

CARING FOR THE RUGBY LEAGUE COMMUNITY

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



























TOGETHER...

We've celebrated the greatest moments in our game's history.

We've shared in triumph and defeat. The rewards of victory are great, but they are not the reason we play the game.

On and off the field, we always support our mates.

For more than a decade, the Men of League Foundation has supported the men, women and children who share our commitment to the spirit of the game.

Now it's your turn.



OUR 2014 NATIONAL BOARD

Patron Chairman Secretary **Treasurer**

The Hon John Fahey AC Ron Coote AM Vice Chairman Jim Hall (resigned March 2014) Neil Musgrave (resigned March 2014) Geoff Thoroughgood

Directors

Martin Cook John Fahey Mark Gasnier Ben Ikin Peter Simons (resigned May 2014) Darryl Van De Velde



MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN - RON COOTE AM

Since our inception the Men of League Foundation has grown to boast a membership of more than 26,000 with 41 passionate committees whose members give their time and expertise to help us deliver essential welfare and support.

The rugby league community is now and always has been - a family. It is this sense of family that drives us to continue to boost our profile, to gain more members and to provide more services, with the aim of helping more people in our family.

This is also what sets Men of League apart. We boast a unique, nationally recognised brand and reputation as a leader within the charity sector working with the highest levels of integrity, while also benefiting from a significant grass roots membership and volunteer base - a family network - which spans the country and makes all we do possible.

Together we work toward a shared vision to celebrate our game's rich history and to provide assistance and support to men, women and children from all levels of the game and the broader rugby league community.

I am thrilled that we have been able to grow the number of welfare recipients whose lives have been touched by the work we do. In fact, over the last year we have been able to make a meaningful impact on the lives of many who have sought our help and we look forward to doing more of the same in the future. We assist people with a range of services including:

- Financial hardship relief due to sudden crisis or life changing circumstances
- Financial assistance for urgent and important medical procedures and prosthesis
- Rehabilitation equipment such as wheelchairs, comfort beds and walking frames
- Home modifications, such as ramps into homes or bathroom and kitchen alterations
- · Grants and scholarship assistance
- · Mental health support, including counselling
- · Social contact through visits, cards and phone calls.

It has been another amazing year for Men of League, with many positive changes thanks to the appointment of Corene Strauss and the wealth of knowledge and passion amongst our Board members.

In 2014 we have continued to focus on telling our story, sharing our television commercial voiced by Russell Crowe, driving membership and donations and focussing our efforts on key events including Heritage Round, the Pull Up Your Socks campaign, our Gala Dinner and Queensland Luncheon as well as supporting committee events right around the country.

I am immensely proud of the growth and success of the Men of League Foundation during 2014 and I am confident that our efforts will continue to deliver strong results into 2015 and beyond.



MESSAGE FROM CEO – CORENE STRAUSS

It is my great pleasure to address you, in this, our first annual report. It has been more than twelve months since I took up the position of Chief Executive Officer at Men of League and I must say that the role has been both challenging and rewarding.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the Board and staff during this initial phase of my appointment.

Secondly, I want to highlight the achievements. Our first big change was the implementation of our three-year Strategic Plan. Our mission, of course, is to protect and enhance the lives of the men women and children of the game and throughout my time in this role, this has been a guiding principle in all decisions made.

As a result of our Strategic Plan we have forged a great partnership with the NRL, a development that has provided capacity to grow and add new services, including the appointment of our NRL Alumni Manager, Michael Buettner, to assist players transition out of the game.

Our welfare support has also improved significantly. We now have a full time Welfare Manager in former Origin player Ben Ross, who is supported by a dedicated Welfare Advisory Committee consisting of health and wellbeing professionals.

Our membership too has grown and we are getting closer to our target of 30,000 members. Our membership model

has had a major revamp so that members can now derive more benefits from their association with us. We have also adjusted the fee structure to ensure a more sustainable future for the organisation, a change that has been well received by the membership base.

Our 41 committees now receive increased support through our State Managers - Stuart Raper and Steve Calder - our updated operating guidelines and templates as well as the outstanding marketing support provided by our agency Brilliant Logic. The ongoing contribution and commitment of our committees has been nothing short of amazing, with approximately 150 events carried out and more than \$800,000 raised locally.

Thanks also needs to go to Jaycar, Gilmour Tennis, Parkview, Jeep Queensland, ICAP, One Solutions, and many other great organisations, including the various leagues clubs, whose support has played an important role in strengthening our financial position.

The structure of Men of League and our corporate governance has also been improved, ensuring a positive outlook for the organisation.

It is a privilege for me to serve as the CEO of the Men of League Foundation. I am humbled by the opportunities to work with and for our members. I would also like to thank my staff for their dedication, hard work and humour this past year. It is a pleasure working with you and I am eager to see what the future holds for Men of League.

2014 MEN OF LEAGUE TEAM



Chief Executive Officer
Corene Strauss



Financial Controller Andrew Gifford



Operations Manager Sandra Hopwood



Welfare Manager Ben Ross



NRL Alumni Manager Michael Buettner



NSW State Manager Stuart Raper



QLD State Manager Steve Calder



QLD Events & Operations Manager Tegan Jennings



QLD Administration Officer Louise Uhl



Events & Community Engagement Manager Jason Turik



Membership & Administration Officer Claire White



WELFARE

A majority of our welfare was focused on the provision of grants for financial assistance and residential and rehabilitation care. In addition, a considerable effort went into assisting beneficiaries via specific cause events.

Throughout the year we have worked closely with a myriad of individuals and families, to help make a difference to their lives when they need it most. We've been there for people like Alex Walker, who became a quadriplegic when he broke his neck playing rugby league. Our support provided Alex and his fiancée Renee with a better quality of life as they underwent the rigors and challenges of rehab.

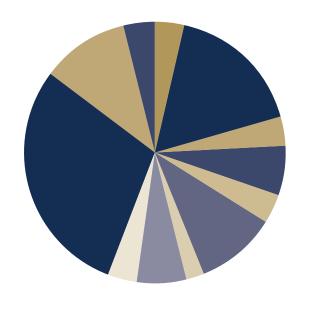
We also provided a hand to the Thompson and Boggitt families, who were each dealing with very different issues. Through our welfare efforts we were able to deliver relevant assistance to support these families in their darkest hours.

We're very grateful for the support that we've received from our members, committees, sponsors and donors throughout the year.

This support has allowed us to do what we do best – care for the rugby league community.







*incorporates knee, hip, shoulder, ankle and spine related treatment

CATALYST FOR ASSISTANCE

Brain	3	4%
Cancer	14	17%
Dementia	3	4%
Other	5	6%
Eye injury	3	4%
Financial hardship	8	10%
Kidney failure	2	2%
Mental health	5	6%
Obesity	3	4%
Orthopedic*	24	29%
Quadraplegia	9	11%
Stroke	3	4%
	82	100%



ASSISTANCE TOWARDS KNEE AND HIP REPLACEMENTS FOR A MORE MOBILE LIFE



MODIFICATION TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY SUCH AS RAMPS, BATHROOMS AND KITCHENS



OVER 2,000 VISITS TO THE ILL AND SOCIALLY ISOLATED ANNUALLY BY VOLUNTEER OFFICERS



ASSISTANCE SUCH AS WHEELCHAIRS, ADJUSTABLE BEDS, MOBILITY SCOOTERS



WITH TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES SUCH AS FUEL VOUCHERS



RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES IN URGENT NEED TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS



HOW WE HELP

The work that we've undertaken in 2014, courtesy of this support, includes:

- Over 40 Kick off Club events annually to reunite the rugby league community and reengage the socially isolated.
- Carpet replacements for quadriplegics and elderly to make home more accessible
- Assistance towards complicated medical procedures such as John "Bomber" Peard
- Emergency relief due to trauma (especially for casual employed) via food vouchers
- Wheelchair accessible vehicle for a carer to increase social inclusion
- · Therapeutic rehabilitation for quadriplegics
- Assistance with utility payments such as water and electricity
- Covering costs associated with traumatic injury that occurred due to a domestic accident
- · Funeral and associated expenses for young families
- · Debt relief and counselling for financially illiterate
- · Mental health support through counselling assistance





MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Men of League undertook and successfully executed numerous marketing and communications campaigns during 2014 in a bid to increase the profile of the Foundation, raise awareness of Men of League and its activities, drive memberships and promote community involvement.

We created a 30 second television commercial to promote the work and activities of the Foundation and we were fortunate enough to have Russell Crowe lend his voice to the advertisement. This ad was aired during coverage of the NRL, on Fox Sports and on various radio stations in Sydney and Brisbane.

An increased focus across digital platforms resulted in Men of League's Facebook page growing by 76 per cent, which represents an increase of close to 4,000 new 'likes'. The website saw 35,000 visitors and more than 190,000 page views, with more than two minutes spent on the website per session. Across the year, 35 per cent of visitors were returning visitors while 65 per cent were new to the page.

Marketing of the Men of League brand has continued to be improved, strengthened and streamlined. During 2014 through a concerted effort to grow the professional image of the brand and support local committee events more than 80 flyers were created to assist the individual efforts of committees around the country, as well as proactive media support to provide

coverage pre and post events. The success of these activities is evidenced through increasingly successful events and greater income in this area.

Sock Round 2014 was a resounding success delivering increased brand awareness and strong media coverage as well as valuable endorsements from the likes of Matty Johns, Cliff Lyons, Megan Longhurst, commentators and NRL Clubs. Social media traction also spiked with a 40 per cent increase in reach on Facebook and website visitation increasing by almost 55 per cent over the weekend.

Heritage Round saw relationships with NRL Clubs continue to be strengthened with increased cross promotion, a valuable development that will continue to yield results for the Foundation in 2015 and beyond.

Another key activation, the 2014 Gala Dinner, generated media results for the Foundation with positive brand coverage achieved on Channel 7 news, Channel 9 news, Wide World of Sports, Fox, ABC Grandstand and in the Daily Telegraph, Sunday Telegraph, The Australian, Sun Herald and Big League, among others.

We have achieved resounding success through the implementation of proactive media and marketing initiatives, an outcome that is testament to the passion of the rugby league community and the support they provide to the Foundation.



COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

In 2014 we saw the consolidation of 41 committees around the country. We also introduced a bi-annual National Committee Conference, the first of which was held on the Gold Coast.

This forum provided an opportunity for our volunteer committee members to gather and share insights into the objectives and operations of Men of League. For many it was a chance to reconnect with old mates and past players and regale stories of the past as well as plan for the future.

Stuart Raper was appointed as our NSW State Manager in May and sadly we had to bid farewell to Steve Calder who took extended leave due to illness. Tegan Jennings stepped in to act as QLD State Manager in Steve's absence. We extend our thanks to Steve for his outstanding contribution to Men of League since he joined the organisation and started the Queensland operation in 2004.

The committees undertook a huge number of activities during the year to raise funds and awareness on behalf of Men of League. Some also conducted Kick Off Clubs to encourage social isolation prevention amongst our rugby league community. Collectively they raised over \$800,000 and conducted more than 150 events, as shown below.

2014 EVENT SUMMARY:

	NSW	QLD	Other States	Third Party	Specific Cause
Bowls Days	16	2	-	-	-
Dinner	12	6	-	1	4
Golf Days	16	9	2	1	-
Kick Off Club	11	31	4	-	-
Lunch	10	7	5	4	-
Race Days	6	3	-	1	-
Other	11	8	1	3	-
	82	66	12	10	4
Total					174



COMMITTEE OVERVIEW CONT.

Congratulations should go to Andrew O'Brien for receiving the QLD Volunteer of the Year award at the Queensland Men of League Luncheon in September.

Special note should also be made to those committees who went above and beyond to host exceptional events, for example Sydney Metro Wide World of Sports Luncheon, the Sunshine Coast Christmas Luncheon with Craig Bellamy and Southern Sydney's John Peard fundraising event.







MEMBERSHIP

At the end of 2014, membership sat at 26,295, this represents growth of almost 6 per cent or a total of 1,469 new members. Of this number, we had 66 Gold Members in 2014 and 21 Corporate Members.

A breakdown of new members in 2014:



Following consultation with our committees and the Board it was agreed that from 1 October 2014 all new membership fees would be \$20 per annum. Renewal of annual membership is scheduled to occur on 1 October each year.

Existing members can opt to pay the annual fee but are under no obligation to do so. It was communicated that their support in this regard would make a huge difference to the operations of the Foundation.

The Annual Gold Membership package was updated to \$150 a year and to include recognition annually in the Men of League magazine and on the website, a Gold Membership plaque and key ring, four editions of the

Men of League magazine and information on events. Renewal is scheduled to occur on 1 March each year.

A special Corporate Membership package was also created. For \$1,000 a year Corporate Members now receive five individual memberships, a keyring and plaque, 10 copies of the magazine, recognition on the website and in the magazine, 15 per cent off major events, priority access to State of Origin and Grand Final tickets and NRL players and an invitation to the exclusive annual presentation for Corporate Members and sponsors. Renewal will occur on 1 March each year.

To drive new membership two key membership campaigns were carried out:

State of Origin Membership Competition

The basic premise of the competition hinged on a new member from the winning state (i.e. the state that won the State of Origin series) selected at random to win four Grand Final tickets, while the committee who got the highest percentage of new members during the period won \$5,000 to go towards one of their Kick Off Clubs. In total this campaign generated 171 new members.

Grand Final Membership Competition

Members who joined in September went into the draw to win two tickets to the Grand Final. If you were an existing member and referred a mate to join, you also went into the draw. 193 new members joined up in the month of September.



EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING

The Men of League Foundation hosted scores of successful events during 2014. Through the support of our 41 committees, over 170 dinners, luncheons, golf days, race days, bowls days and fundraising functions were held.

The community support and involvement has been overwhelming. We have continued to raise much needed funds through these events which ultimately has played an important role in sustaining the welfare we provide to our rugby league community. Of these events, three major fundraisers stood out over the year.

The Men of League Gala Dinner raised more than \$130,000 for the Foundation with 550 people attending the event at The Star, Sydney.

The Men of League Cox Plate Race Day was a great day enjoyed by almost 350 Men of League supporters. The race day took place at Rosehill Gardens Grand Pavilion in October with rugby league greats Michael Vella, Ben Galea, Todd Carney, Wade Graham, James Segeyaro, Jeff Robson, Ron Coote, Michael Buettner, Ben Ross and John Peard.

The Queensland Luncheon held at the Royal International Convention Centre, hosted more than 650 rugby league alumni and raised more than \$105,000 for the Foundation. The luncheon celebrated 10 years of Men of League in Queensland and featured league legend Wayne Bennett, sporting hero Glen Boss and Australia's number one

ventriloquist Darren Carr. The Queensland team were also able to partner with Jeep Dealers Queensland to give away a 2014 Jeep Patriot Sport.

The Men of League Sock Weekend held 27 to 30 June 2014 asked clubs to pull up their socks and show their support for the Foundation. Over \$12,000 was raised over the weekend, with more than 3500 pairs of socks sold. The socks were sported by many NRL Clubs over the weekend also.

Heritage Round offered a chance to position our brand among key markets. The activation included the opportunity for supporters to purchase limited edition Heritage Round coins and also win a chance to carry out the coin toss to start one of the weekend's big games. Sporting commentators wore Men of League lapel pins and major media players supported with editorial.

In addition to this, we lead the charge to help raise money for champion footballer and master entertainer John 'Bomber' Peard so that he could undergo revolutionary treatment for stroke victims in the United States. This special cause event, held at Sharkies in September raised over \$85,000 for John.

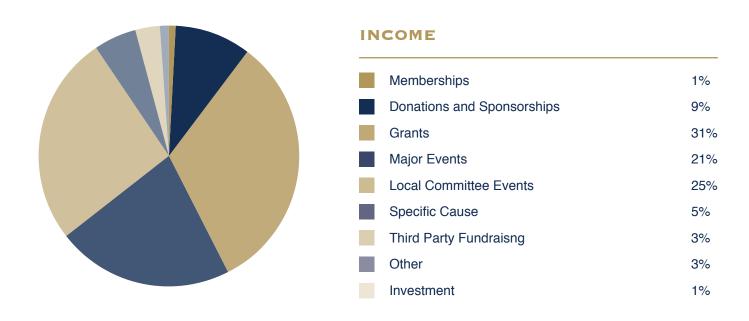
This year we also introduced our first peer to peer fundraising tool that will be utilised to encourage peer to peer and third party fundraising for the Foundation. This development is set to offer wonderful new opportunities as we move forward.

FINANCIALS

2014 was a significant year for the organisation. Due to a formalised partnership with the NRL which provided much needed capital for investment into the organisation we were able to make some major improvements. This included the appointment of much

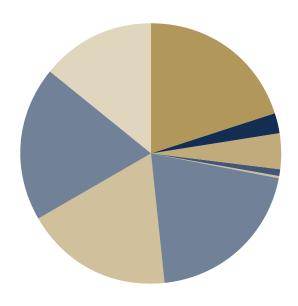
needed resources to meet the strategic objectives of the organisation. Our revenue for 2014 was \$3,217,481 vs \$2,407,437 in 2013. Our net surplus for 2014 was \$553,574 compared to \$158,677.

OPERATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR: JANUARY 2014 TO DECEMBER 2014









BENEVOLENCE

	Grants and Grant Assistance	23%
	Residential and Rehab Care	3%
	Charitable Causes	5%
	Flowers and Baskets	1%
	Scholarships	0%
	Social Welfare Causes	2%
	Specific Cause Events	23%
	Employee and Vehicle Costs - Welfare	21%
	Magazine - Memberships	22%
		16%

OPERATING SURPLUS

Operating Surplus is used for the ongoing running of the Foundation

18%

OUR SUPPORTERS 2014

The Men of League Foundation would like to thank the following sponsors for their support in 2014.











OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS

Men of League would like to thank our valued corporate members for their continued support and their assistance in enabling us to support the rugby league community.



















Bridge Street Conveyancing



GOLD MEMBERS

John Beecher Erik de Haart Scott Henry Andrew Hughes
Ian Ingle
Barry James
John Jeffries
Damien Luck

Jamie Mackenzie Charles McGee Robert Mitchell Kelvin Moss Don Parish Stephen Rarere Shauna Riley Don Smith Ian Thompson

CLUBGRANTS 2014

ClubGRANTS is a program coordinated through Clubs NSW to allocate a percentage of club / gaming revenue back into the community.

The Men of League Foundation have been applying and receiving funds through this program since 2007.

We apply for funds for our Residential Care and Rehabilitation program which aims to increase the quality of life for the men, women and children of the rugby league community who have fallen on difficult times.

Applications are sent to local council areas throughout the state. In 2014, we sent applications to 31 local council areas. Of this, we received funding through 17, which is made up of 23 individual clubs.

The total amount received was \$126,000.





















































CONTACT US

NEW SOUTH WALES

CANBERRA MONARO

President: Noel Bissett 0407 597 533 **Secretary:** Susan Gerrard 0406 378 086

CENTRAL COAST

President: Don Parish 0414 353 141 **Secretary:** Trevor Andrews 0412 694 857

CENTRAL WEST

President: John Lasker 02 6852 2477 Secretary: Norm Cook 0458 658 827

FAR SOUTH COAST

President: Terry Dickson 0429 449 058 **Secretary:** Damian Kennedy 0417 069 723

ILLAWARRA

President: Peter Fitzgerald 0412 263 733 **Secretary:** Barry Harle 02 4229 1545

MACARTHUR/STH HIGHLANDS

President: Ron McEntee 0448 118 789 **Secretary:** Stephen Hazelton 0450 010 770

MID NORTH COAST

President: Brian Atherton 0427 523 818 **Secretary:** Kevin Rayment 0427 533 644

MID WEST

President: Badger Babbage 0428 164 398 **Secretary:** Elwyn Lang 0429 721 266

NEWCASTLE HUNTER

President: Garry Leo 0400 421 767

NORTH COAST

President: Peter Barrett 0414 227 068

Secretary: Terry Clark

NORTH WEST

President: Don Pascoe 02 6742 1560 **Secretary:** Kevin Robinson 02 6760 5067

NORTHERN SYDNEY

President: Neil Whittaker 0412 488 037

NORTHERN RIVERS

Patron: Bob Abbott AM

Secretary: Tony Cicchinelli 02 6621 3096 Media Officer: Barry Cheadle 02 6686 2977

NSW POLICE

Patron: Andrew Scipione

President: Dennis Clifford 0411 266 610

RIVERINA

President: Dave Mulrooney 0438 017 428 Secretary: lan Lloyd 0457 850 384

SOUTH COAST

President: David Hayward 0405 102 361 **Secretary:** Ross Collins 0423 853 515

SOUTHERN SYDNEY

President: Terry Hughes 0447 488 052 **Secretary:** Grahame Bowen 0400 355 500

SYDNEY METRO

President: Henry Morris 0418 115 706 **Secretary:** Seamus 0'Connell 0411 126 060

TWEED DISTRICT

President: John Strong 0421 971 586

UPPER HUNTER

President: Peter Ford 0421 805 235 **Vice President:** Peter Collins 0419 763 279

WESTERN REGION

Secretary: Ross Tighe 02 6882 4649 Vice President: Bryson Luff 0438 058 563

WESTERN SYDNEY

President: Steve Winbank

Secretary: Garry O'Donnell 0418 699 257

TUGGERAH LAKES

President: Denis Smith **Secretary:** Rod Wicks

QLD AND AFFILIATED STATES

BRISBANE

President: Ron Atkins 07 3355 7271 Secretary: Vance Rennie 07 3350 6436

BUNDABERG DISTRICT

President: Terry Dodd 0414 526 828 **Secretary:** Chris Sullivan 0407 425 563

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

President: Andrew Lawrence 0448 813 666 **Secretary:** Mick Roach 0400 638 249

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

President: Paul Fowler 0407 640 533 **Secretary:** John McAllister 0411 752 391

FRASER COAST

President: Peter Stephensen 07 4122 2868 **Secretary:** Bob Wicks 0419 722 746

GLADSTONE

President: Mark Graham 0431 709 476 Secretary: Chris Anderson 0404 543 216

GOLD COAST

President: Ian Amos 0417 005 180 Secretary: Mick Toomey 0422 870 025

GOONDIWIND

President: Trevor Brown 07 4671 2882 **Secretary:** Col Trehearn 0427 712 679

GVMPIE

President: Ross Groundwater 0408 825 466 **Secretary:** Greg Pountney 0432 397 974

MACKA

President: Owen Cunningham 0407 916 657

ROCKHAMPTON

President: Ron Milne

Secretary: Dominique McGregor

ROMA

President: Owen Lingard 0400 496 507 **Secretary:** Julie Walton 0437 721 527

SOUTHERN DIVISION

President: Andrew O'Brien 0417 748 489 Secretary: John Dent 0400 046 214

SUNSHINE COAST

President: Bob Hagan 0419 252 092 Secretary: Ross Meldrum 0418 500 928

TOWNSVILLE

President: Tim Nugent 0419 730 700 **Secretary:** Terry Feeney 0488 000 899

VICTORIA

President: Peter Foreman 0439 533 171 **Secretary:** Greg Brentnall 03 8412 4905

NORTHERN TERRITORY

President: Dave Cannon 0428 895 211 Secretary: John Barry 0417 732 660

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

President: James Sullivan 0414 733 083 **Secretary:** Justin Reid 0488 906 665

QLD STATE COMMITTEE

Qld State Manager: Steve Calder **President:** Darryl Van de Velde **Committee:** Ken Brown, Ben Ikin,

Anthony Joseph, Mark Mackay, Mark Murray, Peter Psaltis, Justin Ribot, Wayne Roberts, Greg Veivers, Angelo Venardos, Tony Woodgate

Honorary Wellbeing Advisor & Scholarship Officer: Ray Beattie OAM 02 8765 2232

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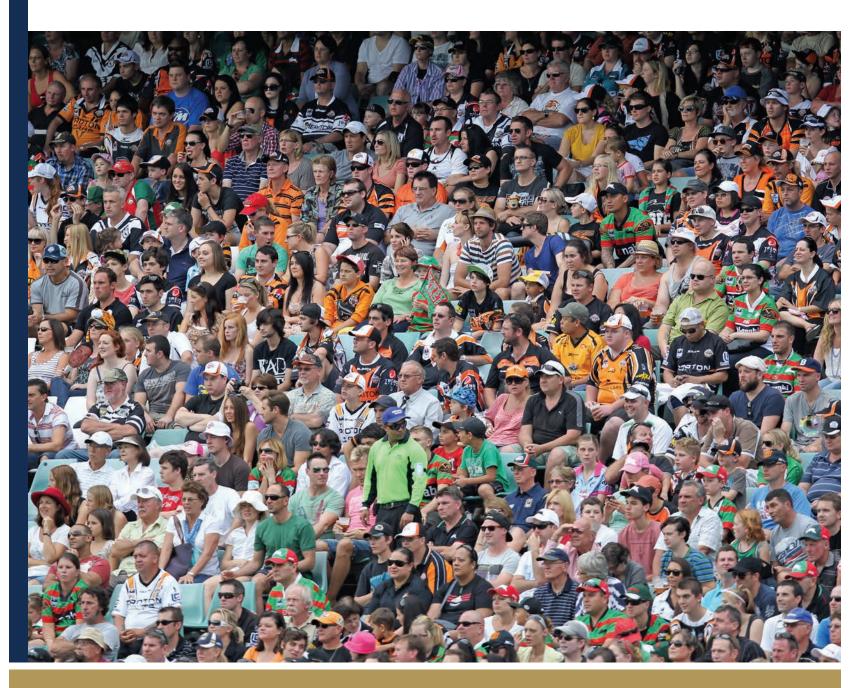
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