

Australian Rugby League Commission

Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee
on
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Inquiry into the Contribution of Sport to Indigenous Wellbeing and Mentoring

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Acronyms

ARLC	Australian Rugby League Commission
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
HORSCATSIA	House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
NIRA	National Indigenous Reform Agreement
NRL	National Rugby League Limited
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan



Australian Rugby League Commission

Foreword



Thank you for affording the Australian Rugby League Commission the opportunity to contribute to this important Inquiry.

The game of Rugby League provides genuine opportunities for Indigenous Australians to participate at the elite and grassroots level as players, administrators, coaches, officials, volunteers and proud supporters.

Partnerships with the Australian and NSW Governments have also confirmed Rugby League as an effective vehicle to re-engage Indigenous secondary students in their schooling, provide employment pathways for Indigenous school leavers and improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Australians participating in community programs.

The Commission understands and embraces its role in closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage and is pleased with the progress to date:

- international recognition for Indigenous programs through the Beyond Sport Awards (2012)
- first national sporting code to join the Oxfam Close the Gap campaign (2009)
- only national sporting organisation with a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- an Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council to advise the game on Indigenous issues
- an annual All Stars marquee game that signals the beginning of the NRL season
- a Community, Culture and Diversity Department to support and grow inclusive participation and community development opportunities through the delivery of programs
- partnerships with government to deliver on Indigenous outcomes (education, employment and health)
- senior Indigenous players group that has input into the programs and activities delivered across the game.

I am confident that this Submission will provide the Committee with evidence on how sport plays a critical role in delivering on Indigenous outcomes and the importance of working in partnership with the industry to achieve it.

I look forward to the completed report and continuing our strong relationship with all levels of government, the corporate and not-for-profit sectors working together to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians.



Shane Mattiske
Interim CEO
National Rugby League Limited



Australian Rugby League Commission

1. Executive Summary

Australian Rugby League Commission

The Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC), as the governing body, is responsible for fostering and growing the game by providing adequate funding for Rugby League at all levels. The ARLC is a leader in Australian professional sport in developing, implementing and evaluating policies, programs and initiatives aimed at addressing a wide range of social issues.

The ARLC is also committed to improving the level of opportunities for all Australians to be involved in Rugby League at all levels in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and ability.

The ARLC enjoyed a bumper season in 2012 with 3.48 million supporters attending matches; club memberships topping 200,000 fans for the first time; average free-to-air (FTA) and subscription television ratings increasing significantly during the year; 61 of the top 100 most-watched programs on subscription television, including eight in the top 10; and the largest social media following of any sport in the country with a total of 2.8 million fans on Facebook.

In 2012 the ARLC was also named Governing Body of the Year at the prestigious international Beyond Sport Awards in London for its commitment to social change.

Indigenous Engagement

The ARLC's commitment to improving outcomes for Indigenous people (males and females) is reflected through a number of initiatives.

In 2008, Rugby League became the first national sport to formally announce the development of a game-wide Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council was formed in 2008 to fulfil the role of the RAP Working Group to provide independent direction and advice on Indigenous matters.

The NRL All Stars concept encompasses a number of key Indigenous initiatives including the main game, a women's Indigenous All Stars v the Australian Jillaroos match, an under 16s NSW v QLD Indigenous match and a Friday night NSW Koori v QLD Murri challenge.



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In the lead-up to the 2011 All Stars game, the Learn Earn Legend! All Stars Regional Tour provided an opportunity to take the All Stars concept to the communities of Batemans Bay, Condobolin, Wilcannia, Walgett and Moree.

The Learn Earn Legend! All Stars Youth Summit has seen 180 Indigenous high school students undertake education, employment and personal development workshops.

The game works with NRL Clubs, through the Learn Earn Legend! campaign, to implement 'School to Work' transition programs for Indigenous students. To date 427 students (68% of a total 626) successfully transitioned into further education, training or employment.

In two years, the Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program, which promotes the benefits and importance of education and employment opportunities and pathways for Indigenous Australians and their communities, has engaged 75 Indigenous students from regional communities across NSW and QLD.

In 2011 the game partnered with the Australian Government to deliver Parental and Community Engagement Programs. These were creative and innovative approaches to improve the educational outcomes, within three targeted Indigenous communities - Albury, Bathurst and Lismore.

Through inclusive programs the game of Rugby League makes a significant contribution to the Building Blocks (Schooling, Health, Economic Participation, Safe Communities, and Governance and Leadership) and Targets in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA).

Value of Sport

Sport can improve physical and mental health and help rehabilitate offenders back into society, reduce youth crime, enhance social cohesion, play a role in the regeneration of communities, improve educational attainment and strengthen employment opportunities.

Sport helps build stronger communities by providing opportunities for social engagement, which can create awareness of difference and break down barriers for individuals and communities. Sport is an engagement mechanism to build relationships with hard to reach individuals or groups. It contributes to capacity building, particularly through volunteers being involved in decision-making and management. Additionally, sport contributes to safer communities and tackling crime and offering alternative role models and peer groups.

Fundamentally the sports industry understands what is required to sustain the delivery of quality sport programs, competitions and pathways, particularly for elite sportspeople. This is also the case for coordinating the delivery of programs that seek to engage community people for non-sport outcomes.



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Level of Engagement

The game achieved record participation levels in 2012 for females, masters competitors, weekend club Rugby League registrations, coaches, officials and administrators.

Specific participation achievements for 2012

- Rugby League based programs engaged 1,409,946 children.
- 598,191 children participated in a Rugby League game across clubs and schools.
- A record 167,553 registrations for weekend Club Rugby League.
- The highest number of registered participants in the 6-12 years age group in the history of the game (75,621).
- 430,638 students playing in regular school competitions and formal gala days.
- 27% increase in the number of first contact programs run by Rugby League's affiliated states - Northern Territory, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.
- The Masters competition is the highest growth area in the game with a 28% increase in participants.
- The ARLC has supported the development of 5,415 fully accredited coaches since November 2011.

The official supermarket of the NRL, Coles, partnered with the ARLC to deliver more than 125,000 footballs into the hands of children across Australia, through the Coles Backyard League program.

Of particular note is the 20% rise in female participation from 5,490 in 2011 to 6,559 in 2012 and female club membership increasing by 20,000 in 2011 to 82,250 to account for 41% of all members.

Women also represent 37% of the overall administration positions within the ARLC across all levels of the management structure.

The Rugby League National Census 2011 identified Indigenous Australians in various roles across the game, including:

- 3.39% of committee members at registered clubs
- 5.8% of all registered Rugby League players in Australia (aged 4-19+)
 - 8,830 males
 - 532 females
- 8% of National Toyota Cup players
- 12% of NRL players
- 21% of State of Origin players
- 35% of the Australian National Team



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2. Inquiry Terms of Reference

On 24 September 2012, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (HORSCATSIA) announced an inquiry into the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring.

The Committee will examine how sporting bodies can increase opportunities for Indigenous participation, including for Indigenous women and how non-government organisations can use sport as a vehicle to improve outcomes for Indigenous people. The Committee will look at how Indigenous sporting programs can contribute to Closing the Gap targets.

Rugby League was also referenced in the Committee Chair's comments on the Inquiry

"Sport can have a powerful effect in Indigenous communities, with Indigenous athletes enjoying a long and rich history of achievement in sport. Indigenous people are more likely to participate in some sports, such as Australian Rules Football or Australian Rugby League, and Indigenous men participate in sport more than Indigenous women." Mr Shayne Neumann MP said.

"We know that sport can contribute to promoting teamwork, healthy living and community cohesion in Indigenous communities. The challenge, then, is to increase participation in sport and remove barriers to participation. Sporting bodies, non-government bodies and the government all have a role to play."

The Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, The Hon Jenny Macklin MP, and the Minister for Sport, Senator the Hon Kate Lundy, have asked the Committee to inquire into and report on the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring with a focus on:

- how sporting bodies can increase opportunities for Indigenous participation, including opportunities for Indigenous women
- how non-government bodies can utilise sport as a vehicle to improve outcomes for Indigenous people, and
- the contribution of Indigenous sporting programs to Closing the Gap targets as supported by
 - sporting codes
 - the private and NGO sectors
 - Australian Government assistance.



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3. Rugby League ('The Greatest Game of All')

Chaired by former Australian International, Mr John Grant, the Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC) brings together a uniquely qualified array of business and sporting leaders who act as trustees of the game.

Together they work with the ARLC's administrative executive, to foster, develop, and grow the game and to provide adequate funding for Rugby League at all levels.

Off the field, Rugby League is making a positive difference to people's lives through the One Community and NRL Club charity programs, which have helped raise more than \$1.2 million for charity and saw NRL players and ambassadors devote over 29,000 hours to community work.

Having developed and implemented the first RAP in Australian sport in 2008, and now 3 years into the second formalised Plan (2010-13), Rugby League is in a unique position to continue driving the message of national reconciliation within Australia's diverse multicultural society.

The Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council, which was formed in 2008, fulfils the role of the RAP Working Group to provide independent direction and advice on Indigenous matters including issues requiring mediation, cultural protocol and quality assurance on programs and initiatives delivered in the Indigenous and broader community.

The popularity amongst Indigenous Australians is reinforced by the fact that many thousands follow and play the game and currently 12% of NRL players are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander decent.

Since the game's first RAP, Rugby League has made a commitment to build on, expand and be accountable for the everyday activities the game is involved in - activities that demonstrate the key messages of reconciliation: respect for difference, cultural understanding, being role models for success and providing opportunities to succeed.

Indigenous Engagement Program highlights

- In 2010, the game joined with the Australian Government in a three-year partnership to encourage Indigenous youth to stay in school so they could improve their job prospects.
- Each year the game delivers the Learn Earn Legend! All Stars Youth Summit which includes education, employment and personal development workshops for Indigenous youth.



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- In 2011 the NRL again partnered with the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to deliver three new exciting initiatives:
 - The Learn Earn Legend! All Stars Regional Tour
 - The Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program
 - Parental and Community Engagement Program
- The game is also working closely with NRL Clubs through the Learn Earn Legend! campaign to implement 'School to Work' transition programs aimed at providing Indigenous students with support and mentoring through their transition from high school into further education or employment.
- The annual Jobs Expos aim to deliver messages of encouragement and support designed to inspire youth to stay in school and build careers.

The inaugural Harvey Norman Rugby League All Stars game held in February 2010, played on the second anniversary of the Australian Government's National Apology to the Stolen Generations, exceeded all expectations within the Indigenous and broader community. It attracted a sell-out crowd of 26,687 and a live audience of 1.292 million viewers.

It also broke new ground for fan engagement, with 50,000 supporters taking up the opportunity to collectively select both teams online.

With the unique concept being established in response to player feedback following the Indigenous Dream Team v New Zealand Maori match at the 2008 Rugby League World Cup, the game provides the NRL the opportunity to showcase an important Indigenous celebration to the nation and in turn complements the Australian Government's strategy towards cultural acceptance and tolerance within the community.

The event is supported by the NRL Community Carnival – the biggest annual celebration of Rugby League in regional Australia - and sees NRL players from all 16 clubs blitz the community over a three-week period.

The All Stars is continuing to deliver a lasting, positive impact on communities across Australia.

2012 Harvey Norman Rugby League All Stars Highlights

- The 2012 All Stars event saw the founding of the Arthur Beetson Trophy, reaffirming the game's stature as one of the foremost examples of practical reconciliation in Australia.
- The All Stars game generated \$1.5 million in revenue that is directly invested back into community programs.



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- More than 40,000 Australians participated in the 2012 programs, including over 6000 parents and 2000 schools, with 45,000 community resources distributed.
- 25 new resources were developed after community consultation and an unprecedented 5000 hours were invested by NRL players in the successful delivery of each program and initiative across Australia.

Already the ARLC has demonstrated a long-term commitment to its own Playing by the Rules program, to the government's 'Respectful Relationships' programs and to a range of education packages presented to players that promote positive attitudes to women and greater awareness of societal issues in these areas. These programs have been conducted from NRL level to elite junior competitions.

Rugby League recognises and promotes everyone's right to live safe and free from violence and that reducing violence, particularly against women, is everyone's responsibility through anti-domestic violence programs and initiatives which are being delivered at all levels of the game.

Women in Rugby League highlights

- 70% increase in the number of women in Board or executive management positions.
 - Including 37% of administrative positions across all levels of the NRL management structure and the ARLC.
- 10% increase in the number of women in other management positions.
- 20% rise in female participation from 5,490 in 2011 to 6,559 in 2012.
- Female club membership increasing by 20,000 in 2011 to 82,250 to account for 41% of all members.
- The number of female volunteers across the country now reaches 52,000.
- ARL Development staff now delivering skills and curriculum-based lessons to almost 750,000 female students across Australia and New Zealand.
- 1,500 men from 18 NSW communities and 22 regional Rugby League Clubs have completed the Tackling Violence workshop run by the NSW Government and Rugby League and 1,800 have signed the code of conduct to refrain from domestic violence.
- The NSW Government and Rugby League have combined to deliver the 'Change Your Ways' anti-domestic violence DVD.
- Voice Against Violence is an initiative of the Australian Government and Rugby League to stamp out violence against women through an education pack to more than 1,100 grassroots Rugby League Clubs in Australia this year.



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- Every NRL staff member and NRL Club/Toyota Cup staff member and players have participated in the Respectful Relationship program, designed by experts Professor Catharine Lumby, Karen Willis and Dr Kath Albury.
- The Game was recognised for its work in this area as the only sport to be chosen to pilot the Respectful Relationships program as part of a \$41.5 million national commitment from the Australian Government.
- Rugby League's One Community and the Australian Kangaroos have been in partnership with the White Ribbon Foundation since 2008, encouraging all Australians 'to swear' the White Ribbon oath.

One Community Highlights

- NRL players and One Community Ambassadors spent 29,381 hours working in the community.
- The NRL and NRL Clubs raised more than \$1.2 million for charity.
- The 2012 Community Carnival was the largest in the event's 11-year history with NRL players reaching more than 115,000 children across 170 towns, in two countries and across five Australian states - New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, Victoria and Tasmania – in a 24-day period.
- The Learn Earn Legend! School to Work Transition Program has seen 427 students (68% of a total 626) successfully transition into further education, training or employment.
- An additional 970 students are currently enrolled in the programs which are delivered by nine NRL Clubs: Newcastle Knights, Gold Coast Titans, Brisbane Broncos, North Queensland Cowboys, Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs, Parramatta Eels, Wests Tigers, Penrith Panthers and South Sydney Rabbitohs.
- In two years, the Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program has engaged 75 students in total from remote communities across NSW and QLD.
- 210 newly-arrived migrants and refugees attending Intensive English Centres (IEC) in Fairfield, Blacktown, Beverly Hills, Cabramatta and Lurnea had their first ever Rugby League experience.
- 180 Indigenous students nationally have participated in the Learn Earn Legend! Youth Summit as part of the Harvey Norman Rugby League All Stars.

In addition three resources have been developed by the game that effectively target school students at the primary and secondary level:

- Dream Believe Achieve – a teaching resource that encourages [Indigenous] students to build healthy lifestyles and positive ways to find and achieve their dreams.
- Eat Well Play Well Stay Well – developed to engage and encourage [Indigenous] children to build healthy lifestyles and make positive choices.



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- Rugby League Reads – a series of Rugby League Reads initiatives aimed at primary schools to highlight the importance of reading – an Indigenous-specific “All Stars-themed” version will be available in 2012.

The ARLC is a leader in Australian professional sport in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and education programs and initiatives aimed at addressing a wide range of social issues. The ARLC is committed to improving the level of opportunities for all Australians to be involved in Rugby League at all levels in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and ability.

2012 Rugby League Highlights

- Formation of the ARLC.
- Highest regular season attendance in NRL history with 3,485,012 fans attending all matches of the 2012 Telstra Premiership.
- The most watched State of Origin Series in history with almost 12 million viewers across the three games nationally.
- NRL Club Membership increased 12.7% to 204,772, breaking the 200,000 mark for the first time.
- NRL partnering with White Ribbon to prevent violence against women.
- TV ratings increased across FOX Sports, the Nine, WIN and NBN Networks with average ratings 0.3% higher and FOX Sports overall ratings 1.4% higher.
- Rugby League boasting 61 of the top 100 most-watched programs on subscription television, including eight in the top 10.
- 170 NRL and Toyota Cup players enrolled in a University Degree program, with 60 per cent of these players being the first in their family to do so.
- The opening of Rugby League Central, which houses all NSW-based Rugby League organisations under the one roof, the Learning with League Centre (a purpose-built classroom) and the official Rugby League Museum.
- Securing a broadcast rights agreement with Channel Nine and FOX Sports.

The ARLC 2013-17 Strategic Plan builds on the success of 2012. The vision of the ARLC is for Rugby League to be:

“The most entertaining, most engaging and most respected sport”.

A field diagram of the Vision, Mission and Values of the ARLC can be found at Appendix 2.



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4. Value of Sport

“Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than government in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all type of discrimination.”

Nelson Mandela

2000 Laureus Sports Awards, Monaco

In recent decades sport has been recognised by governments, the corporate sector and not-for-profit organisations as an effective tool to unite communities and celebrate diversity.

Sport plays a role in a number of broader Australian government agendas, including:

- Closing the Gap on Indigenous Disadvantage
- Social Inclusion
- Reconciliation
- Multicultural Australia

There is evidence that at its best, long-term sustained participation in sport can improve physical health and so reduce the risk of obesity, heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis and many other illnesses, treat depression, stress and anxiety, and aid in the prevention of dementia. Sport can help rehabilitate offenders back into society, reduce youth crime, enhance social cohesion, play a role in the regeneration of communities, improve educational attainment and strengthen employment opportunities.

Sport helps build stronger communities by providing opportunities for social interaction and break down barriers for individuals and communities. Sport can be used as an engagement mechanism, to build relationships with hard to reach individuals or groups. It can contribute to capacity building, particularly through volunteers being involved in decision-making and management. Additionally, sport can contribute to safer communities and tackling crime and offer alternative role models and peer groups.

For example, the 2012 *Healthy lifestyles programs for physical activity and nutrition* resource sheet (No.9) produced by the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse stated:

For Indigenous Australians, being overweight or obese, being physically inactive and consuming a diet low in fruit and vegetables have been estimated to contribute to the high rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and chronic kidney disease experienced by Australia’s Indigenous people.



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Physical activity and nutritional meal programs can help with these conditions. Diabetes rates in adults have been shown to stabilise and healthy lifestyles have been effectively promoted among children where programs are community-initiated, community managed and comprehensive, and where community-accepted external expertise is appropriately utilised.

Intensive lifestyle programs have been shown to be effective in reducing the incidence of diabetes among overweight non-Indigenous people who are pre-diabetic. Their effectiveness in relation to overweight Indigenous people who are pre-diabetic has not yet been demonstrated. Individual, family and group-based Indigenous healthy lifestyle projects have had positive health effects in the short term; however, it is not known whether these have been maintained.

The settings in which lifestyle programs are delivered to at-risk individuals and who delivers them appear to contribute to their effectiveness.

Sport can be used to promote healthy lifestyles. A small number of evaluations suggest a link between sports role models and health-promoting behaviour. These are most effective for children and youth where significant adults in their community form long-term mentoring relationships, alongside the shorter-term involvement of sporting celebrities.

The benefits to health of participating in sport are well recognised and participation rates for Indigenous children are comparable with those of non-Indigenous children. For example, over two-thirds (69%) of Indigenous boys and over half (51%) of Indigenous girls aged 12–14 participate in organised sport (ABS 2010b). By comparison, participation rates for 12–14 year olds in the general Australian population are 74% for boys and 55% for girls (ABS 2010a).

However, participation in sport decreases rapidly with age and participation rates for women are much lower than for men. Just over half (53%) of young men and just over one-third (36%) of young women aged 15–24 participate in sport and physical activities. These rates decrease further to about one-third of men and one-quarter of women aged from 25–44, and 18% of men and 11% of women aged 45 and over (ABS 2010b).

4.1 Benefits for Government in Partnering with the Sports Industry

Primarily governments are responsible for the delivery of services that meet the needs of Australians in crucial areas like health, education, employment, housing, social support, and targeting extra support to disadvantaged communities where it can do the most good.

More recently this responsibility for the delivery and in some cases the design and evaluations of these services have required the involvement of the private and not-for-profit sector (including the sports industry).



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Under the Australian Government's National Compact and Social Inclusion Agenda, it is acknowledged that new and innovative partnerships with all sectors, in partnership with governments are required to deliver better services, build stronger communities and create new opportunities for disadvantaged people.

Australian and international governments have acknowledged the value of sport in contributing to non-sport outcomes for a number of years now.

Critical to the success of this approach is the program design which identifies:

- actual (not perceived) needs of communities
- mutual aims, objectives and desirable outcomes
- a program coordinator/manager
- key partners and their role in the program design, delivery and evaluation
- governance arrangements to keep partners informed (e.g. steering committees, working groups, community forums etc.)
- opportunities to build the capacity of partners and/or service recipients – critical if there is expectation that recipients will run/manage future programs
- conflict resolution processes
- community engagement strategy
- a flexible implementation plan linked to delivery milestones
- an evaluation strategy to determine achievement against the program aims and objectives.

Underpinning this approach is:

- funding security (minimum of 3 years)
- effective community engagement strategies
- acceptance that programs require flexibility
- independent evaluation processes.

Through genuine partnerships and a collaborative approach the delivery of successful, ongoing programs that meet community-need are improved which leads to far greater improvements in participation, effectiveness and long-term results for Indigenous Australians.

Further details about designing community engagement strategies, using sport as the basis, can be found at Appendix 3.

Details about the positive effects of community engagement can be found at Appendix 4.



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5. Addressing the Inquiry Terms of Reference

5.1 How does Rugby League increase opportunities for Indigenous participation, including opportunities for Indigenous women

Rugby League has high levels of participation at registered club, schools and recreational levels. It is very popular in the densely populated eastern seaboard states and has participation and competition bases in the remaining states and territories.

This context is important given the majority of the Australian Indigenous population (548,370, ABS Census 2011) reside on the eastern seaboard with 172,624 (31.5%) people in NSW and 155,825 (28.4%) people in QLD.

2011 CENSUS COUNTS(a) — Indigenous Status by State and Territory

State/Territory	INDIGENOUS STATUS		PROPORTION OF POPULATION			
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples no.	%	Non-Indigenous no.	Status not stated no.	Total no.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples %
New South Wales	172 624	31.5	6 402 111	342 923	6 917 658	2.5
Victoria	37 991	6.9	5 069 156	246 893	5 354 040	0.7
Queensland	155 825	28.4	3 952 706	224 206	4 332 737	3.6
South Australia	30 431	5.5	1 503 205	62 934	1 596 570	1.9
Western Australia	69 665	12.7	2 038 786	130 719	2 239 170	3.1
Tasmania	19 625	3.6	456 345	19 380	495 350	4.0
Northern Territory	56 779	10.4	137 774	17 391	211 944	26.8
Australian Capital Territory	5 184	0.9	338 030	14 005	357 219	1.5
Australia(b)	548 370	100.0	19 900 764	1 058 586	21 507 719	2.5

Source: ABS 2011

The game of Rugby League has always had an inclusive approach to participation and development which maximises the opportunities for male and female Indigenous Australians. While a mainstream approach to participation is paramount, the game also understands the need to deliver programs contextually, depending on the needs of community people. This enables the game to deliver an inclusive mainstream program that caters effectively for all population groups.

This also applies to clubs, administration and competition structures where Indigenous Australians are highly represented at local and elite club level as players, officials and volunteers.

These programs are delivered through the various administrative levels of the game (e.g. NSW Rugby League, Country Rugby League and QLD Rugby League).

The All Stars concept encompasses a number of key Indigenous initiatives including the main game on Saturday night, a women's Indigenous All Stars v the Australian Jillaroos match, an under 16s NSW v QLD Indigenous match and a Friday night NSW Koori v QLD Murri challenge.



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The Rugby League National Census 2011 identified Indigenous Australians in various roles across the game, including:

- 3.39% of committee members at registered clubs
- 5.8% of all registered Rugby League players in Australia (aged 4-19+)
 - 8,830 males
 - 532 females
- 8% of National Toyota Cup players
- 12% of NRL players
- 21% of State of Origin players
- 35% of the Australian National Team

The 2013-17 ARLC Strategic Plan identifies Participation as one of six strategic pillars. The ARLC has also committed to developing new, targeted player attraction and retention initiatives for women, Indigenous Australians and multicultural communities.

In developing future programs that engage Indigenous participants more effectively, the ARLC recognises the Indigenous population demographics and the number of individuals that sit within the target age group for Rugby League (4-19+).

The ARLC is aware that the Indigenous population has a much younger age structure than the non-Indigenous population and that the median age (at 30 June 2006) for the Indigenous population was 21 years, while for the non-Indigenous population it was 37 years.

Children under the age of 15 years comprised 38% of the total Indigenous population, twice that of the non-Indigenous population (19%). People aged 15–24 years comprised 19% of the Indigenous population but only 14% of the non-Indigenous population.

The ARLC also encourages the running of professionally managed Aboriginal Rugby League knockouts across NSW and QLD which attract male and female senior and junior teams to compete against each other on an annual basis. Historically these competitions attract between 15,000-20,000 volunteers, participants and supporters annually.

The ARLC, through the Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council, provide endorsement for these competitions which also bring insurance benefits through either the Country Rugby League or QLD Rugby League. This is a means of protecting the integrity of the competitions and NRL and National Toyota Cup players who participate.



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The Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council provides community with an avenue to provide information relevant to community programs that impact on Indigenous participation and development.

5.2 How does Rugby League improve outcomes for Indigenous people

Rugby League's commitment to improving outcomes for Indigenous people is reflected through a number of programs from the NRL All Stars game, to school-to-work opportunities in partnership with the Australian Government, to the Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council and the NRL Indigenous Players' Advisory Group which gives Indigenous players an identity and voice in the game.

Rugby League Reconciliation Action Plan

In 2008, Rugby League became the first national sport to formally announce the development of a game-wide RAP. The RAP recognised the commitment made by the game, through its staff, NRL clubs and players to increase the opportunities for Indigenous people and their communities to participate in Rugby League at all levels. It also showcases the programs and initiatives in place that directly respond to community need.

Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council

The Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council was formed in 2008 to fulfil the role of the RAP Working Group to provide independent direction and advice on Indigenous matters including issues requiring mediation; cultural protocol and quality assurance on programs and initiatives delivered in the Indigenous and broader community.

In 2010 Rugby League reinforced its commitment to Indigenous people with the launch of the game's second RAP which, to date, remains the only plan registered with Reconciliation Australia by any national sporting body. The RAP identifies Indigenous employment and retention, education, health and sporting opportunities as key focus areas requiring immediate attention under the key areas of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities. It articulates the roles and responsibilities of the game and processes used to effectively track, evaluate and report on progress and outcomes.

As part of the RAP, a Reconciliation Cup match is played annually to celebrate the ongoing contribution Indigenous people make to the game and highlights a rich and proud culture and heritage.

Another key aspect of the RAP is the creation of an Indigenous Player Advisory Group that has been instrumental in the development of the NRL Indigenous All Stars game which will assist in the funding of a player-driven mentoring program for young players in the game.



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This Advisory Group model is being used in other areas of the game with meetings already held with players from the Pacific Islands, Maori and Papua New Guinea (PNG) communities.

NRL All Stars

The All Stars is continuing to deliver a lasting, positive impact on communities across Australia with \$1.5 million generated by the game being invested back into community programs and initiatives which are run by the NRL clubs and directly respond to community need aimed at improving the lives of Indigenous Australians.

The game aims to achieve success on a multitude of levels including:

- Providing a national platform to promote the game's appreciation of its Indigenous players and the attributes they bring to the game
- Promoting the strength of the game's Indigenous participation and the impact the game of Rugby League has on Indigenous communities
- Inspiring young footballers to strive to represent their people or the game of Rugby League in a unique event that has all proceeds being directed to charities and community programs
- Celebrating and showcasing the rich and proud history of Indigenous Australians, and
- Promoting harmony across all cultures while also celebrating the game's best athletes
- a Community, Culture and Diversity Department in the ARLC to support and grow inclusive participation and development opportunities.

The ongoing partnership with the Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council and the NRL Indigenous Players' Advisory Group, along with the appointment of a team of staff to promote and deliver Indigenous initiatives, further highlights Rugby League's commitment to building on its strong partnership with Indigenous Australia and continuing to meet the high demand placed on the game.

The NRL's focus on Indigenous programs has been one of delivering community benefits that goes well beyond the sporting field, with the primary objective being to reduce the gap that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities – that in itself is part of the game's RAP.

In 2009, the NRL became the first national sporting code to join the Close the Gap campaign, which is Australia's largest ever campaign to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians and in particular to provide a better future for Indigenous children.

The Job Expos aim to deliver messages of encouragement and support designed to inspire youth to stay in school so they can build careers and be a legend for themselves and their community. The Expo provides practical employment and health information to school leavers and job seekers through a range of interactive activities.



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Attendees are also given the opportunity to speak to education and training providers and local and national employers.

In 2010, the National Rugby League joined with the Australian Government in a three-year partnership to encourage Indigenous youth to stay in school so they could improve their job prospects and 'be a legend for themselves, their family and their community'. The NRL Indigenous All Stars team promoted the 'Learn Earn Legend!' message to 'have a go, stay at school and ensure a pathway to employment'.

In 2011 the NRL again partnered with DEEWR to deliver two new exciting initiatives added to the game's calendar of events aligned with the Learn Earn Legend! campaign; the Learn Earn Legend! All Stars Regional Tour and the Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program.

All Stars Regional Tour

In November-December 2010, in the lead-up to the 2011 All Stars game, the Learn Earn Legend! All Stars Regional Tour provided an opportunity to take the All Stars concept to Indigenous communities across NSW as well as showcase local community programs and initiatives. Five communities participated – Batemans Bay, Condobolin, Wilcannia, Walgett and Moree.

NRL staff, NRL One Community Ambassadors, Indigenous All Stars players, local communities and organisations participated in the Tour.

Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program

Over two years, the Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program, held in conjunction with the Harvey Norman State of Origin Series, has seen 75 Indigenous students partake in work experience, leadership and mentoring activities.

The 75 Indigenous students, represented the regional townships across country NSW (Narromine, Wellington, Coonamble, Toormina, Grafton, Batemans Bay, Wilcannia, Walgett and Moree) and QLD (Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe and Warwick).

The Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program promotes the benefits and importance of education and employment opportunities and pathways for Indigenous Australians and their communities.



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Parental and Community Engagement Program

The NRL has also increased the reach of its Indigenous programs and initiatives by partnering with the Australian Government through the Learn Earn Legend! campaign to deliver 2011 Parental and Community Engagement programs within three targeted Indigenous communities - Albury, Bathurst and Lismore. The visits focused on the development and implementation of creative and innovative approaches to improve the educational outcomes of Indigenous school students through enhancing parental engagement with schools and education providers.

School to Work Transition Programs

The game is also working closely with NRL Clubs through the Learn Earn Legend! campaign to implement 'School to Work' transition programs aimed at providing Indigenous students with support and mentoring through their transition from high school into further education or employment. The Brisbane Broncos, Gold Coast Titans, Newcastle Knights, North Queensland Cowboys, South Sydney Rabbitohs, Canterbury Bulldogs, Parramatta Eels, Penrith Panthers and Wests Tigers currently have programs in place with remaining clubs looking at opportunities to deliver similar programs.

The Learn Earn Legend! School to Work Transition Program has seen 427 students (68% of a total 626) successfully transition into further education, training or employment.

An additional 970 students are currently enrolled in the programs which are delivered by nine NRL Clubs: Newcastle Knights, Gold Coast Titans, Brisbane Broncos, North Queensland Cowboys, Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs, Parramatta Eels, Wests Tigers, Penrith Panthers and South Sydney Rabbitohs.

All Stars Youth Summit

The Learn Earn Legend! All Stars Youth Summit has seen 180 Indigenous high school students from around Australia travel to the Gold Coast for three days of education, employment and personal development workshops that culminated in participants attending the game. This program continues today and is seen as the 'flag-ship' event around the Harvey Norman Rugby League All Stars concept.



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5.3 The contribution of Rugby League to Closing the Gap Targets

The National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) is one of six National Agreements agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). The NIRA frames the task of Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage. It sets out the objectives and targets, outcomes, outputs, performance indicators and performance benchmarks agreed by COAG. It also provides links to those National Agreements and National Partnership agreements across COAG which include elements aimed at Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage.

COAG recognised that overcoming Indigenous disadvantage requires a long-term, generational commitment that sees major effort directed across a range of strategic platforms or 'Building Blocks' which support the reforms aimed at Closing the Gap against the six specific targets.

The targets endorsed by COAG are:

- (a) closing the life expectancy gap within a generation
- (b) halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade
- (c) ensuring all Indigenous four years olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education within five years
- (d) halving the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade
- (e) halving the gap for Indigenous people aged 20-24 in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020
- (f) halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.

The Building Blocks endorsed by COAG are:

- (a) Early Childhood
- (b) Schooling**
- (c) Health**
- (d) Economic Participation**
- (e) Healthy Homes
- (f) Safe Communities** and
- (g) Governance and Leadership.**

The game of Rugby League contributes to those Building Blocks highlighted above, which in turn assists governments in achieving the Closing the Gap targets.



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Below is a table of how Rugby League contribute to the Closing the Gap Targets.

Building Block	Rugby League Activity	Outputs	Contribution to Closing the Gap Target/s	Contribution to COAG Indigenous Specific Outcomes
(b) Schooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School to Work Transition Programs Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program Parental and Community Engagement Program Youth Summits CRL Far West Development Strategy (see Appendix 1, p26) Parenting through Sport Murdi Paaki (see Appendix 1, p26) No School No Play (see Appendix 1, p26) Indigenous Job Markets (see Appendix 1, p26) QLD Development Officers (Northern Division) (see Appendix 1, p27) Northern Pride (see Appendix 1, p27) Rugby League Reads Dream Believe Achieve Eat Well, Play Well, Stay Well 	<p>Provision of innovative and tailored learning opportunities and external partnerships with parents, other schools, businesses and communities.</p> <p>School nutrition programs (related to Eat Well, Play Well, Stay Well).</p> <p>Support for parents/carers to actively participate in children's education.</p> <p>Professional development in quality and culturally appropriate teaching methods.</p> <p>Early intervention and specialist teachers for low achievers (Accelerated Literacy Program).</p> <p>Improve school retention and completion rates from Year 9 up.</p>	<p>(c) Halving the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade.</p> <p>(d) Halving the gap for Indigenous people aged 20-24 in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.</p>	<p>Schooling promotes social inclusion and reduces the educational disadvantage for Indigenous children and youth.</p> <p>Indigenous children and youth meet basic literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy are improving.</p> <p>Indigenous young people successfully transition from school to work and/or further study.</p>
(c) Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NRL community programs (funded by All Stars) Eat Well, Play Well, Stay Well Backyard League 	<p>Address key behavioural chronic disease risk factors (e.g. smoking, risky drinking, poor diet and obesity).</p> <p>Reduction in alcohol use and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing the life expectancy gap within a generation. 	<p>Indigenous Australians and those living in rural and remote areas or on low incomes achieve health outcomes comparable to the broader population.</p> <p>Indigenous people have ready access to suitable and culturally inclusive primary</p>



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(d) Economic Participation

- Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program
- Youth Summits
- Indigenous Job Markets (see Appendix 1, p26)

smoking.

Chronic disease management, including good health, fitness and nutrition.

Increased employment participation impacts positively on life expectancy.

Focus on industry sectors with jobs growth potential (e.g. health, education, construction and government services).

Build aspirations and foundation skills of unemployed and those outside the labour force.

- (e) Halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.

health and preventive services.

Indigenous people remain healthy and free of preventable disease.

The Indigenous working age population has the depth and breadth of skills and capabilities required for the 21st century labour market.

Indigenous people of working age participate effectively in all sectors and at all levels of the labour market.

(f) Safe Communities

- Rugby League Domestic Violence Programs.
- Voice Against Violence

Addressing alcohol/substance abuse and harm through prevention, diversion and treatment services.

Healthy living programs focusing on harmful/hazardous consumption of alcohol and smoking cessation.

Diversionary programs / skills learning within juvenile justice programs.

Community Leadership programs.

There is no COAG target that directly addresses this Building Block.

However, improvements in community safety and support may have long-term impacts on a number of the COAG targets.

For example:

- personal stressors, such as violent abuse and crime, may lead to long-term health conditions
- high levels of alcohol consumption are a significant risk factor for a number of serious health conditions, such as liver disease, pancreatitis and diabetes
- family violence

Indigenous children and families are safe and protected from violence and neglect in their home and communities.

Alcohol and other drug abuse among Indigenous people are overcome.

Breaking cycles of criminal behaviour and violence normalisation.



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may have a damaging effect on children's emotional, behavioural and cognitive development.

(g) Governance and Leadership

- Learn Earn Legend! State of Origin Job Experience Program
- School to Work Transition Programs

Aspiration and leadership programs targeted at juveniles.

Capacity building programs with transitional opportunities into higher level learning.

Indigenous communities are empowered to participate in policy making and program implementation.

Indigenous communities are represented through credible consultation/ governance mechanism.

Connecting the way government agencies work in remote areas (the governance of governments) and developing community capacity.



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6. Conclusion

The ARLC is a leader in Australian professional sport in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and education programs and initiatives aimed at addressing a wide range of social issues.

The ARLC is committed to improving the level of opportunities for all Australians to be involved in Rugby League at all levels in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and ability.

The game's inclusive programs continue to foster a positive change environment (see Appendix 1) for Indigenous Australians; leading to improved education, employment and healthy outcomes.

Strong partnerships with all levels of government, especially the Australian Government, are also delivering tangible results (see Appendix 5) that are empowering the lives of Indigenous Australians through sport.

The game is now best placed to work with governments to effectively use sport to achieve non-sport outcomes, particularly for Indigenous Australians.

The ARLC looks forward to future partnership opportunities with governments to build on this success.



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7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Rugby League Community Programs

- Collation of Rugby League programs and projects categorised as NSW, QLD, International and All Stars Funded Programs.

New South Wales

Project Title	Description
Country Rugby League (CRL) Far West Development Strategy – School Club Program	Delivers rugby league programs in schools to develop capacity as well as accreditation and participation in rugby league.
No School No Play	Utilises Rugby League as a vehicle to improve Indigenous student attendance at school.
Indigenous Jobs Markets	Delivers education and employment outcomes amongst Indigenous job seekers and school leavers.
School to Work Program – Three (3) Programs	Work with Indigenous students to complete their secondary schooling and assist with work experience, traineeships and eventual employment.
Aboriginal Sport Engagement, Broken Hill, Aboriginal Sport Development officer	Engages Indigenous Australians in active sport as participants, officials or supporters and promote healthy lifestyles.
Barwon Darling Rugby League Senior Competition	
Barwon Darling Rugby league Youth competition	
Outback Rugby league	
Shoalhaven Region Indigenous Rugby League Program	
Sunraysia Rugby League Parenting Through Sport in the Murdi Paaki Region	Encourages Indigenous parent/caregivers involvement with young children in the 0 to 5 years age bracket through specifically designed programs.
Rugby League Development Project - Wentworth Dareton	Engages Indigenous Australians in the sport of rugby league through their local clubs and schools.
Far South Coast Wallaga Lake Community Engagement with Sport	
Moree Rugby League Project CRL Welfare Officer	Engages Indigenous youth in the sport of Rugby League and provides mentoring support to local players.



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One Community Shield

Celebrates cultural diversity within the sport of Rugby League. 11 under 16 teams from Maori, Indigenous Australia, Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, Fiji, Mediterranean, Lebanon, Australia heritage compete for the Shield. Participating players in both teams also take part in cultural workshops.

Friday Night Footy

Healthy Lifestyle project delivered in partnership with Aboriginal Medical Services Mt Druitt.

Redfern Harmony Nines

Celebrates cultural diversity within the sport of Rugby League. 10 under 17 teams from African, Indigenous Australian, Mediterranean & Middle Eastern, Maori, Samoan, Tongan and Australian heritage compete.

Ricky Walford Shield

All projects utilise Rugby League for community connection, raising money for local Rugby League Clubs, providing pathways for talented players, providing capacity building for aspiring referees and supporting volunteers.

Neville Thorne Shield

Ronny Gibbs Sevens

NSWRL Harmony Cup U16

NSWRL Redfern 9's

NSWRL U15 Talented Athlete Camp

NSWRL U16 State team

NSWRL Cabramatta Nines

KARI Aboriginal Resources Koori Cup 7's

NSWRL Indigenous Referees Camp

NSWRL Volunteers Camp

Queensland

Project Title	Description
QRL Development Officers	Provides Rugby League development opportunities for Indigenous Australians living in Weipa and Cairns.
Northern Pride	Delivers capacity building activities in education, employment, sporting pathways and health and wellbeing to local, remote and regional areas including the Cape York and Gulf regions.
MeWe (QLD South East Division)	Provides training sessions, workshops, sport fitness and education support programs to Indigenous Australians living in Gold Coast Region.



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International

Project Title	Description
PNG School RL program	Utilises Rugby League to improve education for girls and boys of all abilities in PNG and improve the organisation and management capacity of PNG RFL.

All Stars Funded Programs

NRL Club	Project Title	Description
Brisbane Broncos	Keep Safe Adventure	Raises awareness of child sexual assault as well as providing education to children, parents and survivors.
Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs	The Brisbane Broncos Mentoring Ambassador Bulldogs Learn Earn Legend! School to Work	Provides support, advice and direction to the club. Mentors students through their final years of school and assists with their transition into further education or employment.
North Queensland Cowboys	The Obe Geia Challenge	A junior Rugby League carnival held on Palm Island to promote harmony, healthy lifestyle choices and community partnership through the game.
St George Illawarra Dragons	Dragons Community	Promotes positive behaviour and learning for success, including the creation of an Indigenous activity book to engage participants.
Parramatta Eels	The Blue and Gold Deadly Heart Try Reading	In partnership with the New England Division of General Practice, promotes improved Indigenous health outcomes. Promotes the development of literacy and numeracy skills.
Newcastle Knights	100% Knights	Mentors students through their final years of school and assists with their transition into further education or employment.
Penrith Panthers	Healthy Active Lifestyles - Panthers on the Prowl	Promotes the importance of a healthy diet, nutrition and physical activity.
South Sydney Rabbitohs	Healthy Active Lifestyles	Promotes the importance of a healthy diet, nutrition and physical activity.
Manly Warringah Sea Eagles	Yarrabah "School's Kool" Sea Eagles Reads	Delivers a school attendance program focused on education and health. Promotes the development of literacy and numeracy skills.



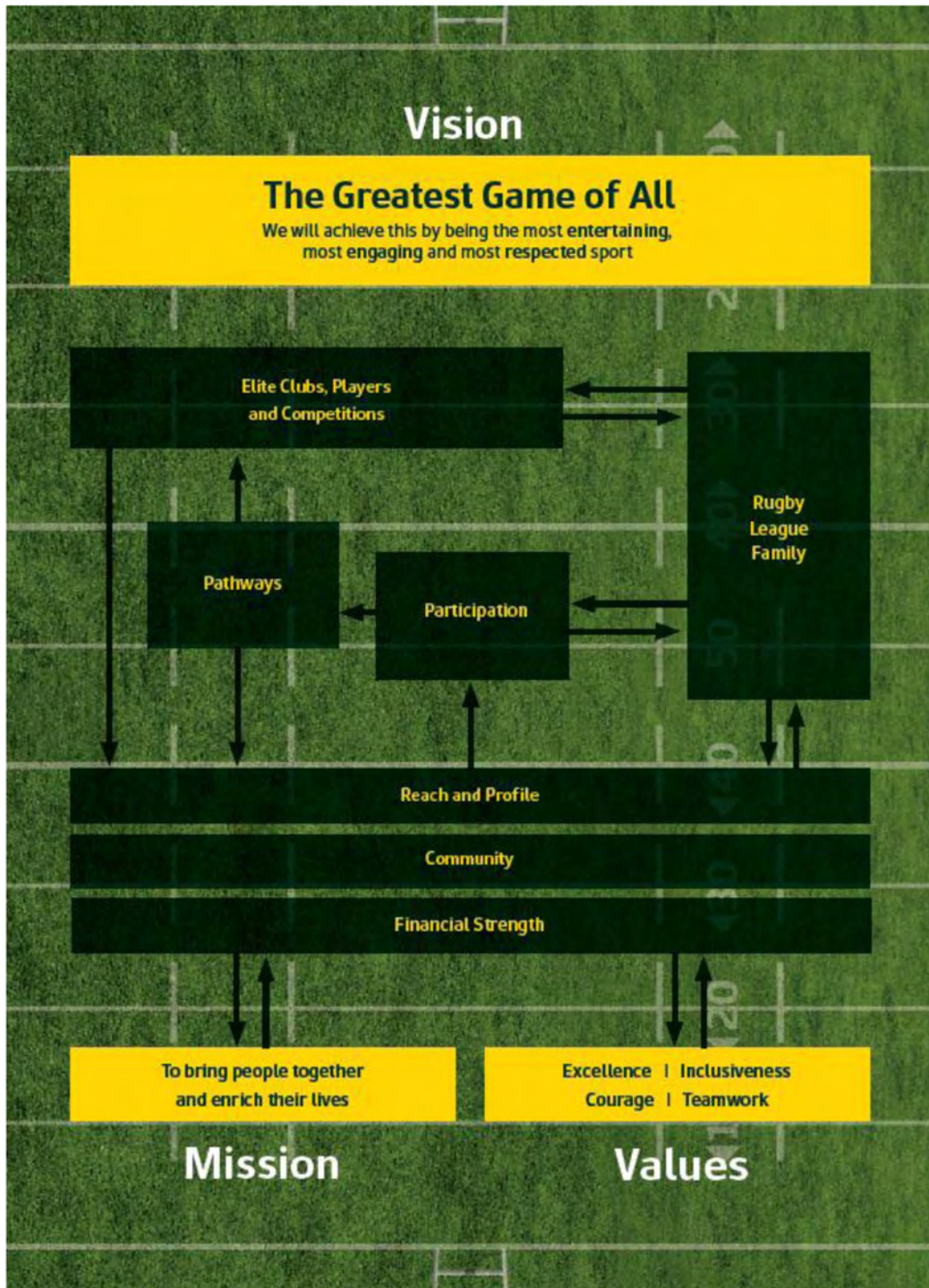
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Cronulla Sharks	<p>Footy Fever</p> <p>Cultural Immersion, Youth Leadership & Mentoring Camp</p>	<p>This is an education and motivation program that delivers messages about achieving goals, life choices, health and fitness, team work and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>In partnership with the David Peachey Foundation and James Cook University (Townsville), a camp for local youth in Northern Queensland that delivers education and employment messages.</p>
Melbourne Storm	<p>Endeavour Sports High School Aboriginal Mentoring (ESHS)</p> <p>Storming Against Violence/Respectful Relationships</p>	<p>Engages and supports 60 Aboriginal students at school.</p> <p>Players promote respectful relationships and reducing violence against women and children.</p>
Sydney Roosters	<p>Stick with It</p>	<p>Players deliver healthy lifestyle messages, leadership and mentoring skills.</p>
Wests Tigers	<p>Wests Tigers Learn Earn Legend!</p>	<p>Mentors students through their final years of school and assists with their transition into further education or employment.</p>
Gold Coast Titans	<p>Titans Beyond Tomorrow</p>	<p>Mentors students through their final years of school and assists with their transition into further education or employment.</p>
NZ Warriors	<p>Backyard Legends (BYL)</p> <p>Breakfast Warriors</p> <p>League in Libraries (LIL)</p> <p>Dream Believe Achieve (DBA)</p>	<p>Promotes Rugby League in the community, particularly for the Community Carnival and school holiday programs.</p> <p>Highlights the importance of nutrition and education using Rugby League as the vehicle.</p> <p>Children’s writing competition to win a day at their local library with Warriors players.</p> <p>Provides teachers with reading resources for secondary students to develop reading strategies and promotes literacy and numeracy using real life techniques and strategies by Warriors players.</p>



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Appendix 2 – Rugby League’s Vision



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Appendix 3 – Community Engagement

The game of Rugby League continues to use these principles in the development, implementation and evaluation of programs/initiatives.

In accordance with better practice (Chau, J. Op Cit, p. 3.), when using sport as the basis for designing and implementing initiatives for strengthening communities, the following elements should be taken into account:

- Engage people from the community, and build partnerships between businesses, councils, government and non-government organisations to collaborate and cooperate to promote and participate in physical activity.
- Recognise different interests and abilities in the community and provide opportunities for different types of involvement in programs, including physical, social and cultural activities.
- Empower community members to manage programs to encourage ownership and sustainability.
- Target community groups that are more disadvantaged and less likely to be active (e.g., Indigenous, culturally and linguistically diverse, women, older adults).
- Ensure that programs targeting people of Indigenous and CALD backgrounds are culturally specific and sensitive to the values and traditions of participants.
- Provide local facilities as gathering places for activities.
- Conduct periodic surveys or focus groups with participants and stakeholders to help inform the ongoing management and development of programs.



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Appendix 4 – Positive Effects of Community Engagement

In their report, *“The benefits of community engagement: A review of the evidence”*, Ben Rogers and Emily Robinson provide evidence of the positive effects of community engagement.

The report noted that the way in which community engagement works to promote positive social outcomes is often complex and multifaceted. In researching and reviewing the report, Rogers et al suggest that there are at least three processes at work:

1. Socialisation: the processes by which communities encourage the internalisation of co-operative, sociable standards;
2. Guardianship: the process by which neighbours look-out for each other and the community as a whole; and
3. Information flows: the process by which communities work with public bodies, providing them with information about the way things work, and views as to how they might work better.

Individual sections of the report highlight some of the achievements of community engagement across different policy areas. On the basis of their research, it is strongly suggested that at its best, community engagement can:

- empower citizens and make a significant difference to the way services are designed and run;
- secure widely valued policy outcomes – indeed community engagement has been shown, at least in some cases, to cut crime, promote health and well-being, improve public trust and satisfaction with public services;
- sustain itself over the medium to long term; and
- be at least moderately representative in nature.

It also implies that community engagement works best when communities are engaged across a range of services, thus suggesting a need for the Sydney Roosters to develop a strategic, across the board approach.

Employment and economic growth

There is also a significant body of evidence that community engagement can promote employment and economic growth. It is weak ties (to former colleagues, acquaintances, friends of friends) that provide job leads, strategic advice and breadth of information. These are exactly the sort of networks that are formed through high levels of community activity.

Networks are particularly important to the marginalised and can overcome obstacles such as employer racism and low skills. The kind of entrepreneurial networks, upon which small businesses



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thrive can be very exclusive and are often built upon homogeneity within small clusters. This is the downside of social capital, particularly in relation to such a competitive area as the labour market.

When communities are able to develop their own training programmes, career advice centres and small businesses, the effect on local prosperity is often far greater than when job creation or skills development schemes are imposed. Not only will the resulting programmes be more responsive to local needs but the actual process will build the networks, skills and confidence of those involved.

Community engagement, crime and anti-social behaviour

Research undertaken in England, Australia and the United States has shown that strong communities can help to reduce crime through informal social monitoring and control.

Community centred police initiatives, which aim to involve local people in developing policing strategies and fighting crime, have been shown to have significant potential. The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) has sustained high levels of public engagement over a long period of time. It has also worked to reduce crime and the fear of crime and tackled drugs problems and anti-social behaviour.

Restorative justice programmes have proved to be another effective way of engaging the public in the way we deal with crime and criminals. Independent evaluation of programmes in the Thames Valley and Canberra have been predominantly positive and shown that restorative justice is seen to be fair by both victims and offenders and can reduce the risk of re-offending.

Community Engagement and Education

Although parental involvement in education is recognised as crucial, for many parents schools can be hostile and intimidating places. Involving parents, pupils and locals in the decision making process assist schools to gain the trust and co-operation of the communities they serve and ensure their policies are seen to be fair.

Just as schools benefit from engaged parents, pupils and communities, so parents and communities benefit from engaged – or ‘extended’ – schools. It has been recommended that schools or community centres should be used as sites for adult learning, childcare facilities, regeneration and community meetings.

It is important for schools to engage with local organisations and community groups. Some disaffected young people may be more willing to relate to local people than to those identified with schools or welfare systems. Community groups can act as ‘an honest broker’ between the young people and the system they have rejected.



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Community engagement and governments

Evidence also suggests that where governments get participation strategies and openness right then communities do respond by getting involved in decision-making. The extent, to which political parties; public management; and the voluntary and community sectors ask the public to participate, can have a dramatic effect on whether latent social capital is mobilised or constrained. It has been shown that societies that have a high level of public participation in political processes can also expect to receive an objectively better standard of local governance. By creating genuine and deliberative consultation structures, local authorities can help citizens of all backgrounds to gain the necessary confidence and political literacy to participate fully in the democratic process. By listening to and acting upon their recommendations, they can restore faith in the institutions of local governance.



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Appendix 5 – Media Articles



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Daily Telegraph, Sydney
31 Aug 2012, by Bruce McDougall

General News, page 40 - 551.39 cm²
Capital City Daily - circulation 350,059 (MTWTFSS-)

ID 160515843

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Mentoring puts kids on positive life path

BRUCE McDOUGALL

RUGBY league stars are spearheading a ground-breaking "school-to-work" scheme by helping indigenous teens move successfully from the classroom into employment or further studies.

Some of the game's big names have signed on as ambassadors for the Learn Earn Legend Program, which, according to a federal Department of Education website, aims to motivate young indigenous Australians to "stay at school, get that job and be a legend for themselves, their family and their community".

Johnathan Thurston, Cameron Smith and Greg Inglis are among the NRL stars in the program, which is part of an even broader campaign to Close the Gap — particularly in health and education — between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.

Parramatta Eel Chris Sandow has been working with 17-year-old triplets Danica, Ben and Matthew

Whitehouse, who are in their final year at Westfields Sports High School in Fairfield West.

"I visit them at school and my main message is telling them to be positive and to build good relationships around themselves and their family," Sandow said yesterday.

"I'm saying to them it is always good to have a plan (for the future) and something to fall back on."

Sandow, who is completing a Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation at TAFE, said he would look for a mentoring role when his studies end.

NRL Culture And Diversity Community Programs manager Mark deWeerd said players gave motivational talks at schools.

"They share their own stories with the kids," he said.

"Our players go through a lot to be successful, so they are good mentors."

The Learn Earn Legend Program is funded by the NRL, the

federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and four western Sydney clubs — Canterbury Bulldogs, Wests Tigers, Penrith Panthers and Parramatta Eels.

Danica Whitehouse, a keen hockey player who aims to do a Bachelor of Society and Community Development at the University of Western Sydney, said NRL stars such as Sandow knew what students needed because they had followed the same path.

"They followed their dream and I am doing the same ... I want to work in indigenous communities," Danica said.

Ben and Matthew will seek carpentry apprenticeships after year 12.

"I've learned a lot from Chris and about what he went through," Ben said.

Matthew said the program showed him different career pathways available after school.



Parramatta Eel Chris Sandow shows the benefit of his experience with Matthew, Ben and Danica Whitehouse. Pictures: Jason Lloyd



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National Indigenous Times, Malua Bay NSW
22 Aug 2012, by Paul Munnings

General News, page 22 - 406.11 cm²
Regional - circulation 13,274 (Fortnightly)

ID 159428547

PAGE 1 of 2

Cooking up a cultural storm

Story and image supplied by Paul Munnings

Aspiring young Indigenous chef Jessica Jeffress has realised her dream.

After just a few days doing work experience at Jupiters Townsville, the talented 17-year-old was offered the chance of a lifetime - a fulltime chef apprenticeship.

Jess, who is of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander heritage, is one of the talented students in the Cowboys' Learn Earn Legend! program, a federally funded program supporting Indigenous students in Years 11 and 12 to complete their secondary education and move into further study, training or employment.

The former Townsville High Year 12 student, who had completed her Certificate II in hospitality at school, is now learning the finer culinary skills under the watchful eye of one of Townsville's most respected chefs, Jupiters executive chef Oden Gough, and after the completion of her three-year apprenticeship, will be a qualified chef.

"I had the opportunity to take up this apprenticeship so this is my first job and it's awesome," Jessica said.

"I also do a bit of cooking at home with Dad, so that inspired me to look at a career as a chef.

"The people are so friendly - I'm loving working in a kitchen.

"At the moment I've been doing breakfasts, so I haven't had a taste of everything yet, but I am sure I will decide at some stage into the apprenticeship which area I want to specialise in."

Jessica said the Cowboys' Learn Earn Legend! Indigenous education support program had helped her determine her career path.

"I would encourage anyone who can be part of this program to get involved," she said.

"Don't be afraid to ask for advice - that's what I did - and from there I got two weeks work experience at Jupiters, and that led to bigger and better things.

"Now I have a three-year apprenticeship from it."

Jupiters executive chef Oden Gough said the business employed an average of six apprentice chefs each year, and they were proud to have their first Learn Earn Legend! graduate working for them.

"Jessica has been with us now for only two weeks and she is already proving to be quite a stand-out apprentice," Mr Gough said.

"She was here for a week's work experience during her time with the Learn Earn Legend! program, and it was then that we identified her talents.

"Not only does Jessica show a lot of initiative in the kitchen, she is also very keen to learn."

Learn Earn Legend! program co-ordinator Joel Johnston said the program, which began last year, now boasted more than 500 Indigenous Year 11 and 12 students signed up from 35 North Queensland schools, from as far north as Weipa and Cairns, Townsville, south down through the Burdekin, the Whitsundays, Bowen and Mackay, and west to Charters Towers.

"This great opportunity for Jess came about



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National Indigenous Times, Malua Bay NSW
22 Aug 2012, by Paul Munnings

General News, page 22 - 406.11 cm²
Regional - circulation 13,274 (Fortnightly)

ID 159428547

PAGE 2 of 2

through her doing work experience while she was still at school," Mr Johnston said.

"We can't emphasise enough the importance of students doing work experience – it not only prepares them for the job market, but now and again, a student is talented enough to be offered a job on the spot, as Jess was, which is fantastic."

The Cowboys' Learn Earn Legend! program

has already been hailed a success, with 88 per cent of participating Indigenous students graduating Year 12 last year transitioning successfully into employment and further training in the fields of retail, business, hospitality, construction, mining and the performing arts, or into university courses as diverse as exercise science, nursing, education, science, law and international relations.



Indigenous apprentice chef Jessica Jeffress, 17, who has just started her training at Jupiters Casino, with Cowboys player Matthew Bowen. Image supplied



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Townsville Sun, Townsville QLD
22 Aug 2012

General News, page 5 - 318.18 cm²
Regional - circulation 55,858 (--W----

ID 159167662

PAGE 1 of 1

Program gives Jess head start

FOR talented indigenous chef Jessica Jeffress, following her dreams will be a piece of cake after landing a lucrative apprenticeship at Jupiters.

Jessica, 17, completed her education at Townsville High last year.

Thanks to some work experience organised through the Cowboys Learn Earn Legend! program, she has been offered a full-time chef apprenticeship.

"I had the opportunity to take up this apprenticeship so this is my first job and it's awesome," she said.

"I also do a bit of cooking

at home with Dad, so that inspired me to look at a career as a chef.

"I would encourage anyone who can be part of this program to get involved.

"Don't be afraid to ask for advice.

"That's what I did and from there I got two weeks' work experience at Jupiters, and that led to bigger and better things."

Jessica is learning the finer culinary skills under the watchful eye of Jupiters executive chef Oden Gough.

"Jessica has been with us now for only two weeks and she is already proving to be quite a stand-out appren-

tice," Mr Gough said.

"She was here for a week's work experience during her time with the Learn Earn Legend! program, and it was then that we identified her talents."

The Learn Earn Legend! Federal Government-funded program boasts more than 500 indigenous Year 11 and 12 students signed up from 35 North Queensland schools.

These range from as far north as Weipa and Cairns; south down through the Burdekin, the Whitsundays, Bowen and Mackay; and west to Charters Towers.



COOKING UP A STORM: Cowboys star Matt Bowen eyes off a dish made by Jessica Jeffress



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Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney

22 Sep 2012, by Chris Barrett and Brad Walter.

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PAGE 1 of 2

Rabbitoh rallying point for duo on mission

A cause drives Dylan Farrell and his sister Katelyn, write **Chris Barrett** and **Brad Walter**.

WHEN South Sydney signed Dylan Farrell from the NSW south coast, they not only provided an opportunity for the then 16-year-old to play in the NRL but also for him and his family to show their small Jerrinja community, near Nowra, what they could achieve.

The Rabbitohs boast a proud Aboriginal history and, since joining Souths, Farrell and his teenage sister Katelyn have become role models for the indigenous youngsters of Redfern and Orient Point.

Farrell is considered a future Rabbitohs captain, while 18-year-old Katelyn juggles her year 12 studies with a school-based business traineeship at Qantas and a tourism and events course at TAFE.

Since moving to Botany last year to live with her brother, Katelyn has also championed a Souths Care program at Matraville Sports High - where she is vice-captain - to help other Koori students reach their goals.

So, successful has she been that Katelyn has been nominated for the NRL's Young Indigenous Learn Earn Legend Award, to be announced at Monday night's One Community Awards, and is considered by Souths Cares as a future mentor for the program once she completes her HSC.

She has also been nominated for Aboriginal Employment Services trainee of the year and was selected to take part in an Indigenous Youth Summit as part of the NRL's All Stars week on the Gold Coast.

"There are two other missions in

Nowra but our mission is only tiny and whenever we can we try to get back there," Katelyn says.

"My dad works for a family relationship centre in Nowra, and he has organised discos and homework clubs and counsels kids who need help, so it is something we have probably always been aware of.

"Dylan has seen some of our older cousins have an opportunity to play footy like he is now but they have thrown that opportunity away ... I definitely think he sees himself as a role model ... He will go out to the school at La Perouse and read books and he will go to the hospital and visit sick kids, and he is always getting stuff signed for kids who are sick."

Farrell says having his sister move to Sydney with him had helped him cope with the homesickness that curtailed his father Darryll's chance to play for Parramatta.

"I have got a lot of relatives that have the potential to do this sort of thing but they found it a little hard," Farrell says. "Luckily I had the support of my parents that they didn't have when they were younger."

Despite being chosen to play SG Ball for the Illawarra Steelers in 2007, his father preferred him to join the Rabbitohs. "Souths have got a lot of Koori players in the team, which is really good, and I think it also good for Dylan to be surrounded by his own people," Katelyn says.

Through Souths Cares, the club is intent on looking after its own. Michael Maguire's players are

involved heavily in health and life-style programs at predominantly indigenous schools in the area.

Where they are really making waves, though, is in their school-to-work transition scheme, which has an indigenous focus at five local high schools.

John Hutchinson, the general manager of Souths Cares, has signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Sydney, opening up alternative entry pathways for students who once thought a prestigious university place was as remote as playing in an NRL grand final. "For these kids, it's been like a light going on," Hutchinson says.

Jenny Wilson, a year 10 transition adviser at South Sydney High School, says Souths Cares assistance in getting indigenous students into traineeships, apprenticeships, jobs or higher education, is a winner. "The five students they worked with last year are all employed or in further education," she says.

One of the program's mentors is former Souths fullback Rhys Wesser, who says the club's premiership tilt is intensifying the connection they are building with indigenous children.

"When the club's doing well there's definitely that passion from the community in Redfern, Waterloo, Maroubra, Tempe. You see it, it's around the streets, people are talking about it," Wesser says. "So we just hope we get out there and win this weekend."



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Stars ... Dylan Farrell and sister Kateiyn, NRL Young Indigenous Learn Earn Legend Award nominee. Photo: Edwina Pickles



Australian Rugby League Commission

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Rabbitohs show their caring side at school

STUDENTS from Coffs Harbour's Bishop Druitt College and Nambucca Heads Primary School had their first day back at school made memorable by a visit from South Sydney rugby league players.

Retired star Rhys Wesser conducted sessions with students where he outlined the NRL's 'Dream, Believe, Achieve' message, which he said the students appreciated.

"We show a video that the NRL has put together of players like Preston Campbell and a lot of the stars from the NRL," Mr Wesser said.

"We talk about their dream as young kids growing up and how they said no to peer pressure and drugs and mixing with the wrong crowd pretty much.

"Of course for kids these days it's quite tough coming out of school and finding out what they



LIFE LESSONS: Promising young South Sydney player Kyle Turner enjoys a clinic with Bishop Druitt College students.

want to do. We're here to support them and support what they want to do and hopefully they have a good future."

Acting in his role as a Souths Cares ambassador, Wesser was at the schools with Rabbitohs' players Michael Crocker, Luke Burgess, James Roberts and Kyle Turner for

the NRL's One Community Carnival.

The players, along with ARL development staff, conducted clinics for the kids and Mr Wesser said that reaching toward students was a big part of the South Sydney message.

"We're really getting involved with the community," he said.

"We literally just started a school-to-work transition program for indigenous kids in years 11 and 12 where we've been able to set up jobs and pathways for the kids using a Souths Cares program that we only started in October."

This visit is a precursor to the Rabbitohs' arrival in Coffs Harbour next week ahead of the NRL pre-season trial game against last year's grand finalists NZ Warriors to be played at BCU International Stadium on February 11.

For the latest Coffs news go to coffscoastadvocate.com.au



Australian Rugby League Commission

news

Legends welcomed at BSHS

WHEN 35 schools across North Queensland clamour to join your school-based Indigenous support program, you know you're doing it right.

And that is exactly what has happened with the Cowboys' innovative Learn Earn Legend! program, with Bowen State High School becoming the 35th school to sign up.

The program, funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), is championed by the Cowboys, whose NRL and NYC squads boast several Indigenous players who have shown how hard work and commitment can lead to success.

The Cowboys' players are an integral part of the program, supporting the program coordinators working with the schools, encouraging students to stay in school, and along with education partners and local employers, helping Indigenous students identify their career paths, become work ready, and help them through the often difficult school-to-work transition.

The program, launched last year, has already been hailed a success, with the majority of last year's participating students transitioning from Year 12 into employment and traineeships in the fields of retail, business, hospitality, construction, min-



YOUNG LEGENDS: Cowboys' Learn Earn Legend! program coordinator Joel Johnston with Bowen students involved in the program, from left, Raine Power, Yasmin Courtney, Xavier Miller, Eljah Yuson, Courtney Oliver, Davian Yocco, Trent Joffris, Luke Parker, Cameron Crowther, Ben Power, Van O'Brien, Joshua McGosker and Tim Quatro. Photos supplied

ing and the performing arts, or into university courses as diverse as exercise science, nursing, education, science, law and international relations.

Cowboys' Learn Earn Legend! program coordinator Joel Johnston said Bowen High approached the Cowboys' community relations team to join the initiative after hearing reviews from other schools. "We are really looking forward

to working with the Indigenous students, their families and the community of Bowen," he said. Mr Johnston has visited the school twice to work with the 15 participating Indigenous students in years 11 and 12.

"I met with the kids, and found them to be a really mature, motivated and engaged group," he said.

"We worked with the group on presentation skills, which they

will need in areas such as job interviews and applying for university scholarships, with a focus on building their confidence, and showing techniques on how to involve their audience, and the importance of knowing their topic and research before going into these situations."

Mr Johnston said several key Bowen businesses had already come on board offering training,

work experience and employment opportunities for students in the program, including major companies Q&A National and TORCAS, as well as others in the fields of mining, engineering, construction and youth work.

Other local businesses keen to offer support for program participants can contact the Cowboys' community relations team on 4773 0700.

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The cost of producing electricity in Queensland is estimated to rise 43% due largely to Labor's carbon tax. That means your power bill is going up. For households, the Gillard Labor government admits the carbon tax will increase the power bill by at least 10%. For small business, it could be up to 25%. That's despite Julia Gillard promising there will be no carbon tax under the government she leads. From 1 July, every household, every business, every school, every hospital and every charity group will pay the carbon tax... through every power point.

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Australian Rugby League Commission



ON THE TOOLS: Apprentice motor mechanic Aneeta Savage all ready to start another day at the Tony Ireland Holden workshop

Photo: EVAN MORGAN

Love of cars becomes a full-time job for Aneeta

TOWNSVILLE teenager Aneeta Savage is eager to show the boys how its done as she puts her career aspirations in motion.

The 17-year-old was recently handed an automotive apprenticeship thanks to a joint initiative between the North Queensland Cowboys and Tony Ireland Townsville.

The self-confessed tomboy was offered the job after impressing during her work experience earlier this year.

Ms Savage said her love for the profession was continuing to grow.

"I'm not really your stereotypical girl and I didn't really have any interest in going to university so I thought it would be nice to give a trade a go," she said.

"I have always preferred the hands-on work and the mechanical side of things really gave me that opportunity.

"I contemplated giving a carpentry apprenticeship a go but I knew as soon as I walked in to the workshop that this was the job for me."

The talented teenager is the first member of the Cowboys Learn Earn Legend! program to gain full-time employment.

Program co-ordinator Ryan Mahoney said the initiative was about improving opportunities for local youngsters.

"We play a mentoring role for the students so they know about the importance of aiming for a career as well as the different avenues they can go down to help them achieve their goals," he said.

"A lot of these students are actively looking for careers, we are just here to give them a bit of a leg up so they can make the most of the opportunities in front of them."

Ryan Matheson

Australian Rugby League Commission

Sport helps steer kids



LOCAL LEGENDS... Courtney Masso, Trisha Cowery, Jannaya Santo, Brittnee Daley, Tauran Masso and North Queensland Toyota Cowboys Learn, Earn, Legend! program co-ordinator Ryan Mahoney.

STUDENTS from Charters Towers State High School are almost ready to move into further study, training or employment thanks to an Australian Government initiative Learn, Earn, Legend!

Learn, Earn, Legend! encourages and supports young Indigenous Australians to stay at school, get that job and be a legend for themselves, their family and their community.

The North Queensland Toyota Cowboys have been involved since June this year.

Yesterday students from

Charters Towers State High School had the opportunity to have one-on-one mentoring with Cowboys Learn Earn Legend! project co-ordinator Ryan Mahoney.

"This week is a school blitz, we're visiting Charters Towers, Ingham, Ayr and Mackay schools in the region who are part of the program," Mahoney said.

"We are mentoring students and providing them with support with their schooling."

The Cowboys work with participating schools and

students to provide an interactive program schedule designed to guide and inspire students to remain active and engaged in school and assist them through the transition period into further education, training or employment.

Students work closely with the program manager and support team to identify a career pathway, in conjunction with existing school programs, and participate in work experience, industry engagement, self-esteem development, mentoring sessions and workshops.

Mahoney said the program was funded for Year 12 students, however, the Cowboys also invited Years 10 and 11 to take part in the program.

"We provide support through school and into the following year," he said.

"It's enough time for them to graduate and settle in."

"The aim of the whole program is to bridge the game and change the unemployment rates."

All Souls St Gabriels School and Columba Catholic College are also involved in the program.

Australian Rugby League Commission

Learn Earn Legend! in Bowen

Story and image supplied by Paul Munnings

When 35 schools across North Queensland clamour to join your school-based Indigenous support program, you know you're doing it right!

And that is exactly what has happened with the Cowboys' innovative Learn Earn Legend! program, with Bowen State High School becoming the 35th school to sign up to participate in the Indigenous support program, spearheaded by the North Queensland Toyota Cowboys.

Bowen State High School signed up late last month, joining schools across North Queensland from as far north as Weipa and Cairns, Townsville, south down through the Burdekin, the Whitsundays and Mackay, and west to Charters Towers.

The program, funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), is championed by the

Cowboys, whose NRL and NYC squads boast several Indigenous players who have shown how hard work and commitment can lead to success.

The Cowboys players are an integral part of the program, supporting the program coordinators working with the schools, encouraging students to stay in school, and along with education partners and local employers, helping Indigenous students identify their career paths, become work-ready, and help them through the often difficult school-to-work transition.

The program, which was launched just last year, has already been hailed a success, with the majority of last year's participating students transitioning from Year 12 into employment and traineeships in the fields of retail, business, hospitality, construction, mining and the performing arts, or into university courses as diverse as exercise science, nursing, education, science, law and international relations.

Cowboys' Learn Earn Legend! program coordinator Joel Johnston said Bowen High School approached the Cowboys community relations team to join the initiative after hearing reviews from other schools.

"We are really looking forward to working with the Indigenous students, their families and the community of Bowen," he said.

Mr Johnston visited the school last month and again last week, to work with the 15 participating Indigenous students in years 11 and 12.

"I met with the kids, and found them to be a really mature, motivated and engaged group.

"We worked with the group on presentation skills, which they will need in areas such as job interviews and applying for university scholarships, with a focus on building their confidence, and showing techniques on how to involve their audience, and the importance of knowing their topic and research before going into these situations."

The Bowen visit ties in with a career expo held the same weekend by the Girudalla Community Co-operative Society, where Mr Johnston took the opportunity to speak to the parents of students, as well as to local businesses regarding possible employment and training opportunities.

He said several key Bowen businesses had come on

experience and employment opportunities for students in the Cowboys' Learn Earn Legend program, including major companies C National and TOR GAS, as well as others the fields of mining, engineering, construct and youth work.



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Cowboys help keep kids in school

COWBOYS Matt Bowen and Johnathan Thurston headed to school yesterday to motivate Indigenous students at Kirwan High State School to keep up their school attendances as part of the "Every Day Counts" three week challenge.

The star duo threw their support behind the initiative as term two attendance rates increased by 12 per cent on last year.

Thurston the only member of his family to complete grade 12, said he was grateful for the chance to nurture the young students.

"They are the next gener-

ation of our culture and we need to get them in the workforce and making something of their lives and in their communities," he said.

Bowen said he wished a similar program existed when he was going through school.

"I wish I learned a bit more at school, academics are more important than sport," he said.

"It is a great way to keep them learning." Executive principal John Livingston said the Townsville icons were a great incentive to keep the kids coming back each day.



Australian Rugby League Commission

Matty rocks the Shaq

WORKING in radio was always a dream for Townsville teenager Shaqueel Mitchell – and having Cowboys legend and keen amateur DJ Matt Bowen mix the beats with him in the studio was just icing on the cake.

The former Heatley High student, 18, is just five months shy of finishing his Certificate III in Media Traineeship with local indigenous radio station 4K1G. And the Aboriginal teenager one of the many success stories to come out of the Cowboys' "Learn Earn Legend!" program.

The program encourages indigenous youth to stay at school, get a job and be a legend for themselves, their family and their community.

Shaqueel completed his Certificate III in Broadcast Technology last year as a school-based trainee, and will finish his media traineeship at the end of this year with both host employer 4K1G and at the Brisbane Indigenous Media Association.

Shaqueel works three days a week at the 107.1 Too Deadly radio station, assisting with voiceovers for sponsorship and production, as well as having his own two-hour music program, *The Beat Shack*, every Tuesday night.

He said the "Learn Earn Legend!" team had inspired him to do well.

"All the other senior students had already gained host employers for their traineeships and apprenticeships, but I was still looking and hadn't found a placement," he said.

"It wasn't until my mum heard on radio 4K1G that they were looking for radio trainees that I went in to apply, and with the help of the 'Learn Earn Legend!' program was successful.

"I enjoy putting my own program together and letting the community listen to the music I like. And once I



RAD: Shaqueel Mitchell and Matt Bowen.

finish my traineeship, I hope to gain full-time employment."

Shaq said having Bowen come into the studio was awesome.

"The 'Learn Earn Legend!' team shows participants how important it is to stay in school and get good grades, because it is their future they are building," Bowen said.

"Shaq having this opportunity to learn everything he can about his dream job is a perfect example of how the program helps indigenous kids to get their foot in the door.

"It is great that Shaq gets to mix his beats and have them heard by the community, and I know he will do great in this industry."

4K1G station manager Linda Saltner said Shaq had taken everything on board during his traineeship, learning a range of skills.

Australian Rugby League Commission



Cowboys player Tariq Sims meets Rhianna Watkins, 18, who has her first full-time job with aviation support company Hawker Pacific at the Townsville RAAF Base Picture: FIONA HARDING

Off to a flying start

BUBBLY Townsville teenager Rhianna Watkins was always destined to be the smiling face greeting people as they walked into her workplace.

And it was her personality and drive to succeed, along with her involvement with the innovative Cowboys indigenous education support program – Learn Earn Legend! – which saw her land her first full-time job on Townsville’s RAAF base.

Rhianna is one of the many success stories to come out of the Cowboys Learn Earn Legend! program, a federally funded program supporting indigenous students in Years 11 and 12 to complete their secondary education and move into further study, training or employment.

Before signing up with the Learn Earn Legend! program in October, the former Pimlico State High student had already completed certificates in workplace practices and business administration, and done stints in customer service with Qantas and a local law firm, and within months she landed her dream job.

She is now in her element working in

administration at RAAF Base Townsville with Hawker Pacific, an aviation support company to the RAAF’s 38 Squadron technicians and pilots, undertaking a whole new world of administrative responsibilities including invoicing, financial management, purchase orders and computer programs.

“I am loving the work. I have had to learn a lot in a pretty short time, but I am enjoying it,” she said.

“I started early last month, and my bosses Sue and Martyn have been great, training me and showing me how to do everything.

“My job is to help Sue keep the office running as smoothly as possible, and to keep learning as much as I can.”

The committed team in Community Relations at the North Queensland Cowboys works with more than 220 indigenous students from 35 schools across North Queensland. The program is funded by the national Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), and supported by the NRL.

Australian Rugby League Commission



PASSION: Tula Clutterbuck and Tibian Wyles have both been accepted into the Aboriginal Centre of Performing Arts in Brisbane

Photo: MEGAN TAYLOR

Talented pair pursue their performing arts dreams

ONE used to sing to the Spice Girls while the other would have a dance-off with his cousins.

Kirwan State High School graduates Tula Clutterbuck and Tibian Wyles will take the next step in their performing arts careers when they attend the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts in Brisbane.

Tula will study music and drama while Tibian will concentrate on dance.

Tula first started performing in *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Grease* and

helped out backstage during Kirwan State High School's production of *Back to the '80s*.

"When I get on stage I love to be another character and sing my heart out," the 18-year-old said.

"It was an amazing feeling when I stood in front of 900 people for *Pirates*."

"That was when I decided this is what I want to do with my life."

Tibian started modern dance in Year 8 and picked up traditional dance two

years ago. He won the Indigenous Student of the Year Award and was named an Indigenous Young Leader in 2011.

"I dance everywhere. Wherever there is music, I dance. When I am bored, I dance," the 18-year-old said.

Tibian choreographed cultural and modern dance routines for his school's speech nights. Tula and Tibian will study a Certificate III in Performing Arts for six months and then will re-audition for a Certificate IV in the major they

choose. Kirwan State High School deputy principal and Indigenous education program manager Joanne Thomson said the pair had increased awareness for performing arts for Indigenous students. "What they have done for Aboriginal students at our school has taught them to have a go," she said. "They have been really good role models for people who want to pursue their dreams and passions."

Tula and Tibian begin their study in Brisbane on January 30.



Australian Rugby League Commission



WORKING OUT: Genami Geia, 17, with Cowboys player Anthony Mitchell at Good Fortune Bay Fisheries

In the swim with a fish farm job

THE smile on Genami Geia's face while working shows just how much he loves his job.

Looking for work after leaving Kirwan High School at the end of last year, Mr Geia was taken on by the Good Fortune Bay Fisheries on a three-day work experience job through the North Queensland Cowboys' Learn Earn Legend program.

He is now working full-time at the fisheries' Gumlow barramundi farm where he is responsible for feeding and harvesting the fish and maintenance of the equipment facilities.

"The Learn, Earn, Legend program asked me if I was interested in doing aquafarming," Mr Geia said.

"Because I come from Palm Island I love fishing. So I got a call one afternoon and I got the job."

"I love it."

The teenager said he had improved his driving skills among other things while at

It's one thing getting a job and landing it, but getting a job you really enjoy is a bonus as well and Genami seems to really enjoy it a lot

the farm and it had opened up a wide range of new opportunities.

"When Fiona (Pelling, community relations manager at the Cowboys) told me (I had the job) I was pretty stoked," he said.

"I just got out of school last year and I was looking for a job and I couldn't find one until Fiona gave me a call."

Mr Geia said he had been in the job for about two months and was hoping to eventually work his way up the ladder.

"I don't know if I can, but hopefully I can move up the hierarchy in the farm," he said.

New Cowboys recruit Anthony Mitchell has become an ambassador for the program along with fellow indigenous players Johnathan Thurston, Matt Bowen and Ray Thompson and was impressed with how well Mr Geia had been progressing.

"It's one thing getting a job and landing it, but getting a job you really enjoy is a bonus as well and Genami seems to really enjoy it a lot," he said.

"He's working out here full-time now which is really good, and he's getting steady payment."

"And he can look on to the next thing."

- LIAM BUTTERWORTH

Australian Rugby League Commission

Students rewarded for effort

AGGIE Nono learned just how much hard work can be rewarded when her dream came true yesterday.

The Wetpa high school student stole a kiss from North Queensland Cowboys superstar Johnathan Thurston – a moment the giggling Year 11 girl from Western Cape College said she would never forget.

It was all thanks to the Cowboys Learn Earn Legend! program, which helps indigenous students complete their education.

"I think everyone's going to be very jealous – I'd be jealous if I was them," Aggie, 16, said of her moment with Thurston.

"Oh my god, my heart almost stopped."

Students were challenged to improve their grades and attendance levels, with the reward being a 2400km round trip to Townsville for a lucky 10. The teenagers met Thurston and Matt Bowen, watched the Cowboys train and will tonight watch them play Canberra.

Western Cape's Emma-Lee Bradford said the results of the program had been overwhelming.



HEART-STOPPER: Aggie Nono gives Johnathan Thurston a kiss on the cheek and, *inset*, her reaction when finding out she would meet the Cowboys star Photos: FIONA HARDING

Australian Rugby League Commission

Appendix 6 – References

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