1 in Brisbane	1 in Brisbane
CLUB LEVEL - PREMIER	Easts Rugby Union Club	9	Provision to meet Premier Rugby competition structures and venue capacity needs
CLUB LEVEL - REGIONAL	Mount Isa Regional Rugby Centre	2	Provision to meet Regional Rugby competition structures and venue capacity needs
CLUB LEVEL - LOCAL	Toowoomba Bears Rugby Club	140	Provision to meet local club requirements and service competition structures
PLAYING & TRAINING SPACES	Council Parkland	Minimal provision outside of formal rugby club and competition structures	School fields, open parkland, alternative sports fields with access to areas on an as-needs-basis

**Note 1** Suncorp Stadium is managed by Stadiums Queensland and is identified as a venue that hosts national and international sport events and sits outside the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Hierarchy

**Note 2** There are a number of **core, preferred and optional facility requirements at club level**. Typically, Club Level – Premier and Regional facilities will have a number, if not all, preferred and optional facility requirements (e.g. Grandstand or tiered structure seating.) Club Level – Local facilities, only provide core infrastructure (ie Playing fields, changerooms, support amenities)

# QLD rugby facility hierarchy



## National

Stadium facility designed to meet the elite and professional needs of QRU and its participation in national domestic and international competition. This level of facility sits outside the QLD Rugby Facility Hierarchy and should be addressed via the QRU and QLD Government.

## State HQ (Ballymore)

Headquarters for the administration levels of rugby that provides a home for QRU. The range and mix of facilities allows for flexible use in order to serve community rugby, as well as high performance and event needs. It also acts as a central venue for rugby development and education. Ballymore is not club owned or controlled, but managed by QRU to meet the broader needs of Queensland Rugby.

## Club Level - Premier

Club Level - Premier club venues provide a mix of rugby facilities and amenities that primarily meet the needs of user club(s) competing in the Premier level competition. Club Level - Premier venues will generally have multiple fields (with a main playing field) and be capable of accommodating multiple teams.

Club Level - Premier venues are typically controlled by the management of a single entity on a long term lease, and may enjoy all year access. The majority of desirable and preferred infrastructure as per the Rugby Australia National Facility Guidelines in place include spectator grandstands, venue fencing, pa systems, elevated game recording position and strapping rooms.



# QLD rugby facility hierarchy

## Club Level - Regional

There are two Regional Rugby Centres operating in Queensland at Mt Isa and Townsville that provide a range of facilities, amenities and services that are targeted to meeting the needs of community rugby within a geographical area.

They are best located in key population centres to improve levels of accessibility.

Regional Rugby Centres may be managed by sub unions or local government and be accessible to the broader rugby community. They are also viewed as rugby development centres that have a centralised administration and service delivery role for their given region or rugby area.

Commercial realities are a significant challenge for the provision of regional rugby centres, with ideal tenancy, participation, location and funding conditions required before new regionals rugby centres are considered by the QRU.



Townsville and District Rugby Union

## Club Level - Local

Local clubs will form the majority of community rugby hierarchy in QLD. They are generally provided for individual clubs and their activities and could also be provided within schools. They are commonly shared with other sports and seasonal users.

Local clubs facilitate access to the game in individual localities and communities across QLD and primarily serve neighborhood catchment areas in larger population centres and individual townships in regional and rural settings.

The local club network, in association with local government, will be responsible for the provision, use and development of local club facilities.

A playing field, amenities, player changerooms, referee changerooms, social club room, kiosk/canteen and storage are seen as core infrastructure requirements of club level local rugby venues.

## Playing and training spaces

Playing spaces are generally unformed or informal areas of green / open space used for training and kick-about activities. Many of these spaces are not bookable and not managed to a level suitable of providing competition rugby activities and are mainly used for additional training venues.

School fields, open spaces and alternative sports fields also fall into this category.

# QLD rugby facility hierarchy

The following tables provide an overview of the general levels of activity and facility / amenity provision expected within each level of the Queensland Rugby Union Facility Hierarchy. Details within these tables should be used as a guide to plan new and develop existing venues, but should not be used as a definitive criteria to be provided across every existing venue within the Queensland facility network.

HIERARCHY LEVEL	EXAMPLE VENUES	KEY RUGBY ACTIVITIES	FUNDAMENTAL FACILITIES
<b>NATIONAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suncorp Stadium</li> <li>(Future) Ballymore Upgrade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Super Rugby team training and matches</li> <li>Visiting international / interstate team training</li> <li>The National HQ for Womens Rugby</li> <li>The National HQ for Youth 7's</li> <li>The Base for the St.George Queensland Reds (Mens and Womens)</li> <li>A winter training venue for the Wallabies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per Super Rugby requirements</li> </ul>
<b>STATE HQ (BALLYMORE)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ballymore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>QRU representative rugby</li> <li>Under and over age state team training</li> <li>Rugby development and education centre</li> <li>Coach and referee development and education</li> <li>Premier club and team competition</li> <li>Community and school rugby competition</li> <li>Regional, State, National carnivals and events</li> <li>QRU administration</li> <li>Onsite management presence</li> <li>QRU activity programming</li> <li>Venue Hire options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premier rugby competition capable</li> <li>Multiple full-size floodlit fields of play (minimum 3)</li> <li>Mix of grass and synthetic playing fields</li> <li>Dedicated floodlit training field / area</li> <li>Players and referee change rooms</li> <li>Medical amenities</li> <li>Office, meeting and education accommodation</li> <li>Commercial café</li> <li>Spectator amenities and viewing</li> <li>Media and broadcast capabilities</li> <li>Event capacity / temporary overlay capacity</li> <li>Dedicated car parking for 200+</li> <li>Access to fitness facilities</li> </ul>
<b>CLUB LEVEL - PREMIER</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easts Rugby Union Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premier club and team competition</li> <li>Local finals venue</li> <li>Community events</li> <li>Community rugby competition (potential)</li> <li>Rugby program delivery (potential)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premier rugby competition capable</li> <li>Multiple full-size floodlit fields (desirable 1-3)</li> <li>Dedicated floodlit training field / area (desired)</li> <li>Players and referee change rooms</li> <li>First-aid and medical amenities</li> <li>Canteen / Kiosk (permanent)</li> <li>Spectator amenities and viewing</li> <li>Media and broadcast capabilities</li> <li>Dedicated car parking for 150 (estimated)</li> <li>Access to fitness facilities (desirable)</li> <li>Large social space</li> </ul>

# QLD rugby facility hierarchy

HIERARCHY LEVEL	EXAMPLE VENUES	KEY RUGBY ACTIVITIES	FUNDAMENTAL FACILITIES
<b>CLUB LEVEL - REGIONAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mt Isa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional club and team competition</li> <li>Local finals venue</li> <li>Community events</li> <li>Community rugby competition (potential)</li> <li>Rugby program delivery (potential)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional rugby competition capable</li> <li>Multiple full-size floodlit fields (desirable 1-3)</li> <li>Dedicated floodlit training fields / area (desired)</li> <li>Players and referee change rooms</li> <li>First-aid and medical amenities</li> <li>Canteen / Kiosk (permanent)</li> <li>Spectator amenities and viewing</li> <li>Dedicated car parking for 150 (estimated)</li> <li>Access to fitness facilities (desirable)</li> <li>Large social space (desirable)</li> </ul>
<b>CLUB LEVEL - LOCAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everdell Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community rugby training and competition</li> <li>School rugby use</li> <li>Rugby program delivery</li> <li>Entry level rugby activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Floodlit field(es) (minimum 1-2)</li> <li>Players and referee change rooms</li> <li>Canteen / Kiosk</li> <li>Dedicated car parking for 60-80 (estimated)</li> </ul>
<b>PLAYING &amp; TRAINING SPACES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community rugby training</li> <li>Social rugby activities</li> <li>School rugby activities (if at school sites)</li> <li>Entry level rugby activities</li> <li>Unrestricted community access and use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to grassed areas</li> <li>Access to toilets / water</li> </ul>

**\*Note:** Specific sizes, dimensions and other prescribed minimum or required levels of infrastructure provision are purposely not provided within these hierarchy tables. This level of detail is represented within local area and sub-union competition rules and match day requirements. Many “Club Level” venues will have a mix of fundamental facilities between the Premier and Local Club level which is based on local conditions related to participation and funding available.

More detail on recommended provision levels and technical information is available from the Rugby Australia National Facility Guidelines.





**RUGBY CONTEXT**

# Rugby in Australia

## History

Rugby Australia is the sports national governing body and is a member of World Rugby. The first rugby match was played in 1829, with the first Australian rugby club formed by the University of Sydney in 1864, with the original members playing among themselves or against the crews of visiting British warships.

The club adhered to its own rules, which were based roughly on what they believed was the practice in England, where a 16-year-old schoolboy named William Webb Ellis originated rugby in 1823. Ellis became bored during a game of soccer, and with 'a fine disregard for the rules, took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of rugby football'.

## Rugby Australia role

The first body to control rugby was formed in 1874. Present day Rugby Australia Limited represent member unions of each state and territory of Australia. And has affiliations with various member unions representing juniors, schools, universities, defence force and women's rugby. The member unions, super rugby clubs and the rugby union players association have voting member rights to ratify Rugby Australia decision making.

Rugby Australia has an independent Board of Directors committed to advancing the best interests of Rugby throughout Australia. The Board is responsible for the activities and performance of Rugby Australia in both the short and long term.

## Rugby Australia Strategic Plan

Rugby Australia's 2016 -2020 Strategic Plan, is underpinned by the vision

**"To inspire all Australians to enjoy our great global game."**

To realise this vision, four areas were identified to deliver key outcomes being:

- Make rugby a game for all
- Ignite Australia's passion for the game
- Build sustainable elite success
- Create excellence in how the game is run

## Make rugby a game for all

Rugby Australia has identified traditional fifteen's Rugby as its core and the game needs to strengthen and protect senior and junior clubs. In addition, development of new formats of the game to encourage new entrants through the doors of clubs and focus on encouraging diversity, particularly to appeal to more women and indigenous populations.

The Queensland Rugby Union Facility Strategy has embraced this area of focus and applied it in the development of the *inclusive rugby facilities* priority contained with the Strategy. The objective of this priority is to support diversity of game formats and participants through provision of inclusive facilities.



Players from Deception Bay and Murrumba Downs in the Moreton Bay Super 6 competition

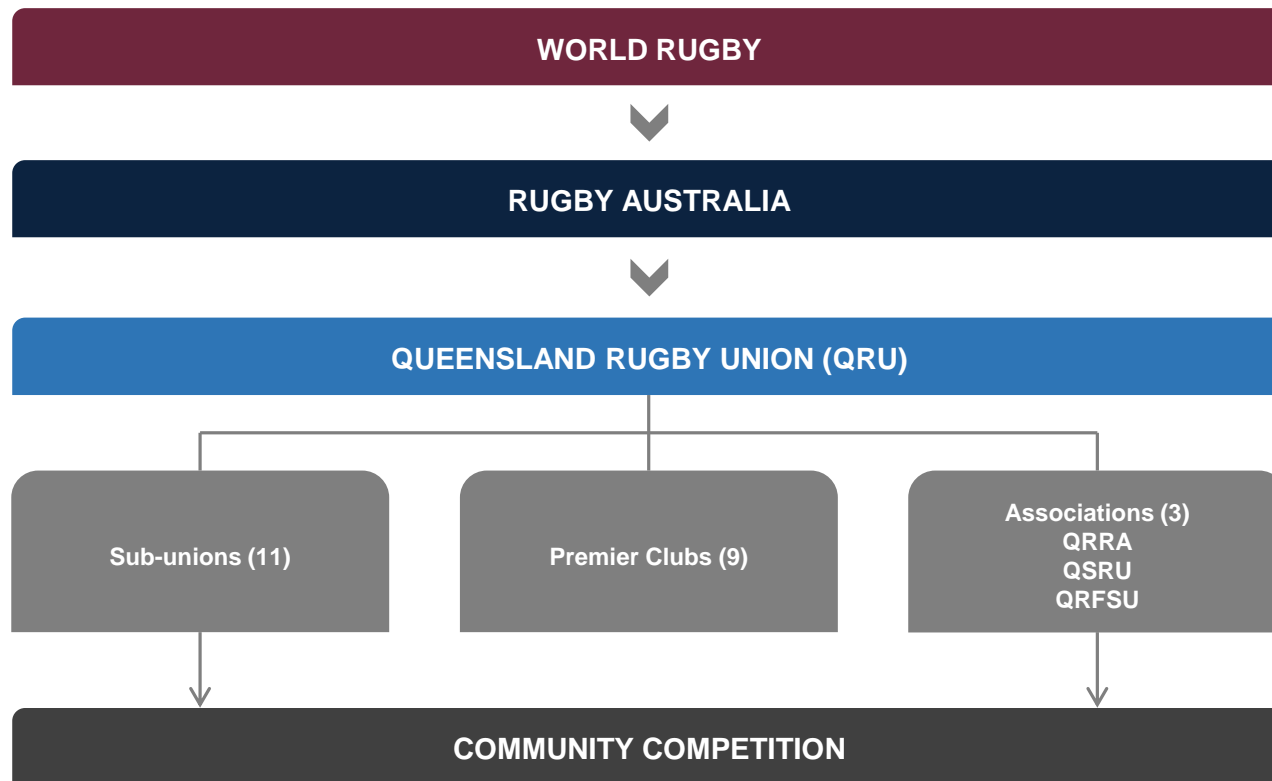
# Structure of rugby in Queensland

## Rugby in Queensland

Is managed by Queensland Rugby Union which is a union member of Rugby Australia.

Queensland Rugby Union is responsible for independent competitions, development activities and education courses, planning and support rugby facilities and infrastructure improvements. The Queensland Rugby Union Community Unit is focused on participation and provides support to the 11 Sub - Unions, 9 Premier Clubs and 3 Associations that deliver community rugby.

The Community Unit provide support in the areas of Governance, Planning, Finance, Workforce, Facilities, Competitions, and Communications to support rugby's local face to face delivery. The various sub-union boundaries have been considered to ensure travel times and distance are minimised and are not insurmountable barriers for local clubs to participate in community rugby activity. It is acknowledged that the geographic areas of some sub-unions is large in nature.



**Note:** The Queensland Reds is a professional high performance rugby union team managed by the Queensland Rugby Union. The Reds participate in Super Rugby, an international southern hemisphere competition, and sit outside the structure of community rugby delivery in Queensland.



# Queensland rugby regions

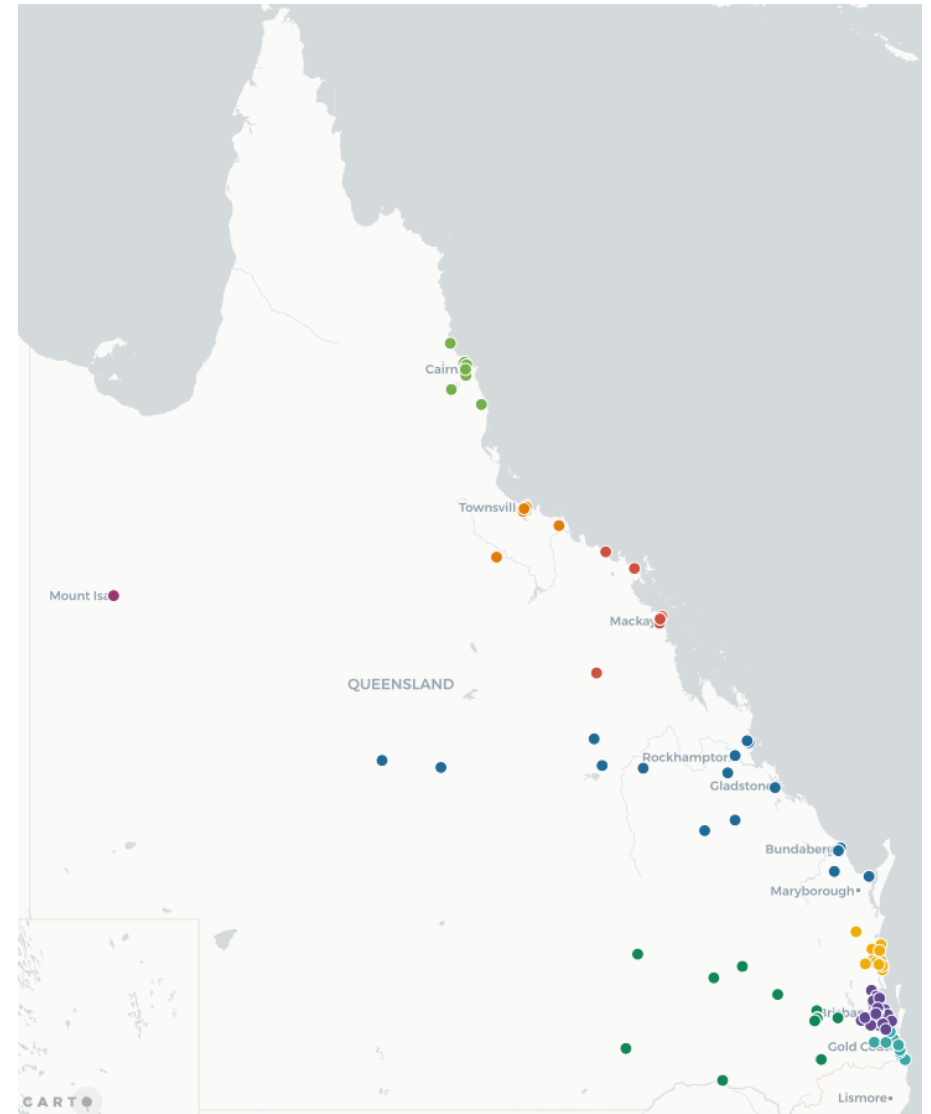
## Geographic Rugby Regions in Queensland

The adjacent map identifies the number of rugby venues contained within the various regions of Queensland.

Rugby venues are typically located in densely populated areas in line with the historical development of rugby union activities. The GPS school rugby competition commenced in 1918 with schools represented in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Gold Coast and Ipswich areas.

Location	Venue Number
Brisbane	31
Central and Western Queensland*	26
Gold Coast	18
Darling Downs	16
Sunshine Coast	12
Far North Queensland	12
Townsville	10
Mackay	7
Mt Isa	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>133</b>

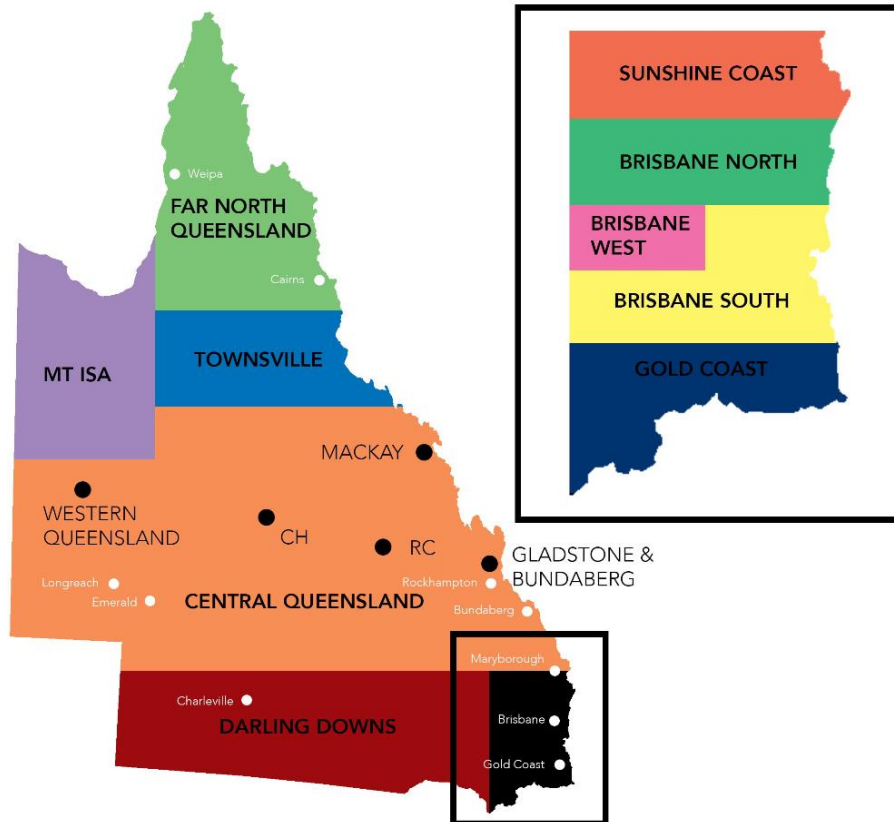
**Note\*** Central and Western Queensland include the 4 sub-unions for Capricornia, Western Queensland, Central Highlands and Bundaberg.



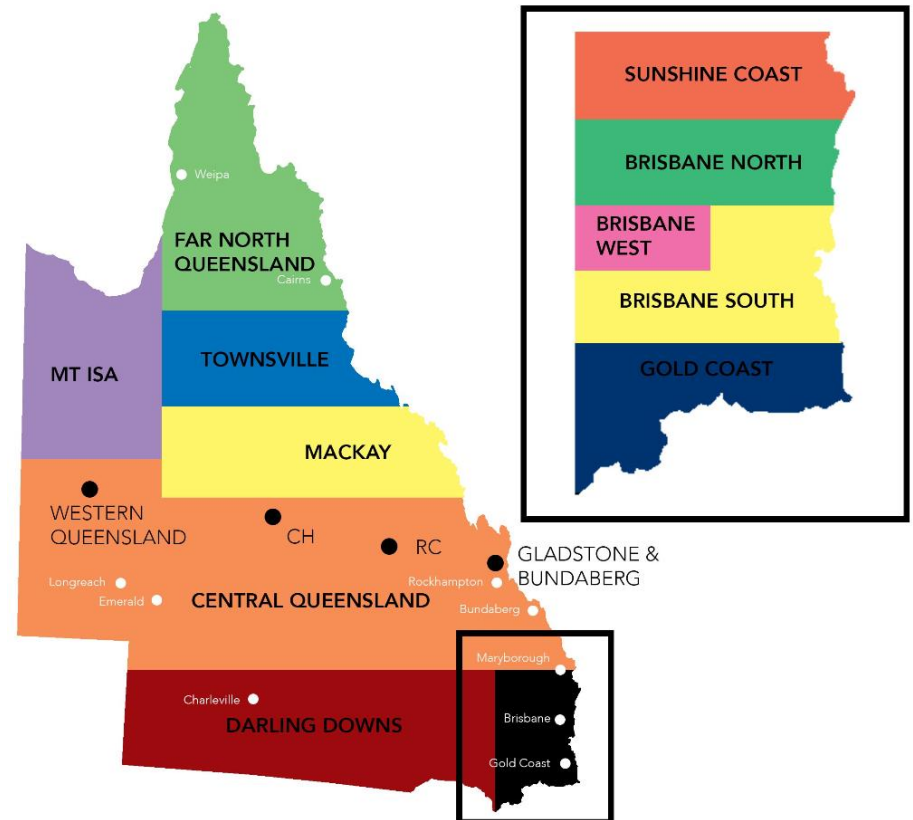
# Queensland rugby sub-unions

Community rugby union competition is delivered by 11 sub-unions across Queensland that is divided into senior and junior areas. See mapping below.

Junior Sub-Union Rugby Areas



Senior Sub-Union Rugby Areas



**Note:** While junior and senior competition are typically managed by the one sub-union, the exception is in the Mackay region where a seniors only competition is in place. Juniors in the Mackay area, play competition rugby in the Central Queensland region.



# PARTICIPATION OVERVIEW



# National participation in Rugby Union

## Participation

In May 2020, the National Sports Survey (AusPlay) results, undertaken by Sport Australia, indicate that Rugby Union has 207,783 participants Australia wide. In the year to December 2019, it is estimated that 133.3k adults 15+ were participating in rugby with 74.5K children 0 -14 participating in organised rugby union out of school activity.

Furthermore 322,225 nominated rugby union as the sport of physical activity they most strongly associate with. It was reported that 82,225 people were involved with the game in non playing roles including coaching, official, administrator, committee, team manager or medical support role.

The AusPlay survey, estimates that 0.7% of the adult (15 years old+) adult population and 1.6% of children (0 to 14 years old) regularly took part in rugby union activity. Boys accounted for 91% of all children's rugby union participation and adult males accounted for 86% of adult rugby union participation.

Since 2017, Ausplay data report a 7% overall increase in organised rugby participation, up from 196,900 participants.

Ausplay advise Queensland provides 33% (43,926 participants) aged in the 15 plus demographic.

## Future Growth

Identifying trends, AusPlay recognise a future positive net growth market opportunity for rugby union of 9.76%.

Rugby union is providing new variants of the game to ensure the sport can be played by all ages, skill levels and backgrounds.

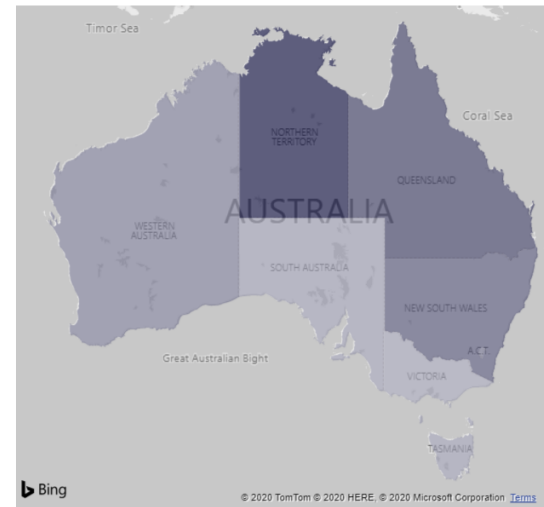
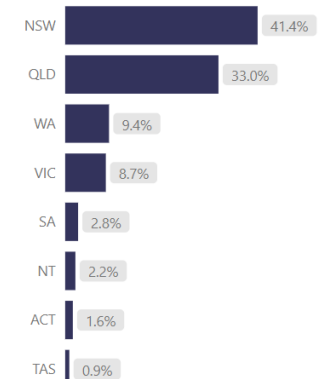


Chart below shows the % share of each state by total number of participants. It can be read as Victoria accounts for X% of participants across Australia. The % adds up to 100%.



Source: Ausplay December 2019 rugby adult 15+ participation rates by State

**AusPlay advise that Queensland provides 33% of all Rugby Union participants aged 15 and above in Australia**

# Queensland rugby region participation

## Rugby Region Participation

The below table identifies the number of registered winter participants in 2019 by rugby region and the overall percentage of participation against total 2019 registered participants.

The Brisbane region provided 56% of all 2019 QRU registered participants. Southern and South East Queensland, which includes the Brisbane, Gold Coast, Darling Downs and Sunshine Coast regions, provides around 85% of all QRU participants state-wide.

The Townsville, Central and Western Queensland, Mackay, Far North Queensland and Mt Isa regions share 15% of total QRU participants, which equates to 4,154 registered players in 2019.

Region	2019 Participant Number	Percentage of Total Participants
Brisbane	15,572	56.3%
Gold Coast	3,022	10.9%
Darling Downs	2,692	9.7%
Sunshine Coast	2,228	8.1%
Townsville	1,806	6.5%
Central and Western Queensland	1,393	5.0%
Mackay	475	1.7%
Far North Queensland	460	1.7%
Mt Isa	20	0.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,668</b>	<b>100%</b>

**South East Queensland provided 85% of all 2019 registered Rugby Union participants, equating to 23,514 players.**

**Note:** The Rugby Region Participation table considers *where players play the game*. In the Demand Assessment section provided later in this report, the local government area where players live is used as the geographic indicator. This method has been used to ensure consistency with population and demographic characteristics.

# Queensland Rugby Union participation summary

**240**  
CLUBS

**27,151**  
WINTER  
REGISTERED  
PLAYERS

**2,786**  
COACHES

**782**  
OFFICIALS

**5,638**  
VOLUNTEERS



**Source:** 2019 Queensland Rugby Union Registered Clubs, Players, Coaches, Officials, Volunteers.





# FACILITY AUDIT OVERVIEW



# Facilities audit overview

**129**

**COMMUNITY  
RUGBY  
VENUES**

**218**

**RUGBY  
PLAYING  
FIELDS**

**177**

**FLOODLIT  
PLAYING  
FIELDS**

**101**

**VENUES WITH  
PLAYER  
CHANGE ROOMS**

**46**

**VENUES WITH  
REFEREE  
CHANGE ROOMS**



*Data is provided via the Queensland Rugby Facility Audit undertaken over 2019 and 2020 by Queensland Rugby Union staff and affiliates.*

# Facilities audit overview

## Audit Introduction

In a first for Queensland Rugby Union, the development of the Queensland Rugby Union Infrastructure Strategy involved the auditing of all facilities across the state, including all on-field and off-field rugby infrastructure. This included playing fields, sports lighting, player change rooms, referee facilities, clubrooms, canteens, storage, car parking and other supporting infrastructure.

The on-site audits were completed over a 6-month period between November 2019 and April 2020. Queensland Rugby Union staff and affiliates undertook the audits and to facilitate the audit process, a customised web based audit program was developed – Sports Facility Auditor (SFA-Rugby Union).

SFA-Rugby Union was designed to collect baseline data for the following key areas:

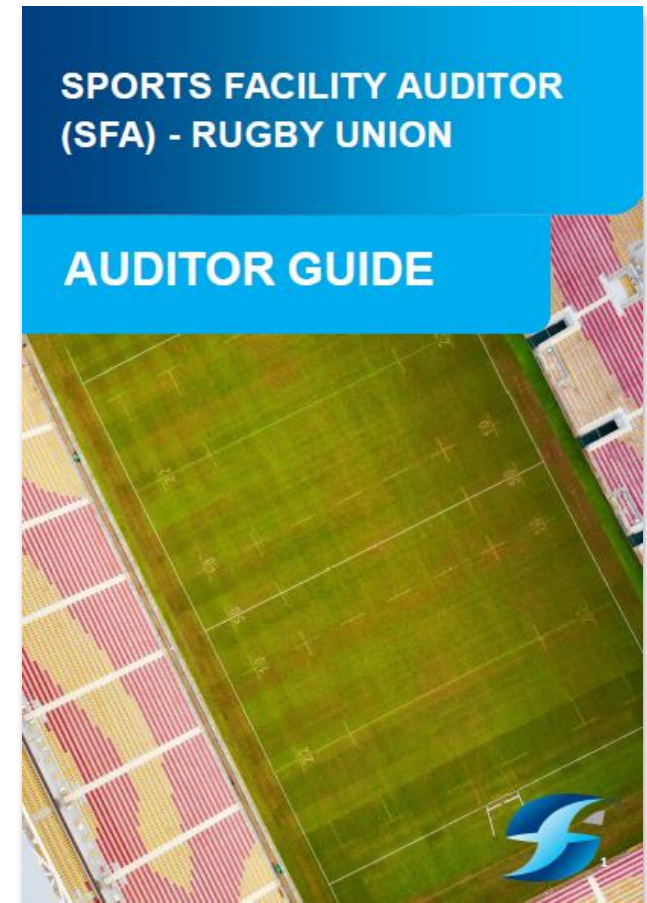
- Current facility provision, dimensions, condition and amenity type.
- Auditor commentary and photo records.
- Location of venues and individual fields using GPS coordinates.
- Identification of potential future projects and development opportunities for each venue.
- Field utilisation (estimated hours and time of use) and maintenance responsibilities.

The audit program is based on a range of best practice preferred National Facility Guidelines developed by Rugby Australia and relevant Australian Standards (eg. playing field lighting levels).

## Audit Methodology

The analysis of onsite audit information has focused on the four most critical areas of rugby infrastructure and the relevant capacity and impact of being able to facilitate community rugby activities:

1. Playing field surfaces (type, condition, size, drainage and irrigation)
2. Playing field lighting (type and level)
3. Change room amenity (for players, match officials and all gender use)
4. Clubrooms (size and overall condition).



# Audit findings – playing fields

## Playing field surface type

Playing field surfaces generally provide a mix of surfaces, including cool season grasses, warm season grasses and a mix of grasses. At present there is one synthetic training field in use in Queensland at Sunnybank Senior and Junior Rugby Union Club. It is irregular in shape and approximately one third the size of a full playing field.

The following provides an overall number of the different playing field surface types provided across all community rugby facilities. Overall the mix of surface types were consistent across Queensland.

Surface type	Number of playing fields	Percentage of provision
Summer grasses	79	36.2%
Winter grasses	7	3.2%
Mix of grasses	92	42.2%
Synthetic grass	1	0.45%
Surface unknown	39	17.95%
<b>Total playing fields</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Playing field size

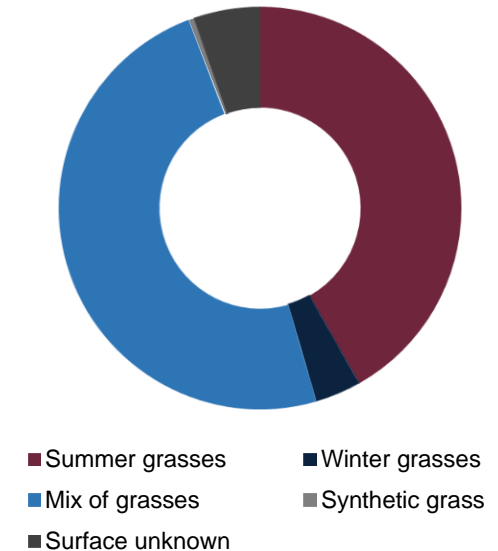
Playing size has been categorised into two key sizes:

1. Full-size, capable of hosting 15 v 15 senior competition.
2. Other size, catering for modified and/or junior rugby and other training or program activities.

Across Queensland there are 155 full-size rugby playing fields (71%) and 63 other sized fields (29%). 13 surfaces had no playing field markings or size identified.

Surface types are mixed across both full-size and other sized playing fields. It should also be noted that many full-sized playing fields are also used for multiple rugby activities and can be configured a number of different ways to cater for different programs. A number of these sites are shared with other winter sports such as rugby league, AFL, soccer and summer sports such as cricket.

## PLAYING FIELDS





# Audit findings – playing fields

## Playing field surface condition

Playing field surfaces were rated as part of the facility audit process. Playing field conditions were rated predominately during the summer months where conditions may have been impacted by predominately dry and out of season conditions. The following data provides 'a guide' to the general overall observed condition of playing fields across Queensland and is used to identify geographical areas of concern.

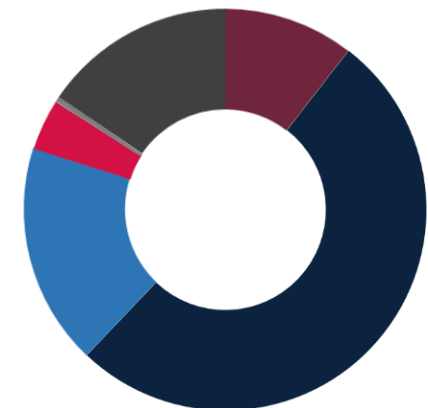
Playing field surfaces were rated using the following scale:



Condition rating	Definition
<b>Excellent</b>	As new
<b>Good</b>	Some wear observed across playing surface
<b>Moderate</b>	Considerable wear across playing surface but still playable
<b>Poor</b>	Multiple quality and playability issues observed, safe play may be impacted
<b>Very poor</b>	Playing area requires immediate rejuvenation or replacement

Surface condition	Number of playing fields	Percentage of provision
Excellent	23	10%
Good	113	52%
Moderate	39	19%
Poor quality	9	4%
Condition not assessed	34	15%
<b>Total playing fields</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100%</b>

PLAYING FIELDS



- Excellent
- Good condition
- Moderate
- Poor quality
- Synthetic grass
- Surface unknown

# Audit findings – playing fields

## Drainage and irrigation

The quality of playing fields can be impacted by a range of different factors, including age, original construction methods, usage levels, maintenance regimes, climatic conditions, drainage function and availability of irrigation.

The presence of drainage and irrigation infrastructure was identified through the facility audit as it is considered to have a significant impact on the continued capacity of playing fields and is required to enable effective ground maintenance. Without this infrastructure in place, playing fields are significantly restricted in terms of the capacity to accommodate use.

### Across all playing fields it was identified that:

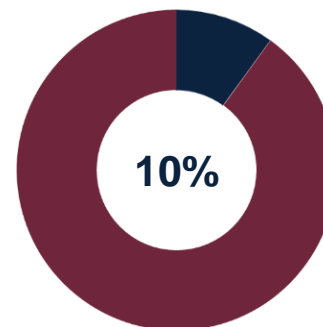
- 29% of all natural grass playing fields did not have functional drainage.
- 35% of other sized playing fields did not have functional drainage infrastructure in place.
- 10% of all natural grass playing fields have no irrigation infrastructure.
- 68% of natural grass playing fields have automated irrigation systems in place.

Levels of drainage and irrigation provision were varied across all areas of Queensland and are often specific to local government areas as to what level it is provided. In general terms, playing fields in regional areas of Queensland provide lower levels of drainage and irrigation infrastructure.

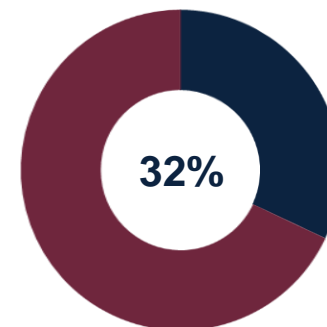
The direct correlation between the provision of functional drainage and irrigation infrastructure and playing field surface quality is evidenced by:

- 80% of very poor playing fields have no drainage or automated irrigation infrastructure.
- The same assessment for good to excellent playing fields identified that less than 5% had no drainage or automated irrigation systems in place.

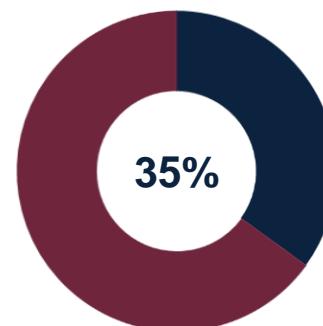
### Fields have no irrigation infrastructure



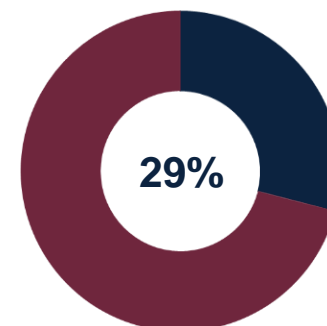
### Fields with no automated irrigation



### Other (non-full size) sized fields without drainage



### Fields without functional drainage



# Audit findings – playing fields

## Playing field capacity

Playing field data analysed through this Strategy has assisted to create a model for assessing the Full-Size Equivalent (FSE) capacity of playing fields, using the data held within SFA-Rugby.

While this method does not take into account all the factors that may impact capacity (including weather conditions, maintenance regimes and fixturing), the following elements of a playing field have been analysed to create a consistent capacity model across all playing fields.

- Playing field size
- Usage type (modified to senior competition)
- Lighting levels
- Drainage functionality
- Irrigation provision
- Surface condition.

The model created allows all playing fields to be scored based on the features above, with a maximum score of 1.0 FSE attributed to the most functional playing areas. While there are no full-size, floodlit synthetic rugby union playing fields in Queensland, these do have the ability to score a maximum of 2.2 based on their additional utilisation capabilities.

While the need to plan and develop new rugby union venues in growing population areas is required in the longer term, increasing the capacity of existing playing fields via improving their associated quality is an efficient, sustainable and cost effective method. Increasing capacity supports maximising playing field use, improving and renewing existing infrastructure and partnering with councils to better manage venue and club requirements.

If existing playing field capacity can be enhanced through the improvement of drainage, provision of automated irrigation, change in surface type and/or the upgrading of lighting to expand the hours of use, this could have a significant impact on the entire Queensland rugby union playing field network.

Routine sport field maintenance practices such as aeration, weed and feed combined with responsible use (as opposed to overuse) can reduce down times and increase capacity.

Increased capacity would also assist in supporting the future planning of new venues in terms of identifying what is required through new facilities to cater for the demands of rugby.



**State-wide, the capacity assessment of 218 playing fields identified a collective full-size field equivalent capacity of 165 full-size playing fields. Based on all the above factors it could be assumed that around 30% of playing field capacity is being lost due to existing conditions.**



# Audit findings – change room amenity



## Barriers to female participation in sport

Traditionally, sporting facilities were constructed to meet the needs of male participants. Present day, best practice sport facilities should provide a range of amenities that attract and sustain access for all.

Increasing female participation in safe and welcoming environments is a strategic priority of the Queensland State Government, Queensland Rugby Union, Rugby Australia and local government authorities. The support by all is welcomed as it is acknowledged, there is plenty of work to be undertaken to improve the accessibility of changeroom amenity.

## Gender neutral change room amenities

The Queensland Rugby Union facility audit reported on player and match officials/referees change room number, condition and gender neutral compliance.

Change room provision trends are very much based on historical male sport requirements and each existing Council capital provision policy in place, which is inconsistent in across municipalities.



## Gender neutral change room amenity findings

- 22% of all rugby venues in Queensland **do not provide player change room facilities.**
- 55% of all player change room facilities **are rated in the moderate, poor and very poor categories.**
- 80% of all player change rooms in Queensland **are not gender neutral.** This equates to only 1 in 5 change rooms being gender neutral compliant.
- 65% of venues **do not provide a change room** for match officials/referees
- 62% of all match official change room facilities **are not gender neutral compliant for match officials/referees.**

## Gender neutral change room facilities

Typical features of a welcoming gender neutral change room and associated amenity include:

- Lockable shower cubicles.
- Each shower has a change space with a robe hook, seat and shelf to place a bag.
- Toilets with full height petitioned pans and no urinals.
- Baby change facilities.
- Wash basins with vanity shelf space, mirrors and electrical outlets.

# Audit findings – clubrooms and social spaces



Source: Surfers Paradise Rugby Union Club



Source: Wests Bulldogs Rugby



Source: Wests Bulldogs Rugby

## The value of social spaces

The community sporting club environment is designed to build a stronger, healthier, happier and safer communities, on the playing field, and in the social spaces, are often where strong social bonds are formed.

It is evident that social spaces:

- bring people together, providing opportunities for social interaction and networking
- can improve mental health
- provide a vehicle for inclusion, drawing people together of different races, religions and cultures
- provides a sense of where everyone belongs.

While difficult to measure, easing pressure on the health system, fostering community pride and promoting volunteering opportunities are all benefits realized from thriving clubs and social spaces.

## Clubroom findings

- Of the 129 rugby venues, **26 do not have social spaces** which equates to 20%
- Of the 103 venues with social spaces, **45 were rated in the moderate, poor and very poor categories.**

## Social space features

A good social space is easily accessible, with natural light, ideally has site lines to the playing fields and are inviting, well lit at night safe places. Quality social spaces organically become the meeting point for all club activities outside the playing arena.

A space of 100m<sup>2</sup> fits 80 to 100 people seated pending the table configuration and capacity can be increased by a further 80% when visitors are standing only. The required size of social areas varies between local government areas with the membership size of the community rugby club to be considered.

# Audit findings – summary

## Audit summary

The adjacent table provide a summary of:

- The number of venues audited
- The numbers of key on-field and off-field infrastructure found

## Key findings summary

- 23% of rugby fields in Queensland are rated as being in moderate to poor condition.
- 19% rugby fields **do not meet minimum training sports lighting requirement of 50 lux**
- 21% of venues **do not have a social space**
- 4 out of 5 change rooms **do not meet all gender requirements**
- 10% of all fields **do not have irrigation**

#	Facility Statistics
135	Venues
218	Playing Fields
267	Player Changerooms
50	Gender Neutral Player Changerooms
35	Match Officials Changerooms
13	Gender Neutral Match Official Changerooms
82	Rugby Field Lighting with no or less than 50 lux
63	Rugby Fields with Functional Drainage
148	Rugby Fields with Automated Irrigation
103	Community Pavilion Social Spaces





# CONSULTATION FINDINGS

# Key stakeholders consulted

## Clubs

There were 240 rugby union clubs operating in Queensland in 2019. All clubs operate to promote physical activity and develop rugby. The purpose of the various junior and senior clubs is to provide a combination of social, and competitive rugby while providing a strong sense of community inclusion.

## Sub-unions

There are 11 affiliated rugby sub-unions that support the operations of metropolitan, regional and remote rugby in Queensland.

Each of these organisations have a goal to grow, develop, promote and service rugby while encouraging equity for all. Typically, each sub-union implement local initiatives, in addition to programs that have been adopted by Queensland Rugby Union.

The range of activities and programs delivered include:

- Amateur (community rugby) services.
- Competition management.
- Regulatory support of member clubs.
- Operate some representative teams.
- Coaching and referee education and accreditation.
- Support delivery of participation programs like Get into Rugby

## Local Government

There are 77 Local Government Authorities (LGAs) who own and manage the majority of community rugby venues across the state. Arguably local government is collectively rugby's biggest sponsor and a significant stakeholder in the provision, management and investment into community rugby facilities.

As land owners, LGAs perform the following functions:

- Local planning authority.
- Setting fees and charges.
- Developing and negotiating tenancy conditions.
- Venue and playing field maintenance.
- Capital renewal.
- Policy development and new venue planning
- Investment partner.

## State Government

The Queensland Government through its various departments, agencies and elected members are a strategic partner of rugby. State Government sets the policy framework under which local government operate, in addition to guiding the priorities for planning (including land release) and investment into sporting infrastructure (both current and future).

The Queensland Office for Sport and Recreation, is a closely aligned partner of Queensland Rugby Union. Endorsement by State Government in the Queensland Rugby Union Infrastructure Strategy will be critical in attracting the required future investment to support implementation.



# Consultation findings

## Summary of club, sub-union and local government consultation

The Queensland Rugby Union Infrastructure Strategy included an online survey that was distributed to all 240 clubs, 77 Local Government Authorities and 11 sub-unions across Queensland. The consultation period extended from November 2019 to May 2020.

Workshops were held for clubs at Queensland Rugby Union state headquarters at Ballymore, with one on one meetings with officers from Brisbane, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast LGA's conducted. Telephone interviews South east Queensland Council's and 15 councils responded to the online survey.

Of the 77 Council's in Queensland, 38 have at least one rugby union venue. Local Government Authorities that support rugby union activities were targeted in the consultation with 70% of all local government rugby field owners in Queensland completing a survey, or participating in a telephone or in person interview. Typically LGA's that do not have a rugby union facility are located in central and remote areas of Queensland and have low population bases.

A broad cross section of sub unions and clubs responded to the survey with 76 responses received.

A high level summary of survey and workshop responses are provided in the following pages. These key facility findings have helped to shape and influence the overall strategic pillars and recommendations provided in the Strategy.

Furthermore, sub-unions and clubs have been asked to identify high priority rugby projects in their locality with 30 projects identified at time of writing the Strategy.

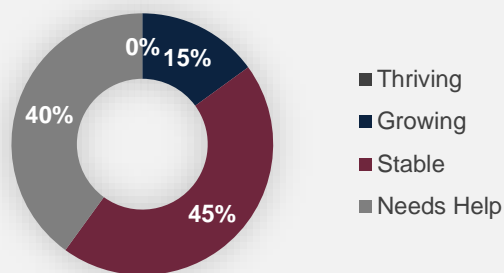




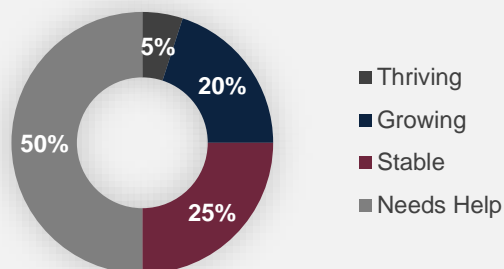
# Consultation findings

## Word that best describes current rugby participation

### Local Government



### Sub Unions and Clubs



## Identified challenges

### Local Government

- On-field game and training equipment storage
- Ability to upgrade playing field lighting
- Securing funding to address facility requirements
- Poor quality of playing fields
- Inadequate number of playing fields

### Sub Unions/Clubs

- Securing funding for facility improvements
- Inadequacy of existing playing field lighting for competition and training
- Permanent on-field sports equipment
- Inadequate number of playing fields to host tournaments and gala days
- Poor quality of playing fields due to inadequate irrigation/drainage

## Key Priorities

### Local Government

- Address levels of ageing infrastructure
- Secure partner investment for new facility development and/or renewal works
- Development of gender neutral change room facilities
- Increase levels of storage provision

### Sub Unions/Clubs

- Provision of gender neutral change rooms
- Maintaining amenities to a safe and suitable standard
- Secure partner investment for new facility development and/or renewal works
- Address levels of ageing infrastructure
- Increase levels of club storage provision
- Increase the number of playing fields

# Stakeholder themes



*Rugby union participation remains strong in traditional areas but needs help to renew infrastructure and encourage new people to the game*

*Accessible, factual data on rugby participation in each sub-union and Local Government Area needs to be shared and used for decision making*



*75% of LGAs agree that ageing infrastructure, securing funding and gender neutral change rooms are key priorities*

*Increasing community rugby venue capacity via sports field lighting and improved drainage and irrigation is a priority*

*School access provides participation opportunities for rugby, if formal agreements were easier to negotiate*





# DEMAND ASSESSMENT

# Influences on future demand



**A vast number of factors influence the demand for Rugby Union, including demographics, location, residential settlement pattern, climatic conditions and socio-economic influences. In simple terms, key areas of population growth and demographic change provide high level indicators where existing rugby participation is likely to be sustained, and where new rugby participation growth will be generated.**

## Population and demographics

The 2016 National Census reported Queensland as having a total population base of around 4.85 million. The Queensland population is expected to grow by almost 30% (1.35 million people) to 2031.

This 15-year growth is expected to impact significantly on the overall demand for sport and recreation. Growth in the key Rugby playing age groups of 5 to 34 however will grow at a slightly slower rate, at around 20%. This will still equate to an additional 382,000 5 to 34 year old's living across Queensland by 2031, providing the potential for more than 2,000 additional rugby union participants conservatively.

Around 0.5% of the current Queensland population are registered QRU participants. At the above population growth rate, by 2031 a market for an estimated additional 6,700 registered QRU participants is possible, given the right programming, funding and infrastructure conditions are in place to support the game.

Brisbane is projected to remain the most populous LGA in Queensland, increasing from 1.18 million people in 2016 to between 1.48 million and 1.64 million by 2041 (refer adjacent table).

Gold Coast LGA is projected to remain the LGA with the second largest population in 2041 (increasing from 577,000 people to between 831,000 and 1,076,000 in the 25 years to 2041), followed by Moreton Bay, Ipswich, Logan, Sunshine Coast and Townsville.

---

**Of Queensland's top 10 LGAs by population size in 2041, eight are in South East Queensland. The remaining two LGAs, Townsville and Cairns, are in regional Queensland.**

---



# Influences on future demand

Projected population, ten largest LGAs <sup>(a)</sup>, Queensland, at 30 June

LGA	2016	2041 projection series		
	ERP	Low	Medium	High
	persons	Number		
Brisbane (C)	1,184,215	1,479,841	1,551,149	1,653,343
Gold Coast (C)	576,918	831,416	943,686	1,076,192
Moreton Bay (R)	438,313	639,626	690,602	750,214
Ipswich (C)	200,123	482,691	557,649	644,677
Logan (C)	313,785	502,450	554,327	614,918
Sunshine Coast (R)	303,389	462,160	518,004	578,762
Townsville (C)	192,058	253,722	282,281	313,315
Cairns (R)	162,451	206,548	236,593	269,481
Toowoomba (R)	164,595	187,121	204,332	223,151
Redland (C)	151,987	184,292	192,431	201,988

(a) Ranked according to the medium series projected population in 2041.

Projected population change, ten largest growing LGAs <sup>(a)</sup>, Queensland, 25 years to 30 June 2041

LGA	Projection series		
	Low	Medium	High
	Number		
Brisbane (C)	295,626	366,934	451,128
Gold Coast (C)	254,498	366,768	499,274
Ipswich (C)	282,568	357,526	444,554
Moreton Bay (R)	201,313	252,289	311,901
Logan (C)	188,665	240,542	301,133
Sunshine Coast (R)	158,771	214,615	275,373
Townsville (C)	61,664	90,223	121,257
Cairns (R)	44,097	74,142	107,030
Mackay (R)	20,212	40,577	61,174
Redland (C)	32,305	40,444	50,001

(a) Ranked according to medium series projected population growth between 2016 and 2041.

Sources: Queensland Government population projections, 2018 edition data and ABS 3235.0, Population by age and sex, regions of Australia, 2016

# Influences on future demand

## Distribution of participants

Registered player numbers have been used as a measure to assess current use and future demand.

The 2019 QRU registered players total 27,151 across all formal formats of the game. This is a slight reduction from 2017 numbers. However, participation has remained stable between 27,000 and 28,000 for the past three years.

Registered rugby participation is spread across Queensland but is traditionally centred around metropolitan Brisbane, South East Queensland and into key Regional Cities.

The table on the following page provides a summary of the Top 25 areas of registered QRU participants for 2019. These areas will form the main focus for future rugby infrastructure renewal and redevelopment projects.

These Top 25 LGA areas for QRU participation make up almost 97% of the total number of players across Queensland. While the bulk volume of participants is clearly centered around the metropolitan and South East Queensland municipalities, the regional cities and surrounding areas of Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton, Mackay and the Sunshine Coast also remain integral to the structure and support of Queensland rugby union.

When participation is expressed as a percentage of total local area population, individual locations such as Charters Towers (3.1% of the local population are registered QRU participants) demonstrate their significance and value within their local communities.

Goondiwindi (2.0%), Burdekin (1.4%), Central Highlands (1.3%), Western Downs (1.2%), Southern Downs (1.2%) and Livingstone (1.1%) all demonstrate that rugby union and their associated facilities are all very significant within their local area and worthy of investing in to continue to support the sport and the social fabric of these regional areas.

## Growth trends

Using 2019 registered QRU participation rates for each individual LGA across Queensland, QRU could expect to grow its registered participant base to almost 34,000 by 2031. Reaching this level of growth will primarily depend on the ability and capacity of QRU to drive participation across these Top 25 LGAs and naturally also in the areas that have the greatest levels of expected population growth (e.g. South East Queensland).



# Top 25 QRU participation areas

Local Government Area	Registered QRU Participants (2019)	2019 QRU Participation Rate (%)	Estimated QRU Participants by 2031
Brisbane (C)	11,170	0.9%	13,176
Gold Coast (C)	2,548	0.4%	3,520
Moreton Bay (R)	1,762	0.4%	2,377
Sunshine Coast (R)	1,670	0.6%	2,404
Toowoomba (R)	1,256	0.8%	1,433
Townsville (C)	1,089	0.6%	1,372
Logan (C)	806	0.3%	1,133
Ipswich (C)	802	0.4%	1,646
Redland (C)	714	0.5%	842
Southern Downs (R)	430	1.2%	453
Livingstone (S)	421	1.1%	528
Western Downs (R)	420	1.2%	462
Cairns (R)	391	0.2%	495
Charters Towers (R)	375	3.1%	385
Central Highlands (R) (Qld)	365	1.3%	372
Mackay (R)	308	0.3%	364
Noosa (S)	301	0.6%	343
Burdekin (S)	251	1.4%	253
Goondiwindi (R)	221	2.0%	220
Somerset (R)	212	0.8%	285
Gladstone (R)	201	0.3%	223
Whitsunday (R)	169	0.5%	200
Rockhampton (R)	164	0.2%	188
Scenic Rim (R)	133	0.3%	188
Banana (S)	127	0.9%	118

## Local government area registered participants

For each Queensland Local Government Area (LGA), the postcode of each registered participant was assigned based on a specialist geographic information system (GIS) formula. The formula created takes the centroid (centre of entire mass) of each postcode and whichever LGA the centroid point falls into, is the LGA assigned to that postcode.

It's purely a geometric measure and avoids duplication of a postcode being in more than one LGA.

When analysing the adjacent table it is important to identify LGAs that are adjacent to each other as participants are likely to play rugby in the same rugby region and should be considered in a broader regional context.

For example, Rockhampton, Livingston and Central Highlands LGAs share boundaries and post codes and should be considered as having 950 participants collectively in the region to best inform, then determine, current and future rugby needs in these municipalities.

The adjacent table is a flexible guide that can be used by clubs, sub-unions, QRU and local government to investigate a combination of unique rugby participation outcomes.

**Note:** Estimated 2031 QRU Participants have been projected by applying the 2019 QRU participation rate to each future QLD LGA 2031 population.

# Provision ratios

Playing field, participant and population provision ratios provide a general guide to the average number of playing fields (playing field) per registered participant (participant) and resident population (population) within a specific geographic area. While local ratios can be influenced by a range of factors (including planning policies, facility quality, support amenities, access, user activities), they do provide a general comparative guide to provision and usage levels and highlight potential areas for more detailed investigation. Provision ratios for QLD rugby union are only based on those localities that currently provide a rugby facility and do not calculate all LGAs across Queensland where a facility does not yet exist.

## Rugby Fields to population ratios



QLD state average population per playing field.  
1 field : to 22,345 people



South East QLD average population per playing field.  
1 field : 29,720 people



Regional QLD average population per playing field.  
1 field : to 21,415 people

State-wide there are an estimated 22,345 people per rugby playing field. Across Queensland almost one third of LGAs that have at least one rugby playing field exceed this ratio.

## Rugby Fields to registered participant ratios



QLD state average players per playing field.  
1 field : to 125 players



South East QLD average players per playing field.  
1 field : to 180 players



Regional QLD average players per playing field.  
1 field : to 67 players

South East Queensland LGAs have the highest ratio of players per field across the state, with 1 playing field for every 180 QRU registered players – almost triple the ratio of LGAs in Regional areas.



# Future demand hot spots

## Future LGA demand hot spots

Forecasting specific areas of future growth and demand should be undertaken with caution as results can be influenced by a range of environmental, climatic, demographic and other rugby related changes (including cost of activities, program offering, access to facilities).

An overall market assessment using QRU participation, population, demographics, facility provision and change over time from 2016 to 2031 has been undertaken.

A summary of the measures assessed are provided adjacent and have also been identified with the Strategic Implementation section of this Strategy. These measures have been used to identify key LGA hot spots for future investment, but they can also be further refined to evaluate specific project and site priorities where competition for investment is evident.

The following measures have been used to evaluate the key LGA hot spots or future rugby facility investment:

- 2019 QRU participation rate is higher than the 0.5% average
- Positive change in registered QRU participation between 2017-2019
- Forecast growth in QRU participants to 2031, based on 2019 participation rates
- Player-to-field ratio being higher than the state average of 1:125
- Field-to-population ratio being higher than the state average of 1:22,500
- 2031 Field-to-population ratio projected to grow greater than the average of 1:28,600 based on LGA population change across Queensland
- Population growth projected between 2016 and 2031.

# Future demand hot spots

## Top 20 QLD LGA future demand hot spots

LGA	2019 QRU Participation	2017-2019 Change in QRU Participation	2019 QRU Participation Rate (%)	Change in Total LGA Population (2016-2031)	Projected QRU Participation Growth 2019 - 2031	Number of Rugby sites in the LGA	Number of Rugby fields in the LGA	Ratio: 2019 QRU Participants to Rugby Fields	Ratio: Rugby Fields to 2016 Total Population	Ratio: Rugby Fields to 2031 Total Population
Brisbane	11,170	518	0.9%	212,696	2,006	16	35	319	33,835	39,912
Burdekin	251	32	1.4%	108	2	1	1	251	17,313	17,421
Charters Towers	375	59	3.1%	317	10	1	1	375	12,074	12,391
Gladstone	201	87	0.3%	6,985	22	1	1	201	63,288	70,273
Gold Coast	2,548	-461	0.4%	220,058	972	15	26	98	22,189	30,653
Gympie	98	31	0.2%	6,148	12	1	1	98	50,292	56,440
Ipswich	802	175	0.4%	210,508	844	3	4	201	50,031	102,658
Livingstone	421	-44	1.1%	9,425	107	2	5	84	7,411	9,296
Logan	806	-402	0.3%	127,272	327	4	7	134	52,298	73,509
Mackay	308	48	0.3%	21,502	56	4	4	77	29,426	34,801
Moreton Bay	1,762	-33	0.4%	152,916	615	5	11	196	48,701	65,692
Noosa	301	-106	0.6%	7,607	42	1	2	151	27,017	30,820
Redland	714	-57	0.5%	27,254	128	2	5	143	30,397	35,848
Somerset	212	49	0.8%	8,710	73	1	2	106	12,587	16,941
Southern Downs	430	28	1.2%	1,942	23	2	2	215	17,811	18,872
Sunshine Coast	1,670	-458	0.6%	133,396	734	10	17	98	17,846	25,693
Toowoomba	1,256	120	0.8%	23,170	177	6	9	140	18,288	20,863
Townsville	1,089	-66	0.6%	49,974	283	7	13	84	14,774	18,618
Western Downs	420	49	1.2%	3,383	42	3	4	105	8,549	9,395
Whitsunday	169	-3	0.5%	6,446	31	2	3	56	11,542	13,691
Average / Benchmark	348	-16	0.5%	+Growth	+86	-	-	1 : 125	1 : 22,500	1 : 28,600

**Note: Green shade** indicates criteria exceeds average or identified benchmark. **Yellow shade** indicates criteria that is better than or in-line with average identified benchmark. The greater the number of green shaded cells, the greater the project demand for future investment.



# STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

# Establishing priorities

## How have we determined the strategic priorities?

State-wide infrastructure priorities and strategic actions have been allocated a level of priority based on their relative impact on delivering the desired outcomes for rugby and the rugby community across Queensland.

The level of priority should be used to inform all stakeholders involved in the delivery and use of rugby infrastructure of the relative importance of each identified action.

A description of each action priority level is provided:

---

### CRITICAL (C)

---

Critical Actions are those deemed to have a significant impact on ongoing service delivery and without achievement, other recommended actions within the strategy cannot be progressed or will be severely hindered in their implementation. They are identified in the adjacent table.

---

### HIGH (H)

---

Recommended action that significantly contributes to addressing an issue or challenge identified within the strategy and will lead to overall service delivery improvement. They may also be viewed as actions requiring immediate or short-term commencement.

---

### MEDIUM (M)

---

Recommended action that contributes to meeting overall strategy objectives and delivers a positive change to user or stakeholder experiences. They may also be viewed as actions that may become a higher priority over the next three to five years.

---

### LOW (L)

---

Recommended action that contributes to addressing site specific challenges or actions that provide benefit to a single stakeholder group. They may also be viewed as medium to longer-term actions.

---

### ONGOING (O)

---

Recommended action that requires a change in QRU and/or stakeholder service delivery and requires an ongoing commitment to implementation.

---



# Establishing priorities

## Critical Actions

1	Continue to develop technology systems and share participation data and community rugby on-field and off-field venue condition information with stakeholders and investment partners.
2	Deliver a consistent and united rugby message through club, sub-union and state body communications.
3	Support players, referees and officials of all genders by prioritising and supporting the upgrade and development of facilities at sites with identified and projected female participation.
4	Partner with identified stakeholders including, but not limited to, Federal, State and Local Government, sub-unions and clubs to contribute expertise and leverage funding (in a coordinated manner) to support rugby infrastructure initiatives.
5	Identify key strategic locations in new, growing and established communities to support rugby activity. Opportunities to collaborate with developers, growth areas councils, QLD Government, commercial partners and other sports should be explored.

To support the achievement of proposed strategic objectives and to ensure the high priority needs of rugby in Queensland can be met in the future, the five **Critical Actions** above have been identified to lead dedicated planning initiatives and investment advocacy.

Critical Actions have been created to help generate awareness of rugby infrastructure challenges and to promote the need for shared resources to address the challenges ahead. Driving the implementation of Critical Actions with QRU's partners and stakeholders should be a key focus for the Queensland rugby community.

The key deliverables are identified as the highest priorities and should form the focus of QRU's available resource allocation and advocacy. Critical Actions have also been identified due to their strong alignment with the four key principles of the strategic framework: **Accessible, Inclusive, Sustainable and Invested**.

# Strategic actions

## IMPROVE EXISTING VENUE CAPACITY

Maximise the safety, carrying capacity and activation of existing venues

STRATEGIC ACTIONS		2020-2021		2022-2025			2026-2030					STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT REQUIRED
<b>C</b>	1.1 Maintain SFA-Rugby and associated data in conjunction with clubs, sub-unions and councils.	●	●	●	●	●						Clubs, Sub-Unions, LGAs & QLD Government
<b>H</b>	1.2 Increase playing field lighting levels and introduce more LED lighting.		●	●	●	●						QLD Government, LGAs, Lighting suppliers, Clubs
<b>L</b>	1.3 Consider introduction of synthetic and hybrid training surface alternatives at strategic locations where site and funding conditions align and participation will be increased.				●	●	●	●				LGAs, QLD Government
<b>M</b>	1.4 Increase industry education on the importance of playing field drainage and irrigation.		●	●	●	●						RA, Parks & Leisure Australia
<b>M</b>	1.5 Investigate a preferred suppliers register to assist with capital projects including playing field renovations (including drainage, irrigation, surfaces), synthetic surfaces, lighting, player benches, scoreboards, goal posts and modular amenities buildings.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Industry suppliers, partner SSAs, LGAs, Clubs, Sub-Unions



Critical action for more immediate delivery



High, Medium or Low Priority Action with a specific timeframe for delivery



Ongoing action(s)

# Strategic actions

## INCLUSIVE RUGBY FACILITIES

Support diversity of game formats and participants through inclusive facilities

STRATEGIC ACTIONS		2020-2021		2022-2025			2026-2030					STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT REQUIRED
C	2.1 Increase and improve gender neutral player and match official change room provision.	●	●	●	●	●						QLD Government, LGAs, Clubs
H	2.2 Identify practical shared and multi-use design models for built facilities with alternate and compatible sports to unlock investment opportunities.	●	●									Clubs, Sub-Unions
H	2.3 Promote information on building and site planning for inclusive rugby activities.		●	●	●	●						Industry suppliers, LGAs, QLD Government
O	2.4 Identify opportunities for continued shared school-based facility and club models.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Clubs, Schools
H	2.5 Provide access to rugby programs, pathways and development services in regional and metropolitan areas.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Sub-Unions, RA, QAS



Critical action for more immediate delivery



High, Medium or Low Priority Action with a specific timeframe for delivery



Ongoing action(s)

# Strategic actions

## PLANNING FOR GROWTH AREAS

Plan to maximise and support participation through new venues in Queensland's growing suburban areas

STRATEGIC ACTIONS		2020-2021		2022-2025			2026-2030					STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT REQUIRED
<b>C</b>	3.1 Continue to use data driven techniques to ensure there are enough facilities in the right locations to meet rugby's current needs and long-term aspirations.	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Industry suppliers, RA, QLD Government, LGAs
<b>H</b>	3.2 Engage with planners, developers, QLD Government and commercial sector to identify future sites to accommodate Rugby's current needs and long-term requirements.		●	●	●							Developers, Industry consultants, QLD Government, LGAs
<b>H</b>	3.3 Develop sustainable rugby model venue designs and land area requirements to support precinct structure planning.	●										Industry consultants, RA, QLD Government
<b>O</b>	3.4 Advocate for rugby through offering expertise (or review) of site master plans and precinct structure plans.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	LGAs, Industry & technical consultants
<b>M</b>	3.5 Identify sites not yet accessed by rugby, where capacity may exist for future use (eg. school sites, multi-sport sites).		●		●		●		●		●	LGAs, Clubs, Other SSAs



Critical action for more immediate delivery



High, Medium or Low Priority Action with a specific timeframe for delivery



Ongoing action(s)



# Strategic actions

## PARTNERSHIPS AND INVESTMENT

Develop and maintain relationships with all levels of government and industry partners

STRATEGIC ACTIONS		2020-2021		2022-2025			2026-2030					STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT
C	4.1 Develop a <i>Stakeholder Engagement Framework</i> that, when applied, builds relationships with all levels of local and state government and is implemented by the rugby community.	●	●									QLD Government, LGAs, RA
C	4.2 Develop relationships with partners that will better position rugby in QLD as a key influencer in sports facility provision and policy development (eg. Queensland Sport and Recreation partnerships Office, Local Councils).	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	QLD Government, LGAs, RA
H	4.3 Promote the <i>QLD Rugby Facility Hierarchy</i> to demonstrate venue priorities over 'desirable' amenities.		●	●	●	●						Clubs, Sub-Unions, LGAs
H	4.4 Share rugby data with local government to drive and guide rugby's needs locally and to embed accurate data into local area planning.		●	●	●	●						LGAs, QLD Government
L	4.5 Develop facility planning and guidance materials and provide to facility operators and land-owners.				●	●	○	○	○	○	○	RA, Clubs, Sub-Unions, LGAs, Industry suppliers



Critical action for more immediate delivery



High, Medium or Low Priority Action with a specific timeframe for delivery



Ongoing action(s)

# Measuring success

## Monitoring and evaluation

Formal evaluation of strategic priorities and critical actions by QRU and partners will be required to ensure ongoing and consistent alignment with government and regional objectives.

The data platforms provided through Sports Facility Auditor – Rugby and the QLD Government's Sports Planning Tool provide for the ongoing updating of data and information and should be used as a consistent source to inform evaluation methodologies.

Evaluation of strategic outcomes should also identify key success and overall benefits for rugby and the communities in which it is played. The following monitoring and review process will need to be led by QRU to ensure the QRU Facility Strategy and its recommended actions remain relevant for all stakeholders.

## Implementation challenges

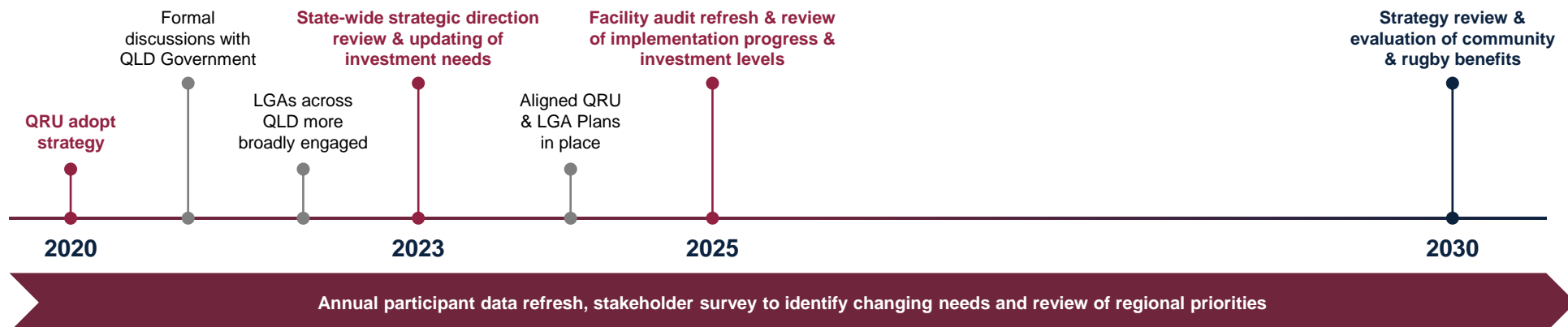
Rugby understands the funding constraints within the public sector and fully appreciates the challenging financial climate, and competing priorities that all local government authorities delicately balance in each-and-every local community.

State and local governments face a difficult task in allocating finite funding in an equitable manner with health, education, transport and aged care just a sample of the important services required in any community setting.

The lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions on community sport are likely to have long lasting impacts for sport participants and the financial stability of clubs. It is also likely to increase the competitiveness for funding and support. However, opportunities may also arise to leverage sport infrastructure development as a method to stimulate local employment and economies, increasing the importance of an adopted Strategy to ensure readiness to capitalize on new opportunities as they arise.

The solution therefore lies in a collaboration and engagement approach that:

- Identifies key sites requiring upgrades are aligned with and eligible for joint funding or third-party investment.
- Prioritises opportunities and upgrades based on participation rates and demand within specific sites to achieve the best community outcomes.



# Ensuring a lasting impact

Rugby Union in Queensland has long been recognised as key breeding ground for Australia's best at the junior and senior levels. Participation is strong within the metropolitan and residential growth areas and Queensland's regional cities. Demand for the game and the drivers of participation are however very spread across the state and heavily influenced by many factors including climatic conditions, infrastructure access, facility quality, travel and socio-economic and demographic change.

To ensure that in the future investment into Rugby Union infrastructure is targeted into the right facilities in the areas of most need, the following provides an investment demand matrix based on key project need and sustainability criteria. It is recommended the QRU and investment partners utilise information provided within this matrix when prioritising site related projects and developing individual facility development/renewal plans with respective clubs and councils.

The matrix is provided as a guide only and is designed to assist stakeholders to strategically assess each project and potential development against a common criteria, in order to prioritise each and identify the key overall benefits to rugby and their local community.

## How will we determine the project priorities?

Measure	Description
<b>Strategic support for facility improvement</b>	Alignment with LGA planning and investment priorities Alignment with QLD Government investment priorities Delivers on one or more QRU strategic infrastructure priorities and investment objectives Can demonstrate benefits for the club or school and local rugby community
<b>Actual recorded growth (2017-2019)</b>	Based on QRU membership database
<b>Forecast growth by club (2020-2025)</b>	Evaluation of club growth to be conducted by QRU post the 2020 COVID-19 impacted season via online survey
<b>Player-to-field ratio (2019)</b>	Number of fields per club member and ratio in relation to the local area and state averages
<b>Field-to-population ratio (2019)</b>	Number of fields per LGA head of population and ratio in relation to the state averages
<b>Field-to-population ratio (2030)</b>	Number of fields per 2030 LGA head of population and the anticipated change in ratio as a result of population change
<b>Demographic profile (2016-2030)</b>	Forecast population growth in the 5-34 year age cohort with the facility catchment area
<b>Proximity to other rugby facilities</b>	Distance to another rugby venue within the facility catchment area
<b>Current facility condition and suitability</b>	Need identified based on SFA-Rugby facility audit data (baseline collected in 2019/20)