

RUGBY LEAGUE EUROPEAN FEDERATION

ANNUAL REPORT | 2017 |





Canada closes out the Americas Championship vs USA in Toronto – September.



Irish, German and Welsh match officials at the Cardiff L2 course - September

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I have great pleasure in warmly welcoming you to the 2017 RLEF annual report. World cup years are always special occasions and the fifteenth edition of the Rugby League World Cup allowed us all to enjoy the colour, spectacle and growing competitiveness of the sport.

Congratulations and commiserations to England, who so nearly defeated Australia in a tense final but who nevertheless played fantastically well throughout a tournament that saw the southern hemisphere nations excel. The future of international rugby league looks exceptionally bright with the likes of Tonga and Fiji gradually gaining ground on the traditional big three, and it is incumbent upon RLEF nations to continue to grow and produce more and more players who will broaden that path to elite, international rugby.

The RLEF Board, and our colleagues in boardrooms throughout the membership, can influence such performance pathways by ensuring they are part of well organised, effective national federations. Our eight-year strategy, which is coming to an end, identified the need for participation to grow to provide, simply, more players and therefore more choice. That message remains as important as we head into 2018 as it did in 2010 when the strategy was adopted. Central to that strategy is cultivating national club championships.



I was pleased to accept Nationaler Rugby League Deutschland and Nederlandse Rugby League Bond to the membership, following the launch of the German *BundesLeague* and Dutch championship. They were joined by five new Observers, in Bulgaria, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Greece and Turkey. It is now incumbent upon those nations to follow Germany and Holland's example and become members.

Pleasingly, both Greece and Turkey are already running club competitions, putting them in strong positions at the beginning of their existence. The addition of two new African nations is significant too, with this continent now an increasing part of the RLEF's operations. With Ghana and Sierra Leone already recognised by their respective National Sports Authorities, pursuing similar recognition in our new African members will directly support the RLIF's aim of membership with the Global Association of International Sports Federations.

For the second time, we staged the RLEF congress in Belgrade, Serbia's beautiful capital. It was the most engaging annual council meeting that I have had the pleasure to chair, with the members increasingly vociferous about the policies and regulations that effect their federation, because that is exactly what the RLEF is, their federation.

Following a competitive tender process, the Board once more awarded the congress to Serbia in 2018, perhaps a sign not only of the Serbian federation's excellent track record in managing largescale events but also the recognition by others that not inconsiderable capacity is needed to be able to do justice to such an important event in the RLEF calendar. The award was notable for achieving the one-year lead-in time that we have been working towards since the members voted to award the congress via tendering in 2014.

The Board is looking forward to an increasing number of countries seeking to host this event and I can confirm that the tenderers for the 2019 event certainly represent the broad geographical breadth of the RLEF.



Hungary and the Czech Republic strengthen their cooperation with a Test match in Budapest - July



France and England played one another in Perth in the world cup - November

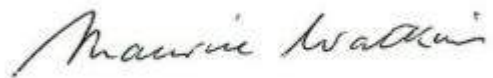
Back on the field, the RLEF was well represented in Queensland when the second Commonwealth Championship was played, this time with disability and women's competitions joining the under-23 men's competition, won by Australia. Countries like Scotland and Wales went to enormous efforts to play in the competition and that should be recognised. Supporting them, through the cultivation of a commercially viable European Championship, remains at the top of the Board's agenda, and in 2017, for the first time, we were able to disseminate an Invitation to Tender document to broadcasters. Our preference is a six-team event, including England and Italy, played biennially.

The governance of the federation saw the Board adopt a new safeguarding policy, created using a number of international frameworks, and assiduous policing of member compliance. The Board feels that it is important to enforce the RLIF's membership criteria, but that does not mean automatically removing or downgrading members the moment they fall beneath the requisite criteria. That would be destabilising and counter-productive. We have several nations on notice and they are in agreement that they must either meet the minimum standards or face re-categorisation.

As we digested the world cup, our attention was immediately drawn to the 2021 world cup, with qualifying competition formats discussed and approved. The qualifiers will be the largest the sport has ever known, a sure sign of the game's growth, and it will be interesting to see the complexion of the finalists given the rise in eligible nations.

Maurice Watkins CBE

Chairman

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Maurice Watkins'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'M'.

RLEF PROFILE & VALUES

The Rugby League European Federation's statutory objectives are to foster, develop, extend, govern and administer the sport of rugby league throughout Europe. Its rapid growth since 2003 has impelled the extension of that remit to additional, non-European regions. In 2017, the RLEF administered national governing bodies [NGBs] in Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean and North America, in addition to its diverse European responsibilities.



Czech educator David Lahr overseas the first European L2 Coach course - July



Saluzzo Roosters participated in the French Federale league - February



Wales and England faced off in the Wheelchair World Cup, France - July

EMPOWERMENT

Enhance the growth of rugby league among members, in all facets, through a policy of empowerment

DYNAMISM

The RLEF recognised as a dynamic, results-based leader

CULTURE

Cultivate rugby league culture among member nations, making the sport a habitual part of participants' lives

GENERAL MANAGER

To echo the chair's comments, it was very interesting watching the 2017 Rugby League World Cup and the increasing dominance of the southern hemisphere nations.



While Europe's participants, other than England, were often second best, the RLEF strategy is not focused on elite performance, but rather the building blocks that will eventually support that important part of the sport – it is a long-term proposition. A large part of our year was spent running the important Training and Education Portal project, the 21-nation initiative supported by €466.000 of Erasmus+ funding. The project's aim is to increase the quality and authenticity of rugby league throughout our European nations through multi-directional learning, tight quality control and long-term professional development.

The processes and methods defined by the TEP will have a long-lasting impact on not only European, or even non-European RLEF nations, but all nations that play rugby league, given that RLEF technical leaders and their counterparts in the Asia Pacific Rugby League Confederation are involved in the adoption of a universal suite of qualifications, which would be a historic first for rugby league.



Greek, Spanish and Italian coaches in the midst of Level 2 tuition delivered by Martin Crick, RLEF Coach Manager, in Sicily - September

In 2017 the TEP saw several Level 1 and 2 courses held in a variety of countries – details of which can be found in the technical reports, below. The leaders that are being trained and nurtured in those countries are an asset the sport has never had, and their value will be felt for many years to come. A polyglot group of RLEF-trained educators delivered courses, with one intervention particularly worthy of mention: Guido Bonatti, Italian rugby league's fine match official educator,

delivered a L1 educator course in Florida, with a combination of his written evaluation coupled with RLEF Match Official Manager Tom Mather's video observations combining to accredit three new American educators. An excellent combination of the RLEF's educator corps, the portal and technology to achieve a result. Other non-TEP courses were held in Russia and Ukraine. The technical portal itself is now fully functional in three languages – English, French and Russian – and being translated into Italian. Eventually, more languages will be added. If the sport is serious about international development, we need to give our members the tools to grow the game in their mother tongue.

In March, the RLEF was represented at the EU Sport Forum in Malta, where Central & Eastern Europe Director Jovan Vujosevic and myself were able to have a number of important meetings, not least with members of Sport Malta itself. That meeting was the catalyst for Jovan's intensive work with our Maltese rugby league community as it attempts to obtain a government recognised federation. Engaging with governments, preferably on a personal level, is key in this next era for the sport.

The RLEF continued to provide fundamental assistance to its members, with over 1000 balls distributed to support the growing amount of football. Not only was there more 13-a-side rugby league played locally generally, we saw some encouraging firsts, such as the first women's international match in the Middle East, when Italy women defeated Lebanon Junipers 22-0, and the first Norwegian youth representative side, playing the visiting Serbians in May. The importance of youth football could not be overstated, and the RLEF was delighted to confirm the re-introduction of the Under-19 European Championship in 2018. A two-stage consultation with nine full members gave the Board the information it needed to endorse the tournament, initially quadrennially, but then biennially following more input from the members. The result is that no player will miss out on European competition. It remains to be seen whether the competition can evolve into a tournament that receives municipal, regional or state support, thereby alleviating some of the significant costs borne by the members. The RLEF was minded to stress the financial impact committing to this tournament would have on the members but the result of the consultation was unequivocal. To tie the tournament back to the technical development work we are involved with, the RLEF invited members to nominate match officials, and we are confident of fielding a multi-national squad next August.



Danny Kazandjian
General Manager

COACHING MANAGER

2017 was a significant year of progress for coach education in Europe, with the commencement of the Level 2 programme, the qualification of the first Level 2 coaches, and the continuing delivery of Level 1 courses run by local educators. Level 1 courses were delivered in Norway, Latvia, Russia, Spain and Germany. The latter was significant in that it was supervised by Mike Aughey from Eire, evidence that our technical programme is bearing fruit, with a small group of coach educators now proving capable of supporting delivery in other countries.



Norway continues to provide a good example of domestic development, with candidates here travelling up to 1200 kilometers from the far north to attend the course. It was very encouraging too to see Russia re-emerge from a period of inactivity with a successful course in Moscow where six candidates were put through their paces by three local educators, and 20 players attended on day two to facilitate the assessment of the coaches.

Having run a pilot Level 2 in Leeds in September 2016 I was keen to see the first courses delivered with our cluster nations. Pride of place goes to the Czech Republic, who had the honour of hosting the first of these in July. Three local coaches and one from Sweden attended, with players from the Vchrlabi Mad Squirrels club providing the raw material for the coaches to work with. From the Czech Republic I moved straight on to Serbia.



Leeds's ex-GB international Chev Walker (left) assist delivering the L2 course to Welsh, German and Irish candidates in Cardiff - September




Martin Crick delivers the L2 Coach course to five nations in Belgrade - July

Here, four Serbian coaches were joined by three from Malta, two from Norway and two from Russia for a very successful four days, and again young local players attended for key sessions. This is a vital element in all Level 2 courses, allowing the coaches to gain practical experience on the field. The Italian course in September was held in Sicily, a significant event for Italian rugby league which

has expanded its operations to the far south. Three Spanish, three Greek and two Sicilian coaches participated here, with a group of under-19 players assisting.

The final course took place in Wales, also in September. Here three German and three Irish coaches joined six Welsh candidates, and we also had a considerable bonus in the presence of Chev Walker and Leon Crick from the Leeds Rhinos coaching staff. The participation of coaches from different nations proved a real stimulus to these courses, not only during the formal education sessions but in their interactions afterwards, sharing experiences and ideas, identifying common problems and possible solutions, and demonstrating a massive enthusiasm for taking the sport forward across Europe.

Our coaching pathway is now clearly defined. Coaches who attend a Level 1 course and successfully completes it will then move on to a professional development programme (CATO). They have a maximum of two years to complete these tasks, involving sessions planning, match analysis and self-evaluation, before applying to attend a Level 2. After three years of the TEP we can now proudly announce the first six Level 2 coaches. Many congratulations to the following: David Hunter (Norway), David Lahr (Czech Republic), Kelly Rolleston (Italy), Tiziano Franchini (Italy), Michalis Chatziioannou (Greece) and Mike Aughey (Ireland). All of them are now active in delivering Level 1 courses in their own countries and are at the forefront of our efforts to improve coach education in Europe. My thanks to them for all their hard work. Thanks must also go to the coaching staff at Leeds Rhinos for their continued support and assistance this year.



Martin Crick

Coach Manager

MATCH OFFICIALS MANAGER

2017 has been another exciting year to be involved in the RLEF Match Officials programme. The year has focused on improved technical education, through the TEP project, improved collaboration with the Asia Pacific RL, starting to close the gap in terms of our education and improved opportunities for officials within the RLEF to officiate at the very highest level. On the TEP front, level 1 educator courses were on the whole completed, with the French Federation becoming involved in Latvia and beginning the process of reviewing the RLEF level 1 programme.



The launch of the CATO CPD programme was a great success. This now allows officials to follow up on their level 1 courses, continuing to learn whilst they start their careers, focusing in the main on the core skills which are developed whilst they are officiating. The documentation is stored on the portal and is reviewable by the participants at any time. Led by the dedicated tutors, Phil Smith and Danny McNeice, a number of officials made excellent progress, with RLI leading the way. By the end of 2017 officials from Ireland, Netherlands, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Poland, Spain, Lebanon, Italy and Wales had completed their CATO process.



Welsh, German and Irish match officials participating in the Level 2 course in Cardiff - September

The new Level 2 was launched in Serbia in June and since then has been delivered to over 30 officials in Serbia, Spain and the Czech Republic. Further courses are taking place during 2018. The Level 2 focusses on more technical aspects of officiating with modules delivered over two days including material on applied laws, fitness and conditioning and mental preparation.

Outside of the core EU activity, a first was also achieved when an Educator, brought through the RLEF education systems, went to the United States to train Educators there. Guido Bonatti from Italy spent a week in Florida working with officials in the United States to help them to gain their level 1 qualifications. The content was reviewed back in the UK by RLEF Tutors to ensure quality control and what a great job he did. It shows some of the huge strides that we have made in the last five years from a technical education perspective.

Further activity in Africa has been led by Ray Safi, with work beginning in Ethiopia and further work planned in other African countries. The participants have been added to the RLEF portal and as such are now on the path to completing their CPD and potentially a Level 2 in the coming year.



Norwegian, Swedish and Czech candidates on a L1 course in Gothenburg - March

There have been some challenges though. Retention of officials from courses remains a challenge, as does ensuring participation numbers on booked courses. Whilst we improve our techniques it has been disappointing that a number of people have been removed from the portal that we have failed to continue to engage. However, this is a natural part of the maturing process in grass roots sports organisations. A plan of action, regularly following up with participants has been launched and the Tutors and Educators now work together to ensure that those who have not completed their technical education processes do not get the top-level refereeing appointments that are now available.

The world cup restricted the number of on field opportunities for officials this year, but increased observations via the portal meant that standards have improved and officials are getting feedback. A group of officials is being assembled for the 2018 U19s championships, the group will be put together via application from each of the member states giving some of the best on field opportunities that RLEF officials have ever had at officiating representative rugby.



Tom Mather
Match Officials Manager

MEDIA MANAGER

Whilst we are becoming more media savvy, the need to post on so many platforms when the number of volunteers on the ground does not increase accordingly, can lead to issues. In some ways we end up competing against ourselves, with nations posting on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram before we get the chance to release the story - or indeed if the RLEF does – thereby negating its news value.



There is also an issue that there is no verification of who is posting on those sites or the accuracy of the information, it should always come from and be verified by the NGB before posting or jointly timed release. For that reason, a WhatsApp group was set up to ensure accuracy before our official postings, which has only worked sporadically but should be followed.

There is also a concern about immediacy and, whilst considered content is still king, once a social media platform has broken the news, the dynamic of the central body changes to becoming reactionary and, invariably as a result, quotes led.

That said, the protocols for games or tournaments works and has again been proven to do in 2017 and should give the competing nations broad content for their outlets. It has formed some good habits which will carry forward.

The real success has been the weekly bulletin which extended almost the entire year. The 'bitesize' content has proved to be extremely popular with major broadcasters, in particular, with an 'international' ticker on Sky Sports during their preview coverage in the UK.

The breadth of stories has been good with prominence given to expanding areas in Africa especially, but the need is for those with news instinct on the ground throughout the regions. The EU-funded TEP has again also produced valuable content fillers.



The big success has been the weekly bulletin both in terms of frequency and reach. The plan was to have at least three stories within it, showing the depth and breadth of activity and there was more reported via it in 2016 than in any year previously, as a true testament to growth across the northern hemisphere. It is our most valuable snapshot.

In terms of reaction, more follows on social media and stories in various global media outlets, together with regular inclusions in places like the Sky Sports 'ticker' justify the process; bitesize news not only sells but creates an extremely favourable

impression of strides being made, a clear example of collaboration for greater good. Hopefully, the growing awareness will translate into greater sponsorship and media opportunities for all.

What would further help in terms of commonality is that if every championship decider in any nation at any age level is labelled as a Grand Final, and that the practice of preview/report/review whether that be a domestic league season or cup final is adhered to; it amounts to three bites of the same cherry.

Accuracy is also key, there have still been occasions when scores and scorers reported do not correlate. To be taken seriously, that is a minimum requirement. Additionally, there is still not enough feedback of either stories being generated and reported locally - we do not have an overall media portfolio which affects implementing a broader media strategy - and impact of centrally sent out stories finding the right media contacts in competing countries so that the database can be constantly kept up to date.



Phil Caplan
Media Manager

GOVERNANCE

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Maurice Watkins reported to Council that the UK Equalities Act (2010) allows for age or other characteristics as determinants in society, but that there is no “objective justification” to support a blanket prohibition on company directors based on age, which article 66(f) does.

At the Annual Council Meeting on 24 June 2017 the special resolution was carried unanimously and the constitutional amendments were lodged with Companies House.

Changes to the Board

There were no changes to the Board in 2017. Both directors elected by the membership are in place until the 2018 Annual Council Meeting, when independent director Paul Nicholson’s term also expires.

Board meetings

The Board held five meetings throughout the year, on 6 February (London), 5 April (London), 24 June (Belgrade), 15 September (London), 29 November (London).

	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held during Director’s period of office
Sally Bolton	4	5
Paul Nicholson	5	5
Marc Palanques	2	5
Blagoje Stojkovic	4	5
Graeme Thompson	5	5
Maurice Watkins	5	5

SUB-COMMITTEES

The RLEF administers four sub-committees, all of which operate independently of the plenary Board and reporting to it at the subsequent Board Meeting.

Dispute Resolution Committee

The DRC was created following a Board resolution taken at its 19 February 2016 Board Meeting. It is a standing committee of the RLEF and is the first instance organ for Members to lodge formal grievance. The Committee is convened by order of the Board upon formal complaint being lodged in writing to the RLEF General Manager or the Board and therefore there are no sitting members or fixed terms. The DRC was not convened in 2017.

Financial, Audit and Risk Committee

The purpose of the FARC, constituted in February 2012, is to advise the Board on financial management, audit and risk management matters. FARC was chaired by Graeme Thompson in an interim capacity, with Graeme Thompson a sitting member. A third member, independent accountant Nigel Hansford, was co-opted onto the committee in October. Upon Nebojsa's departure from the Board in October Graeme Thompson took over as interim chair.

Meetings are usually held approximately two weeks prior to Board Meetings, to enable FARC to make recommendations to the Board. FARC held five meetings throughout the year, compared to three in 2015. These were on 10 February, 16 May and 16 August, 19 October and 5 December (all via teleconference). In addition to providing account and budget oversight, and recommendations to the plenary Board, FARC also monitored the risk register in close consultation with the executive team.

	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held during Member's period of office
Nigel Hansford	4	5
Marc Palanques	0	1
Blagoje Stoilkovic	2	5
Graeme Thompson	4	5

Media and Commercial Committee

The purpose of the MCC, constituted in June 2012, is to create and oversee a strategy that maximizes commercial opportunities and visibility for the RLEF. It is chaired by Paul Nicholson, with RLEF Facebook volunteer George Stilianos, webmaster James Vukmirovic and Media Manager Phil Caplan members. The MCC did not meet at all in 2017 as Paul Nicholson focused on confirming the RLEF's commercial properties and then securing media partners for those properties.

	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held during period of office
Phil Caplan	0	0
Paul Nicholson	0	0
George Stilianos	0	0
James Vukmirovic	0	0

Remuneration Committee

The purpose of the Remuneration Committee, constituted in September 2011, is to oversee a formal and transparent procedure for developing policy on executive and consultant remuneration. It is chaired by Maurice Watkins, with Graeme Thompson its other member. The committee did not meet in 2017.

	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held during Director's period of office
Graeme Thompson	0	0
Maurice Watkins	0	0

COUNCIL

The RLEF Council is constituted by the members of the company. There were two changes to the Council in 2017, with Nationaler Rugby League Deutschland and Nederlandse Rugby League Bond both becoming Affiliate Members. Full Members have four votes each; Affiliate Members have one vote each.

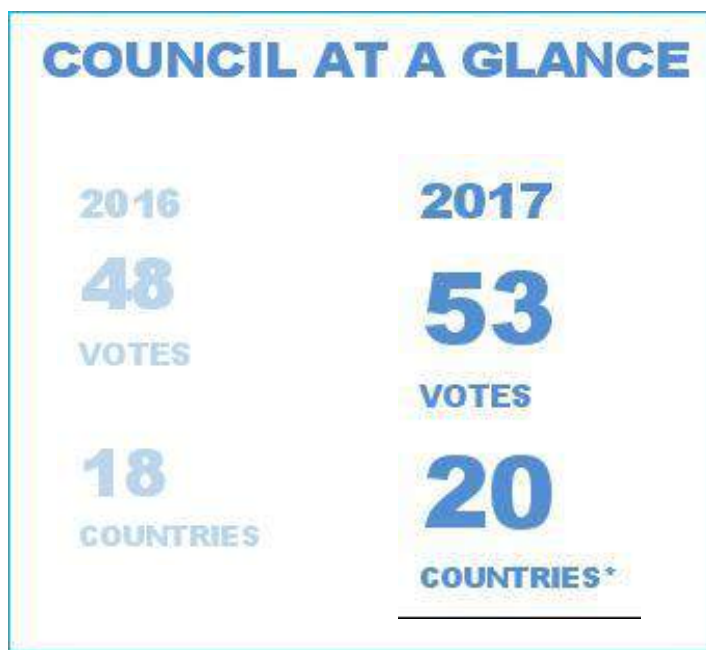


Delegates assembled at the Stari Grad Municipal chambers for the 2017 Annual Council Meeting - June

Congress | Annual Council Meeting

The fifteenth Annual Council Meeting and eighth RLEF Congress was held on 24 June in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia. While the previous year had seen a drop in the number of member nations, and therefore votes, by one following the expulsion of the Greek member, 2017 saw a boost to both categories. It was attended by 21 countries and a record 16 members (increase from 12 in 2016; previous record of 15 was in 2014).

* 2016 figures reflect the membership at the Annual Council Meeting, while 2017 figures represent the year end position.



Nations represented at the 2017 Annual Council Meeting:

Members	Andrew Pilkington (Asociación Española de RL), Andrey Zhukov (Association of Rugby League Clubs), Gerard Keenan (Czech RL Association), Mathieu Khedimi, Marc Palanques (Federation Française de Rugby a XIII), Tiziano Franchini (Federazione Italiana RL), Romeo Monteith (Jamaican RL Association), Remond Safi (Lebanese RL Federation), David Axisa, Jean Pierre Zarb (Malta RL), Jason Bruygoms, Timo Meinders (Nederlandse RL Bond), Nigel Wood (Rugby Football League), Des Foy (RL Ireland), Adrian Seglem (RL Norge), Bob Baxendale (Scotland RL), Predrag Pantic, Blagoje Stojilkovic (Serbian RL Federation), Roman Bykhov, Artur Martyrosyan (Ukrainian Federation RL), Brian Juliff (Wales RL)
Observers	Aris Dardamanis (Greek RL Association), Zsolt Lukacs, Balint Mezes (Hungarian RL Federation).
Proxies	United States Association of RL (represented by RLEF company secretary)
Attending	Adam Vernon (Albania), Zeljko Ljubanic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Stephen Nemeth (Hungarian RL Federation), David Collier (RL International Federation), Miodrag Skoknic (Serbian RL Federation) Gurol Yildiz (Turkish RL Association)

STRATEGY

The 2010-17 strategy was adopted in August 2010. This year was its eighth full year.

KEY FOCUS AREAS

Significantly increasing participation numbers is the principal aim of the 2010-2017 RLEF strategy. Developing national championships is the main indicator to realising this strategic imperative, while the creation of technical departments, manned by trained and qualified local tutors, will support increasing participation numbers by providing competent coaches and match officials all of whom meet an RLEF standard.

PARTICIPATION NUMBERS

Domestic championships
Technical empowerment

STRONG MEMBERS

Independent Members
Cluster system
Increase in membership

CORPORATE RLEF

Staff productivity
Focused investment
Increase revenue & visibility

PARTICIPATION NUMBERS



Cardiff City [credit: Ian Lovell]



Spanish Town and Campion College U19

3

The number of successive years France and Wales have recorded player registration increases

5

The number of successive years England has recorded player registration increases

The number of domestic matches in Jamaica, smashing the 100-game mark set in 2014 and 2015.

142

3231

The number of registered French women players

MEMBER ACTIVITY

SENIOR [community | military | professional | student | wheelchair | women]

	TEAMS 2016	TEAMS 2017	MATCHES 2016	MATCHES 2017
CANADA	8	11	14	16
CZECH REPUBLIC	13	11	58	21
ENGLAND ¹	611	440	4581	3116
FRANCE ¹	112	81	1080	752
GERMANY	4	4	4	6
IRELAND	9	12	29	37
ITALY	12	8	31	6
JAMAICA ¹	16	17	99	76
LATVIA	3	0	3	0
LEBANON ¹	17	18	56	76
MALTA	3	0	0	0
NETHERLANDS	4	4	8	12
NORWAY	6	12	15	21
RUSSIA	14	14	41	13
SCOTLAND	6	6	8	8
SERBIA	17	15	42	57
SPAIN	17	8	57	27
UKRAINE	14	14	31	32
USA	14	12	59	47
WALES	25	25	103	*

* Wales recorded 256 club + 150 school games without specifying the Sr/Jr split of the 256 games.

YOUTH [clubs | schools]

	TEAMS 2016	TEAMS 2017	MATCHES 2016	MATCHES 2017
CANADA	2	2	1	1
CZECH REPUBLIC	6	7	12	12
ENGLAND ¹	1312	1280	5809	3616
FRANCE ¹	542	259	4103	4025
GERMANY	0	0	0	0
IRELAND	2	6	2	5
ITALY	6	3	18	0
JAMAICA ¹	19	23	38	66
LATVIA	0	0	0	0
LEBANON ¹	9	6	17	14
MALTA	0	0	0	0
NETHERLANDS	0	2	0	0
NORWAY	0	1	0	0
RUSSIA	19	0	48	0
SCOTLAND	2	1	1	0
SERBIA	13	8	7	17
SPAIN	3	2	3	4
UKRAINE	22	31	18	26
USA	0	0	0	0
WALES	87	86	249	*

REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES [national | regional | women | wheelchair | student]

1. 2016/17 season:

	YOUTH 2016	YOUTH 2017	SENIOR 2016	SENIOR 2017
CANADA	4	0	4	11
CZECH REPUBLIC	5	2	5	2
ENGLAND ¹	28		28	
FRANCE ¹	2	5	2	12
IRELAND	9		9	
ITALY	6	1	6	8
JAMAICA ¹	6	0	6	3
LATVIA	0	0	0	0
LEBANON ¹	4	3	4	10
MALTA	1		1	
NORWAY	3		3	
RUSSIA	3	0	3	0
SCOTLAND	16		16	
SERBIA	10		10	
SPAIN	5	1	5	6
UKRAINE	2		2	
USA	4		4	
WALES	15		15	

REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS [coaches | match officials | players]

	2016	2017	Notes
CANADA	239		
CZECH REPUBLIC	250		
ENGLAND	64,699		
FRANCE	12,533		
IRELAND	565		
ITALY	661		
JAMAICA	752		
LATVIA	105		
LEBANON	1055		785 registered players in Lebanon; 224 in Australia
MALTA	285		Large majority of players registered in Australia.
NORWAY	252		
RUSSIA	-	-	ARLK did not keep a register, in breach of RLIF regulations
SCOTLAND	442		
SERBIA	590		
SPAIN	278		
UKRAINE	739		
USA	494		
WALES	1592		



Marvin Thompson chose a rugby league theme for his wedding – our sport's culture alive and thriving in Jamaica. Congratulations Mr & Mrs Thompson!



Torfaen Tigers and Valley Cougars contributed to further growth in Wales [credit: Ian Lovell]

Technical empowerment

The year saw the launch of the RLEF's biggest technical development programme, entitled the 'Training and Education Portal' (TEP) which will be implemented through six clusters. The TEP, which is funded by the EU's Erasmus+ programme and the RLIF, will see the formation of the RLEF Education department, increase the federation's suite of qualifications from four to ten and see them registered on the European Qualifications Framework. It will also introduce an e-Learning component and technical portal. Additional funding is being supplied by the Rugby League International Federation.

The project lasts for 36 months, in three phases: a series of Level 1 courses in a selection of the 21 partner countries to train and qualify local educators to use the new system; then to introduce the Level 2, which was trialed among the European educator corps in the UK during the European Week of Sport in September; and finally, to provide professional placements to a select group of six coach and six match official educators. The year saw the project produce the following output:



In addition to the courses run as part of the TEP, the RLEF serviced a new territory, Turkey, which hosted a Level 1 coaching course in July and the equivalent match officials course in November. Regional leader Serbia sent educators to each, while Greek educator George Stilianos supervised the match official course.

STRONG MEMBERS

Governance is one of the key themes disseminated throughout European rugby league. The RLEF, an award-winning governing body in the field of governance, continues to work closely with its member organisations to ensure that the basic principles of good governance are observed at all levels.

The RLEF works daily with the membership on all facets of governance in line with the European Union's precepts on good governance.

“The framework and culture within which a sports body sets policy, delivers its strategic objectives, engages with stakeholders, monitors performance, evaluates and manages risk and reports to its constituents on its activities and progress including the delivery of effective, sustainable and proportionate sports policy and regulation. ”

— EU definition of good governance

The RLEF uses the Annual Membership Audit as a gauge to chart the capacity of its members. In the wake of the RLIF adopting new membership criteria in October 2014, several members are adjusting their calendars to meet the heightened standards. There was an increase from three to five Full Member compliant with the membership policy, in addition to the following positive indicators:

- **ENGLAND** registered a 14th consecutive annual profit
- **IRELAND** launched its player registration system and is confident of meeting senior participatory criteria in 2017
- **JAMAICA** had a record year of participation, completing 138 of 142 scheduled domestic matches, and remains the fourth most active country in the RLEF. It also generated 55% of its revenue locally compared to 43% in 2015 and recorded its strongest cash position, suggesting it is becoming more sustainable
- **LEBANON** received its highest sports ministry grant (US\$50k) and is budgeting a 2017 surplus that will take it into the black for the first time since inception
- **SCOTLAND** hired a full-time development officer through **sportscotland** funding and continues to restructure the organisation, developing a solid foundation for future growth

- **WALES's** balance sheet is in its strongest historical position as a result of WRL's reserves policy, with £79k in the bank. Between 2007-10 WRL held between £1k-£11k cash; and between 2010-15 between £30k-£47k cash
- **ENGLAND, FRANCE, JAMAICA, LEBANON, IRELAND, UKRAINE** and **WALES** all recorded increased participation (measured in registered participants and / or matches played)
- All eight Affiliate Members completed the AMA on time, compared to five in 2015
- **ITALY** achieved Full Member standards and continues to improve its governance and internal processes conscientiously
- The **CZECH REPUBLIC** continues to grow organically. Well governed, with historic high cash reserves, steady competition growth at senior and youth levels, the NRL was also shown in the country for the first time in 2016
- **NORWAY** and **ITALY** completed 100% of their championship matches
- **USA** has improved its financial position, showing prudent financial practice, doubling its cash reserves and generating 55% of its income internally, from player and club registration fees
- Among the Observers, **NETHERLANDS** continues to be an exemplary organisation and should achieve Affiliate Member status in 2017
- Twelve members recorded **PARTICIPATION INCREASES**

MEMBERSHIP AT 31/12/2017

Full



Affiliate



New member

Observer

Belgian Rugby League Association, Burundi Rugby League, Dansk Rugby League Forbund, Ethiopia Rugby League, Fédération Marocaine de Rugby League, Rugby League Federation of Ghana, Hungarian Rugby League Federation, Nationaler Rugby League Deutschland, Nigerian Rugby League, Nederlandse Rugby League Bond, Palestine Rugby League, Saudi Arabian Rugby League Association, Sierra Leone Rugby League Federation, Svenska Rugby League Förening, Trinidad & Tobago Rugby League

CORPORATE RLEF

The RLEF is committed to becoming a more efficient and productive organisation at every level of the business. Discounting the specific RLIF funding for tournaments, fresh investment came through the EU. Aside from this important source, major increases in revenue will only be forthcoming through a successful European Championship, with broadcast and sponsorship income. The Board is committed to pursuing this objective.

The RLEF continued to provide frontline support through cash grants to its Affiliate Members. The Czech Republic, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Norway and Spain all received small grants to support their domestic championships. However, combined these totalled £12,800, with no nation receiving more than £3000, so the direct financial support is minimal. Fortunately, thanks to the *Training and Education Portal* project the level of targeted investment in the technical sector was significant, totaling over £134,000 directly through the project, with a further £3000 spent on non-project activities, including work in Turkey. The RLEF was also able to supply a record 1700 Steeden footballs throughout the membership, compared to 1000 in 2015. Footballs and technical development are the tools with which rugby league will be developed, in an authentic manner.



In addition to the important work being undertaken by the RLEF technical and media managers, which is discussed above, the organisation's three regional directors have also been instrumental in building organisational capacity and achieving RLEF strategic goals. **Jovan Vujosevic** is the Central and Eastern Europe Director, responsible for supporting the work from Germany to Russia and Latvia to Turkey. In 2016 Jovan was instrumental in supporting the creation of the Turkish Rugby League Association and the Bulgarian Rugby League Federation, as well as managing the difficult Greek issue. Turkish and Bulgarian representatives attended the RLEF Congress in October and both are actively creating clubs and forming governing bodies as per local laws. Turkey launched a five-team 2016-17 championship in the autumn, with Bulgaria set to launch a four-team competition in 2017.

In February, Jovan and RLIF CEO David Collier conducted a fact-finding mission to Athens to recommend a course of action to the RLEF Board. The investigation into the Hellenic Federation of Rugby League's practices surpassed the year mark in February and thanks to Jovan's close attention was resolved later in the year. Jovan also worked with the active clubs in Greece with a view to admitting a new Greek governing body early in 2017.

As the statistics on page 19 show, 2016 saw rapid advancement in Jamaica, with RLEF Caribbean Regional Director **Romeo Monteith** providing excellent leadership to the flourishing Jamaican Rugby League Association, which is now the fourth most productive RLEF member in terms of rugby league being played. There was an increase in participation at every level, with one of the representative highlights Jamaica's first youth international, in addition to four senior international matches. This increased activity was supported by an additional government grant of almost €7000. As our sport becomes more popular governments will be more inclined to support the governing bodies in various ways.



UTECH Knights, like an increasing number of Jamaicans, are enjoying more rugby league, more of the time!



Action from the inaugural Turkish league, which kicked off in the autumn

In the expanding Middle East Africa region, **Remond Safi** administers a growing stable of aspiring rugby league nations. While many countries share the same issues, at least many European countries share borders and, through the EU, a legal framework. The same cannot be said in this fertile territory for the game. We need to be realistic about what can be achieved with our limited resources, which is why a key competency our regional directors must develop is the acquisition of public funding. In this area, Remond had a breakthrough year, winning two Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade grants, one a A\$10,000 *Sport for Life* programme grant to aid South African youth development and the second A\$12,000 to support Lebanon's youth and women's rugby league programmes.

Finally, the Board also decided that a new social media plan would increase the sport's visibility, align the work of the RLEF members through a coherent approach and present the RLEF and its members in a more advantageous light. Director Paul Nicholson is leading this project, whose overall mission is to increase the available analytical data throughout the RLEF's social media, implement a more systematic approach to social media output, which has been desultory in the past, and build up a quantifiable community, which can be referenced in future sponsorship negotiations.

Those negotiations, ultimately, will surround the European Championship. The overall visibility of the sport will best be heightened through a successful elite European international competition. The RLEF is committed to pursuing this objective through aligning its existing stakeholders – namely its members and the RLIF – to present an agreed, multi-year schedule, and then taking that schedule to the market place and attracting media partners.

AFFILIATED COMPETITIONS

AMERICAS CHAMPIONSHIP



	W	L	D	PF	PA	+/-	Pts
USA	2	0	0	84	24	60	4
JAMAICA	1	1	0	34	62	-28	2
CANADA	0	2	0	32	64	-32	0

RESULTS

22 JUL	USA 48-6 JAM	Jacksonville
26 AUG	JAM 28-14 CAN	Kingston
16 SEP	CAN 18-36 USA	Toronto



NORDIC CUP



RESULTS

17 JUN	NOR 38-18	SWE	Oslo				
19 AUG	DEN 24-46	NOR	Copenhagen				
NORWAY	1	0	0	40	24	16	2
SWEDEN	0	1	0	24	40	-16	0

The Nordic Cup was disrupted by defending champion Denmark's withdrawal from the opening fixture against Norway. Sweden and Denmark played in an unofficial representative match, while Norway won the trophy with a victory in Sweden.

WHEELCHAIR RUGBY LEAGUE CELTIC CUP



	W	L	D	PF	PA	+/-	Pts
WALES	2	0	0	123	6	117	4
IRELAND	1	1	0	32	67	-35	2
SCOTLAND	0	2	0	16	98	-82	0

RESULTS

29 APR	SCO 16-26 IRE	Stirling
29 APR	IRE 6-51 WAL	Stirling
29 APR	SCO 0-72 WAL	Stirling



OTHER INTERNATIONALS

Below is a list of all internationals with at least one RLEF Member national team participating.

SENIOR INTERNATIONALS

DATE	FIXTURE	CATEGORY	VENUE
4 FEB	HUNGARY 50-4 URUGUAY	MEN	Liverpool
4 FEB	PHILIPPINES 26-44 MALTA	MEN	Cabramatta
8 FEB	HUNGARY 44-10 THAILAND	MEN	Liverpool
18 FEB	MALTA 40-28 HUNGARY	MEN	St Mary's
25 FEB	LEBANON 0-22 ITALY	WOMEN	Jounieh
6 MAY	ENGLAND 30-10 SAMOA	MEN	Sydney
6 MAY	LEBANON 24-8 MALTA	MEN	Sydney
3 JUN	LEBANON 6-4 ITALY	MEN	Beirut
10 JUN	ITALY 94-4 SPAIN	MEN	Piedmontese
18 JUL	SPAIN 30-32 ITALY	WHEELCHAIR	
18 JUL	FRANCE 70-16 AUSTRALIA	WHEELCHAIR	
20 JUL	AUSTRALIA 72-24 WALES	WHEELCHAIR	Carcassonne
20 JUL	SCOTLAND 6-110 ITALY	WHEELCHAIR	Carcassonne
20 JUL	FRANCE 71-31 ENGLAND	WHEELCHAIR	Carcassonne
22 JUL	WALES 32-78 ENGLAND	WHEELCHAIR	Paimers
22 JUL	SPAIN 39-68 ITALY	WHEELCHAIR	Paimers
22 JUL	FRANCE 102-22 AUSTRALIA	WHEELCHAIR	Paimers
22 JUL	HUNGARY 6-26 CZECH REPUBLIC	MEN	Budapest
24 JUL	SCOTLAND 18-54 SPAIN	WHEELCHAIR	St-Jory
24 JUL	FRANCE 118-10 WALES	WHEELCHAIR	St-Jory
24 JUL	AUSTRALIA 26-80 ENGLAND	WHEELCHAIR	St-Jory
25 JUL	AUSTRALIA 49-40 SPAIN	WHEELCHAIR	Albi
25 JUL	ITALY 108-24 WALES	WHEELCHAIR	Albi
26 JUL	ENGLAND 78-36 AUSTRALIA	WHEELCHAIR	Toulouse
26 JUL	FRANCE 98-6 ITALY	WHEELCHAIR	Toulouse
27 JUL	SPAIN 45-66 WALES	WHEELCHAIR	St-Orens
27 JUL	AUSTRALIA 58-45 ITALY	WHEELCHAIR	St-Orens
28 JUL	FRANCE 38-34 ENGLAND	WHEELCHAIR	Perpignan
26 AUG	GERMANY 18-30 NETHERLANDS	MEN	Osnabruck
9 SEP	NETHERLANDS 28-24 SWEDEN	MEN	Rotterdam
6 OCT	GREECE 68-8 BULGARIA	MEN	Belgrade

8 OCT	ITALY 24-24 MALTA	MEN	Sydney
8 OCT	SERBIA 50-8 GREECE	MEN	Belgrade
8 OCT	SERBIA XIII 50-20 BULGARIA	MEN	Belgrade
13 OCT	FRANCE 34-12 JAMAICA	MEN	Perpignan
14 OCT	WALES DRAGONHEARTS 34-38 GERMANY	MEN	Cardiff
14 OCT	MALTA 48-16 HUNGARY	MEN	Sydney
14 OCT	LEBANON 32-16 NIUE	MEN	Sydney
21 OCT	CZECH REPUBLIC 26-30 NORWAY	MEN	Krupka
27 OCT	AUSTRALIA 18-4 ENGLAND	MEN	Melbourne
28 OCT	FIJI 58-12 UNITED STATES	MEN	Townsville
28 OCT	PAPUA NEW GUINEA 50-6 WALES	MEN	Port Moresby
29 OCT	SCOTLAND 4-50 TONGA	MEN	Cairns
29 OCT	IRELAND 36-12 ITALY	MEN	Cairns
29 OCT	FRANCE 18-29 LEBANON	MEN	Canberra
3 NOV	AUSTRALIA 52-8 FRANCE	MEN	Canberra
4 NOV	NEW ZEALAND 74-6 SCOTLAND	MEN	Christchurch
4 NOV	ENGLAND 29-10 LEBANON	MEN	Sydney
5 NOV	HUNGARY 0-72 PHILIPPINES	MEN	Maha Sarakham
5 NOV	PAPUA NEW GUINEA 14-6 IRELAND	MEN	Port Moresby
5 NOV	FIJI 72-6 WALES	MEN	Townsville
5 NOV	ITALY 46-0 UNITED STATES	MEN	Townsville
10 NOV	FIJI 38-10 ITALY	MEN	Canberra
11 NOV	SAMOA 14-14 SCOTLAND	MEN	Cairns
11 NOV	AUSTRALIA 34-0 LEBANON	MEN	Sydney
12 NOV	WALES 6-34 IRELAND	MEN	Perth
12 NOV	PAPUA NEW GUINEA 64-0 UNITED STATES	MEN	Port Moresby
12 NOV	ENGLAND 36-6 FRANCE	MEN	Perth
16 NOV	NEW ZEALAND 50-4 CANADA	WOMEN	Sydney
16 NOV	ENGLAND 36-8 PAPUA NEW GUINEA	WOMEN	Sydney
18 NOV	TONGA 24-22 LEBANON	MEN	Christchurch
19 NOV	AUSTRALIA 38-0 ENGLAND	WOMEN	Sydney
19 NOV	ENGLAND 36-6 PAPUA NEW GUINEA	MEN	Melbourne
19 NOV	PAPUA NEW GUINEA 8-22 CANADA	WOMEN	Sydney
22 NOV	ENGLAND 16-22 COOK ISLANDS	WOMEN	Sydney
22 NOV	AUSTRALIA 88-0 CANADA	WOMEN	Sydney
25 NOV	TONGA 18-20 ENGLAND	MEN	Auckland
26 NOV	NEW ZEALAND 52-4 ENGLAND	WOMEN	Sydney
26 NOV	AUSTRALIA 58-6 CANADA	WOMEN	Sydney
2 DEC	AUSTRALIA 6-0 ENGLAND	MEN	Brisbane

YOUTH INTERNATIONALS

DATE	FIXTURE	CATEGORY	VENUE
4 FEB	MALTA 16-0 PHILIPPINES	U17	Cabramatta
12 MAR	REP. IRELAND 32-36 WEST ENG. LIONHEARTS	U19	Ashbourne
14 APR	ENGLAND 28-18 FRANCE	U16	Newcastle
17 APR	ENGLAND 38-6 FRANCE	U16	Castleford
6 MAY	LEBANON 38-6 MALTA	U18	Sydney
7 MAY	NORWAY U19 12-54 SERBIA U18	-	Nannestad
3 AUG	LONDON SKOLARS 10 SCOTLAND 32	U19	London
4 AUG	WALES U16 32-18 IRELAND U17	-	Cardiff
26 AUG	SCOTLAND 80-6 NORTHERN IRELAND	U19	Glasgow
27 AUG	IRELAND U17 10-32 WALES U16	-	Ashbourne
2 SEP	WALES 18-10 ENGLAND	U16	Cardiff
16 SEP	WALES 24-42 ENGLAND COMMUNITY LIONS	U18	Caerphilly
17 SEP	CUMBRIA 32-34 SCOTLAND	U19	Barrow
7 OCT	ENGLAND COMMUNITY LIONS 36-10 SCOTLAND	U19	Leigh
8 OCT	MALTA 22-20 ITALY	U16	Sydney
9 OCT	FRANCE 18-19 ENGLAND	U18	Le Barcares
13 OCT	FRANCE 31-26 ENGLAND	U18	Perpignan
14 OCT	LEBANON 12-10 FIJI	U20	Sydney
14 OCT	LEBANON 18-4 NIUE	U18	Sydney
14 OCT	MALTA 27-0 ITALY	U16	Cabramatta

STUDENT INTERNATIONALS

DATE	FIXTURE	CATEGORY	VENUE
22 APR	SCOTLAND 12-57 HALIFAX RLFC RESERVES	MEN	Edinburgh
6 MAY	KEIGHLEY RLFC RESERVES 44-38 SCOTLAND	MEN	Keighley
7 JUL	AUSTRALIA 54-10 ENGLAND	MEN	St Mary's
7 JUL	PACIFIC ISLANDS 48-4 IRELAND	MEN	Wentworthville
7 JUL	SCOTLAND 48-16 WALES	MEN	St Mary's
9 JUL	IRELAND 22-4 WALES	MEN	Windsor
9 JUL	SCOTLAND 38-24 IRELAND	MEN	Cabramatta
14 JUL	PACIFIC ISLANDS 40-12 WALES	MEN	Cabramatta
12 JUL	ENGLAND 30-20 SCOTLAND	MEN	Cabramatta
12 JUL	AUSTRALIA 46-8 IRELAND	MEN	Cabramatta
14 JUL	SCOTLAND 12-44 PACIFIC ISLANDS	MEN	Windsor
14 JUL	AUSTRALIA 46-18 ENGLAND	MEN	Windsor
14 JUL	WALES 28-16 IRELAND	MEN	Windsor

1. Wales Students internationals:
 - a. NORTH WALES 12 WALES 40 (played in April 2017 in Wrexham)
 - b. GRIFFITH UNI 16 WALES 28 (played in June 2017 in Nathan, Queensland)



England Students score a try in their Associations Cup victory over GB Armed Forces - June



Scotland and Ireland clash in Edinburgh in the annual Student Four Nations - June

FINANCIAL REPORT

1. This report covers the year until 31 December 2017.
2. Net profit of £15,792 as compared to a Budget of £5,385
3. The Accounts this year have again been subject to Audit by Hays Macintyre. The Audit is nearing completion and Statutory Accounts will shortly be available to Members.
4. Total revenues of £265k were achieved in the year as compared to budget income of £301k. Members will recall that the Revenue and costs on the EU Project are matched to expenditure in each financial year so that there is no profit or loss effect in the accounts for the year arising from the activity. Income is released from a deferred income account each year and set against the actual expenditure in that year. In 2017 £83k was expended on the 2016-2019 project and so a similar income is recorded in the accounts. The EU Project money is received from the EU Commission in two tranches. The first 60% was received in late 2015 and the balance will be received at the Completion of the project in Spring of 2019.
5. RLIF Income was £109k in the year and is similar to the Budget of £107k. This income is based upon the invoicing of AU\$180k for the year and is obviously subject to exchange rate fluctuations dependent on the timing of the receipt of monies from Australia.
6. RFL income was £68k in the year, the same as Budget and £27k higher than the prior year.
7. Income from Members fees at close to £5k is consistent with budget expectations and is derived from the Federation fees for Full and Affiliate members. The current fees are €500 for Full Members and €100 for Affiliate members and for the RLEF Accounts the income is converted at the prevailing exchange rate at the time the invoice is raised to Member Federations.
8. The EU Project income and costs were £83k in the year which is £38k lower than planned but as noted above the costs are spread over the period of the Project and careful management of the Projects expenses will help to ensure that all costs are covered by income. Costs and revenues were £10k higher than plan in 2016.
9. Grant expenditure was in line with our Budget and was similar to those from 2016.

10. Administration costs have been well managed in the year with savings made against budget on Board Meeting and Congress costs as well as media expenses.
11. RLEF has combined bank balances of £52k at the balance sheet date down from £142k at December 2016 when only the first year of EU Project costs had been expended.
12. The RFL Creditor was £14k at 31 December 2017 (2016: £286k). Once the funds owed by RLIF were recovered relating to World Cup Qualifiers the debt to the RFL was substantially reduced.
13. Reserves have increased by the surplus in the year.
14. The financial outlook for 2018 is challenging and another broadly break-even budget has been prepared. There is more competition activity in 2018 as compared to 2017 and we enter the final year of the current EU Project. As ever costs will need to be carefully managed.
15. Cash flow is expected to come under more pressure in the latter part of 2018 as the remainder of the EU Project activities are completed before the last part of funding is received from EU. It is expected that whilst the Federation will trade at break even and hopefully in surplus that some short-term support will be required from RFL. It is envisaged that this support will probably be received by RFL paying some costs on behalf of RLEF with the purchase ledger debt being repaid in spring 2019. This was discussed with RFL Finance department when the Purchase ledger balance was significantly reduced several months ago.

Nigel Hansford FCA

RLEF Accountant

RLEF LIMITED ACCOUNTS

Year to 31 December 2016

Prepared by independent auditors Haysmacintyre of 26 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4AG

Directors' Report

The Directors present their report with the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31st December 2016

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the profit or loss of the Company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the Company's financial statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Principal Activity

The principal activity of the company was as the Governing Body for Rugby League within Europe.

Directors

The directors shown below have held office during the whole of the period from 1st January 2016 to 31st December 2016.

G Thompson

M Watkins
P Nicholson
S Bolton

The directors shown below were appointed to the company during the period:

M Palanques (appointed 29th October 2016)
B Stolicjovic (appointed 29th October 2016)

The following resigned as directors during the year:

N Sretenovic (resigned 29th October 2016)
C Zalduendo (resigned 29th October 2016)

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are directors at the time when this Directors' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as the director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Company's auditors are unaware, and
- the director has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a director in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Haysmacintyre, will be proposed for reappointment in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

Small Companies Note

In preparing this report, the Directors report have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by Section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

The report was approved by the Board of Directors on 30 May 2017 and signed on behalf of the Board by:



G. Thompson
Director

20 Fitzroy Square London
30 May 2017

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of RLEF Limited

We have audited the financial statements of RLEF Limited for the year ended 31 December 2016, set out on pages 5 to 15. The relevant financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is the Companies Act 2006 and the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' Section 1A (Small Entities).

This report is made solely to the Company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and Auditors

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement on page 1, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

A description of the scope of an audit of financial statements is provided on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditscopeukprivate.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Company's affairs as at 31 December 2016 and of its profit for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, the information given in the Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with those financial statements and this report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of RLEF Limited (continued)

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Directors' Report.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, the information given in the Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with those financial statements and this report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Directors' Report.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the directors were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Directors' Report.

Jeremy Beard (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of

haysmacintyre

Statutory Auditors

26 Red Lion Square London

WC1R 4AG

30 May 2017

Statement of Comprehensive Income
Year ended 31st December 2016

	Note	2016 £	2015 £
Turnover		397,539	527,219
Cost of Sales		<u>(399,176)</u>	<u>(526,636)</u>
Operating (loss)/Profit		<u>(1,637)</u>	<u>583</u>
Tax on profit on ordinary activities		<u>5,113</u>	<u>-</u>
Profit for the financial year		<u>3,476</u>	<u>583</u>

There was no other comprehensive income for 2016 (2015:£NIL).

The notes on pages 10 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

Registered number: 7508065
Statement of Financial Position
As at 31 December 2016

	Note	2016 £	2015 £
Current assets			
Debtors	4	287,479	229,919
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>141,831</u>	<u>268,129</u>
		429,310	498,048
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	5	<u>404,320</u>	<u>476,534</u>
Net current assets		<u>24,990</u>	<u>21,514</u>

Net assets	<u>24,990</u>	<u>21,514</u>
Reserves		
Profit and loss account	<u>24,990</u>	<u>21,514</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to Companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 Section 1A – small entities.

These financial statements were approved by the Board of directors on 30 May 2017 and were signed in its behalf by:



G. Thompson

Director

The notes on pages 10 to 12 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

1. General information

The principal activity of the company was as the Governing Body for Rugby League within Europe.

The company is a private company limited (registered number: 7508065) limited by guarantee and was incorporated in England and Wales. The company's registered office is 20 Fitzroy Square, London, England, W1T 6EJ.

2. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with Section 1A of Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland and the Companies Act 2006.

The following principal accounting policies have been applied:

Turnover

Income comprises the value of sales of goods and services in the normal course of business. Income is recognised in the period to which it relates, and costs of sales are recorded in the period in which the related income is recognised. Government grants are taken to income in order to match them against the related costs. Where amounts have not yet been spent grant monies received are shown as deferred income.

Debtors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in no more than three months from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

Creditors

Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price.

Financial instruments

The Company only enters into basic financial instruments that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other debtors and creditors.

Defined contribution pension plan

The Company operates a defined contribution plan for its employees. A defined contribution plan is a pension plan under which the Company pays fixed contributions into a separate entity. Once the contributions have been paid the Company has no further payment obligations.

The contributions are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income when they fall due. Amounts not paid are shown in accruals as a liability in the Balance Sheet. The assets of the plan are held separately from the Company in independently administered funds.

2. Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was 1 (2015 - 1)

During the year, no director received any emoluments (2015 - £nil)

3. Debtors

	2016	2015
	£	£
Other debtors	4,475	15,398
Prepayments	3,986	-
Accrued Income	279,018	214,521
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	287,479	229,919
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

4. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2016	2015
	£	£
Trade Creditors	285,973	245,765
Taxation and Social Security	2,074	4,991
Accruals and Deferred Income	116,273	225,778
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	404,320	476,534
	<hr/>	<hr/>

5. Reserves

Profit and loss account

Includes all current and prior period retained profits and losses

6. Company Status.

The company is a private company limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation. The number of these members at 31 December 2016 was 10 (2015: 11).

7. Controlling Party

The Directors consider that there is no ultimate controlling party

8. First time adoption of FRS 102

The policies applied under the entity's previous accounting framework are not materially different to FRS 102 Section 1A and have not impacted on equity or surplus or deficit.

THE BOARD

MAURICE WATKINS CBE

Maurice became RLEF chairman in August 2012 when serving as the interim chair of the RFL. He is Senior Partner in a prominent law firm and a former Director of Manchester United. Maurice is on the board of the Lancashire County Cricket Club and is currently chair of British Swimming and Barnsley Football Club. He is President of the British Association for Sport and Law.

CHAIRMAN



MARC PALANQUES

Elected president of FFRXIII in July 2016, Marc joined the RLEF in September. A former captain of France and ranked in the world's top 10 players in 1986, he won four cups and three championships. Outside his rugby career, Marc founded sports equipment company Kingsport, was responsible for trade negotiations with INTERSPORT France, and sold his company in 2014 allowing him to return to a leadership role in rugby league.

VICE CHAIRMAN



SALLY BOLTON OBE

Currently the Head of Corporate Affairs at the All England Lawn Tennis Club, Sally is the former Managing Director of World Athletics Championships 2017 and led the team that delivered the Rugby League World Cup 2013. Sally has extensive experience in event management and rugby league, holding several roles within the RFL, as well as being the former Chief Executive at Wigan RLFC.

INDEPENDENT DIRECTOR



INDEPENDENT DIRECTOR

PAUL NICHOLSON

Paul Nicholson is a sports media specialist who has worked with a number of governing bodies and federations. He is currently the CEO of Insideworldfootball magazine. He worked with London Broncos in the early days of their set up and coached a development group in the community. Paul is a former international water polo player for Wales.



BLAGOJE STOILJKOVIC

Currently the Serbian Rugby League Federation Vice President. He has been involved in rugby league in Serbia from 2003, and has served as Acting President, Board Member, and Director of the Technical Staff. A career engineer, Blagoje has been responsible for project managing several SRLF initiatives, including the 2016 tour to Australia, many schools projects, and has represented Serbia internationally since 2004.

MEMBER-ELECTED DIRECTOR



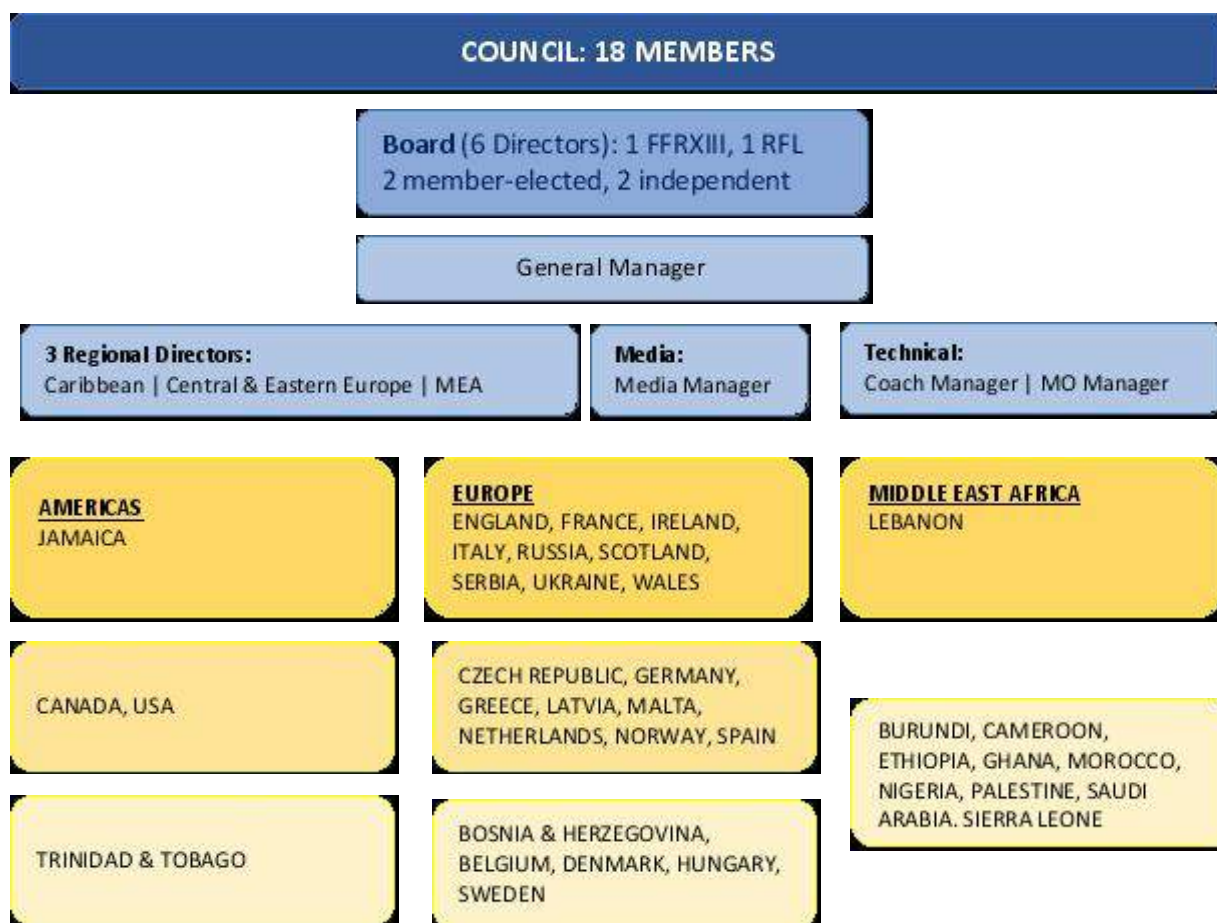
GRAEME THOMPSON

The RFL's former Performance Director and England team manager during the 2008 Rugby League World Cup, Graeme, a former Scotland rugby league international, was elected to the RLEF Board in 2010. He is currently the Performance Director for GB Curling, having also served as the performance director for GB water polo. Graeme is the second RLEF representative on the RLIF Board.

MEMBER-ELECTED DIRECTOR



APPENDIX 1: RLEF ORGANISATION



KEY:



APPENDIX 2: DOMESTIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

MEMBER	LEVEL	Sr. LEAGUE [teams] CHAMPIONS	2 ND DIVISION* [teams]	Jr. LEAGUE [teams]
ENGLAND 2017	FULL	First Utility Super League [12] Wigan	Kingstone Press Ch. [12] Kingstone P. Lg. 1 [14] Multiple amateur comps	Multiple
FRANCE 2016-17	FULL	Elite 1 [10] XIII Limouxin	Elite 2 [10]	Multiple
IRELAND 2016	FULL	Rep. of Ireland League [6] Ulster League [3] Galway Tribesmen	-	-
ITALY 2017	FULL	Serie A [6] XIII del Ducato	-	U18 [3]
JAMAICA 2015-16	FULL	Championship [7] Duhaney Park Red Sharks	Division 2 [4] Intercol [6]	U19 [8] U16 [10] U14 [5]
LEBANON 2015-16	FULL	Championship [5] Immortals RLFC	College Division 1 [4] College Division 2 [5]	U18 [6]
RUSSIA 2017	FULL	Centre Conference [4] South Conference [4] North East Conference [2] Crimea [4] CSKA Moscow	-	-
SCOTLAND 2016	FULL	Deuchars IPA League [4] Aberdeen Warriors	-	-
SERBIA 2016	FULL	First Division [6] Dorcol RLFC	Second Division [5]	U18 [3] U16 [2]
UKRAINE 2016	FULL	Championship [8] Legion XIII	-	U16 [6]
WALES 2016	FULL	South Wales Conference [5] Bridgend Blue Bulls Various RFL leagues [6]	North Wales Conf. [3] BUCS Student comps [7]	Multiple
CANADA 2016	AFFILIATE	British Columbia [5] Alberta [2] Ontario [2]	-	-
CZECH R. 2017	AFFILIATE	First Division [4] Slavia Hradec Kralove	Second Division [5]	U18 [4]

MALTA 2017	AFFILIATE	-	-	-
NORWAY 2015	AFFILIATE	Premiership [6] Trondheim-Lillestrøm	-	-
SPAIN 2016-17	AFFILIATE	Serie A [4] Custodians Madrid	Serie B [4]	-
USA 2015	AFFILIATE	USARL Championship [14] Philadelphia Fight	-	-