



**Prime Ministers Scholarship Report  
Hockey New Zealand Youth Development Structure**

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## 1. Executive Summary

This paper seeks to provide a blueprint for the development of high performance strategies within Hockey NZ's current National League Franchises. The recommendations are:

1. Initial development structures put in place in the players region with the development program linked directly to Hockey New Zealand's development program.
2. Identification, training and monitoring process encompasses:
  - Broad regional identification
  - Regular access to quality training
  - Identifying players for further opportunities
  - Monitoring and guidance of the top players
3. The best coaching - Communication flows between the regional coaching directors and Hockey New Zealand providing coaching direction, latest trends and access to top coaches and strategies.
4. The required increase in support as athletes progress through each stage to ensure adequate resources to maintain development. This process is initiated regionally with Hockey New Zealand then able to provide more opportunities for talented players and coaches through their national framework.
5. Coaching and association structures that will always support and nurture the athlete and ensure the coaching process is implemented in a consistent manner to all athletes.
6. Alignment between youth hockey, academy trainings, provincial teams, regional teams, national age group teams and BlackSticks teams.
7. The player pathway of development and achievement is clearly defined.
8. Consistent structure to provide each athlete an even playing field regardless of location.
9. Competitions that start locally then move regionally and finally national competitions, which all support player development.

## 2. Background

In October 2006 I received a Prime Ministers scholarship after applying through Hockey New Zealand. The aim of the scholarship was to research 3 successful sporting academies and look to suggest change to Hockey New Zealand's player development model.

It is an area that I am very passionate about and in which I feel we under perform. Our lack of nurturing for key youth players leaves them exposed when entering our national age group and senior squads. This also means players are entering international competition with skill and tactical deficiencies.

Over the past 6 months I have visited 3 successful sporting organisations. Canterbury Rugby, Queensland Hockey and German Hockey. Spending time meeting the key people who turn talented youth players into elite performers.

The three organisations chosen are extremely successful at producing world-class athletes. They achieve this through excellent development structures not only at the top level with elite athletes but also with the environment youth players are brought up in. Talented players are constantly challenged and have access to leading coaches or their concepts.

Success is a cornerstone throughout the organisations and this is highlighted by the performance of their respective teams and the success of individuals developed in the region. Queensland age group teams achieving in state open, under 21 and age group tournaments, German age group programmes success mirrors the national teams and Canterbury's ability to win titles and produce the world best players.

From the information gathered and my own experience as a player, coach and supporter I have designed a structure for Hockey New Zealand to consider. This model may not be the final answer to the youth development but will open dialogue to ensure that the best tools and resources are in place to develop junior athletes to their full potential.

The results focus heavily on athlete and coach development; although officials are vital to our game I have not included a template for developing officials.

**When reading through the findings the main theme, which will stand above all others, is the shift in focus from the national body developing the players to the regional associations taking responsibility for the bulk of the player growth.**

## **Travel Overview**

### 1. Queensland Hockey 9 - 12 April 2007

- Garry West-Bail  
CEO Hockey Queensland
- Barry Vohland  
Coach Manager Hockey Queensland

### 2. German Hockey 23-28 April 2007

- Torsten Althoff  
Regional Coaching Director  
National Under 18 Head Coach  
Assistant Coach German Men 2005-2006  
Coaching coordinator Krefield Hockey Club
- Bernhard Peters  
Sporting Director Hoffenheim Football Club  
Head Coach German Men 2000-2007

### 3. Canterbury Rugby 16 - 18 May 2007

- Matt Sexton  
Academy Manager
- Rob Penny  
Head Coach Canterbury NPC Team
- Angus Gardiner  
Professional Players Manager
- Luke Thornley  
Academy Head Physical Trainer

### **3. Canterbury Rugby**

Canterbury Rugby is the leading province in New Zealand Rugby, consistently winning the National Provincial Championship (NPC) and the international Super 14 competition as part of the Crusaders franchise.

Rugby is primarily club based with children joining a rugby club when beginning in the sport and remaining with the club structure until reaching secondary school. Secondary school rugby caters for players aged 13-17 years but the club structure returns post secondary school as the vehicle for adult players.

Canterbury Rugby is a significant professional organisation receiving revenue from various sources including sponsors, television rights and match gates. This enables Canterbury Rugby to retain key personnel to both grow the sport and ensure top performance such as professional coaches, strength and conditioning trainers, medical providers, Athlete Career Education (ACE) staff and rugby development officers. Canterbury rugby also possesses its own facilities in Christchurch featuring a gym, training grounds, offices, computer analysis suites and meeting rooms.

Within the professional rugby environment players are provided significant support and Canterbury Rugby, through their regional development officers, are able to effectively convey information from the professional to the amateur environment. The province has 4 full time regional development officers whose primary focus is to recruit players, improve coaches, develop identified athletes and create more effective training environments within schools and clubs.

Each club within the Canterbury catchment has the first contact with players and for the majority of clubs the coaches are volunteers. Support provided by Canterbury Rugby regional development officers ensures players are well served with the latest coaching techniques and capabilities being supplied. Allocation of each development officer to different areas of the amateur structure supports the various stages of development. These being youth, secondary, metro and country,

Representative competition is the first step for promising players to have training and competition against each other. Teams are selected at U14, U16, secondary schools, U21, development and senior grades. Each of these teams has a full coaching staff and a development officer overseeing the representative program.

A full time academy manager monitors the flow of information into the Canterbury rugby structure and oversees the performance of those structures. This ensures all talent identification, athlete development, high performance programs, development of coaches and regional programs align with and support Canterbury Rugby's overall strategic and operational plans.

The Crusaders Super 14 and Canterbury NPC team are the premier teams in the organisation. The regional development and provincial age-group teams operate to provide Canterbury Rugby with an ongoing supply of players of sufficient quality.

Canterbury Rugby Football Union (CRFU) Academy has since 1999 has produced:

- 16 All Blacks.
- 16 Super 14 players in the current squad.
- 18 Canterbury NPC players in the current squad.
- In the last 2 years: 17 NZ U19 Players and 17 NZ Colts Players

### **Canterbury Rugby Academy Overview**

This form of development has been divided into five categories of athlete or coach (see below). As a movement from each level to the next is achieved the support and focus on each athlete becomes more toward the step of performing on the international stage.

1. Professional: All Blacks / Super 14
2. Elite Academy: NZRFU category 1 players and NPC players
3. Academy: Canterbury gold nugget players
4. Pre Academy: Talented post secondary school players
5. Schools Program: Crusaders schools program

Each stage of development allows a broad squad to be selected and then trimmed to the athletes / coaches who will represent the province or national team concerned.

1. Professional: All Black and Super 14.

Work in a fully professional environment. Supported by corporate, coaching and management teams with strength and condition trainers, medical, sports science and ACE staff.

Key focus is performance in the Super 14 competition and supporting the New Zealand Rugby Football Union (NZRFU) national teams.

Players receive individual and specialised support in the following areas:

#### On field

- Skills
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

Off field

- Strength and conditioning
- Analysis
- Sports nutrition
- Psychology
- Medical support
- Athlete career education
- Salaried employee
- Tertiary scholarships

2. Elite Academy Athletes: Current NPC players, New Zealand U21, New Zealand U19, NZRFU category 1 players and those in their final year of the Canterbury rugby academy.

Focus is on the final development of players into fully professional rugby players.

Players receive support and training in the following areas

On field

- Skills training
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

Off field

- Strength and conditioning
- Analysis
- Sports nutrition
- Psychology
- Medical
- Athlete career education
- Part time salaried employee
- Tertiary scholarships

3. Academy Athletes: Players identified through the Canterbury development system and players recruited to the region from other provinces.

Provide a three-year holistic development programme to prepare Canterbury's Leading Rugby Talent to play Super 14.

Players receive support and training in the following areas

On field

- Skills training
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

Off field

- Strength and conditioning
- Analysis
- Sports nutrition seminars
- Psychology
- Athlete career education
- Medical
- Part time salaried employee
- Tertiary scholarships

4. Pre Academy Athletes: Post school players in the CRFU system (U19), New Zealand age group trialist's and elite identified talent within Canterbury Schools.

Focus is on introducing athletes to regular training sessions, skill and physical improvements

On field

- Skills training
- Tactical awareness

Off field

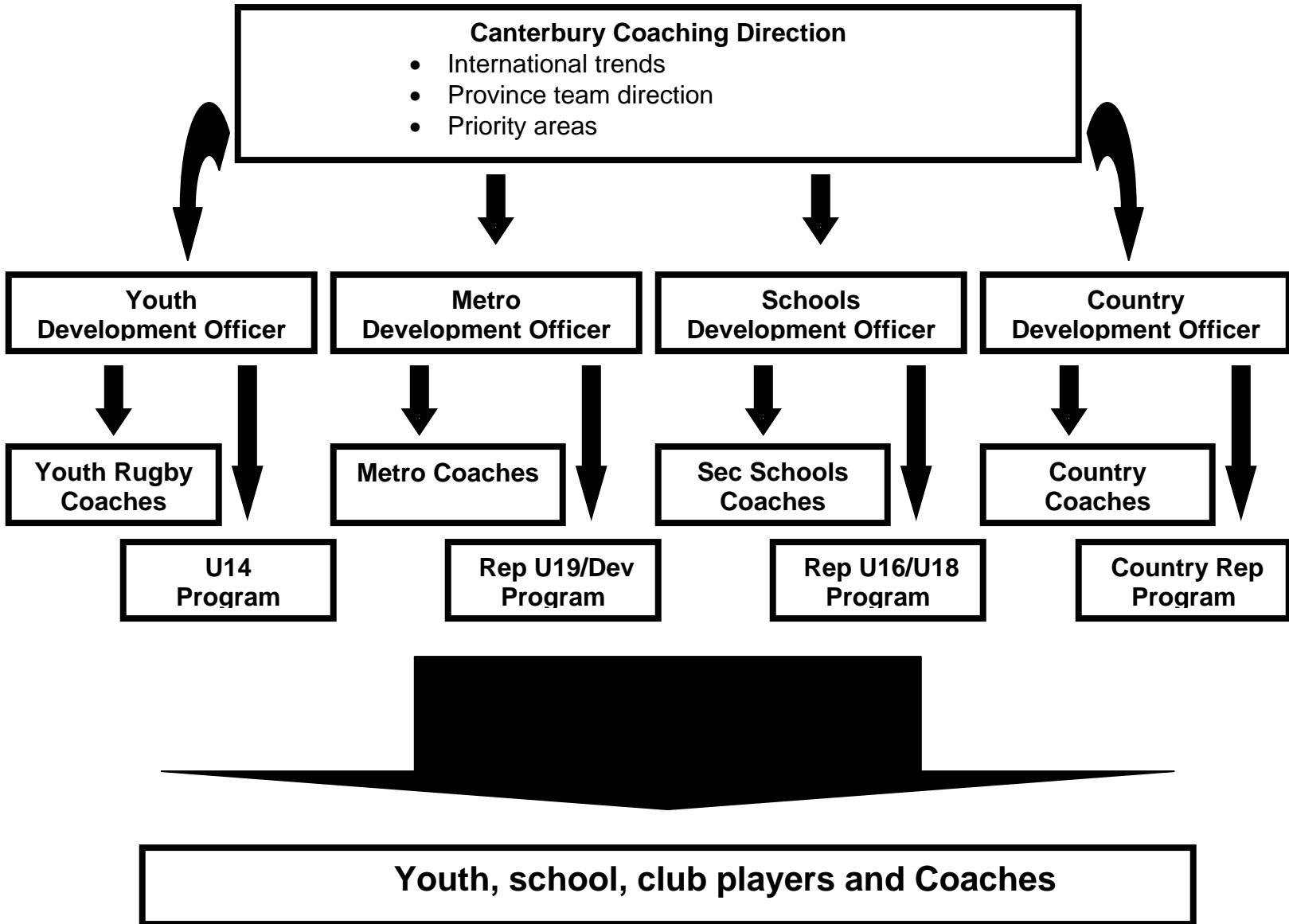
- Strength and conditioning
- Analysis
- Sports nutrition seminars
- Psychology seminars
- Athlete career education seminars
- Tertiary scholarships

5. Schools Program: Identified Crusader schools are used to administer their own academy program with the program looking to achieve the following objectives:
  - CRFU to maintain a presence and support Crusaders Schools Rugby.
  - Talent ID and tracking top players throughout the region to move to the Pre Academy or tertiary scholarship program.
  - Provide resources in schools for coaching, conditioning, nutrition and mental skills.
  - Establish access to safe and appropriate training facilities and programs

### Overview of Academy Content

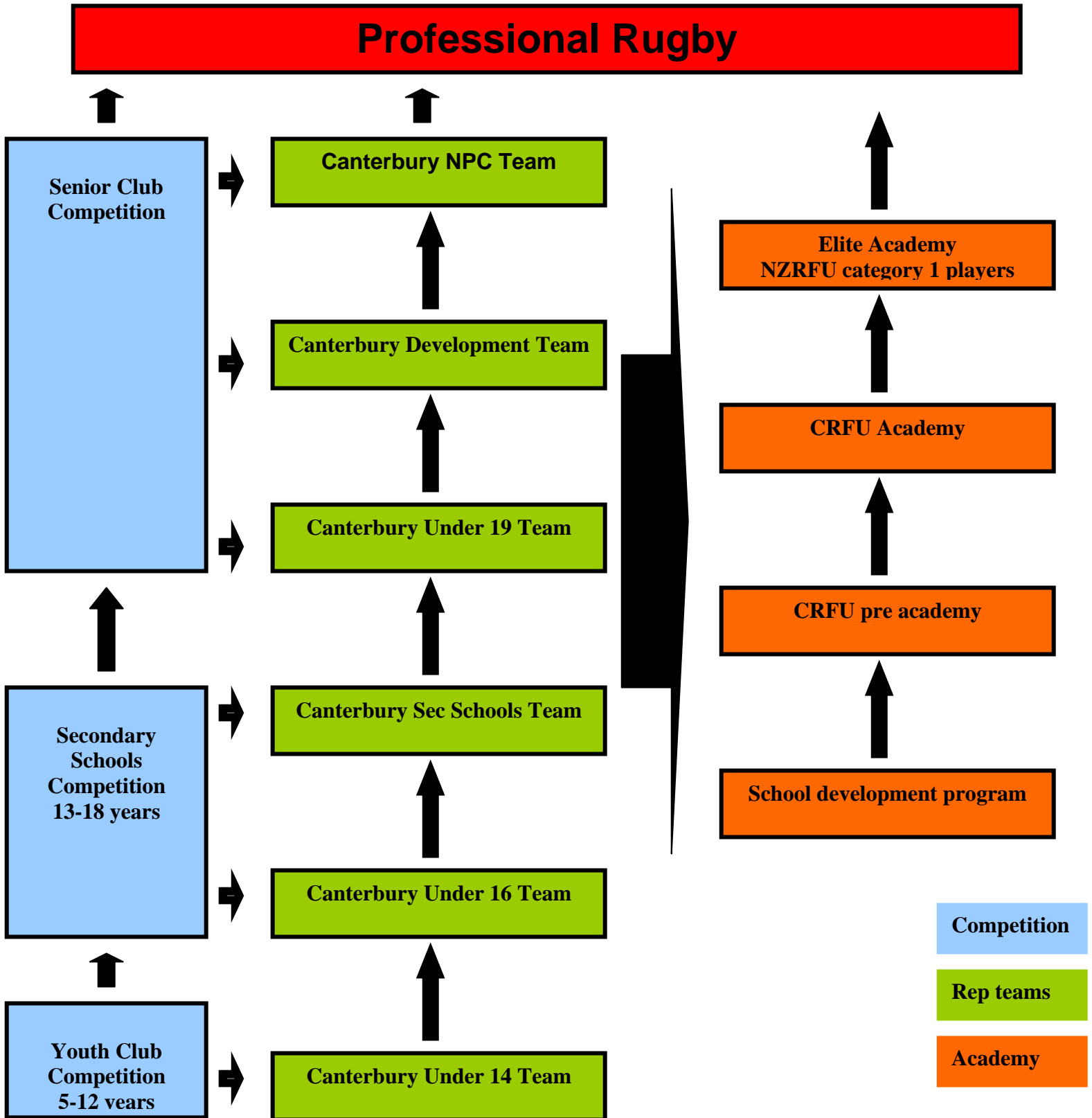
	Super 14	CRFU Academy	Pre Academy	Schools
Individual sessions	✓	✓	✓	
Small group sessions	✓	✓	✓	
Training camps	✓	✓	✓	
Structured training	✓	✓	✓	☐
Strength and conditioning	✓	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>
Sports nutrition	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>	<i>Seminar</i>
Sports psychology	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>	<i>Seminar</i>
Medical support	✓	✓		
ACE	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>	<i>Seminar</i>
Education support	✓	✓	✓	
Salary	✓	<i>Part time</i>		

### Coaching Information Flow



- Development officers responsible for facilitating the flow of information into their respective areas of development.
- Development officers responsible for overseeing an area of the Canterbury representative programs

### Player Pathway



## Summary

- Significant financial resources.
- High staff levels.
- Case management of players including workload, strengths, weaknesses and ACE management begin formally at age 13 through the secondary school structure.
- The natural flow of the academy structures means that as players progress the coaching and support structures increase accordingly to help develop the finished player product.
- Provides clear player pathways.
- Centralised functional training facilities.
- Comprehensive talent identification, recruitment and retention structures.
- There is a direct communication channel from the professional coaches to regional coaches and therefore regional players.
- Youth players are nurtured through the school system with Canterbury Rugby directly supporting the schools.

#### **4. Queensland Hockey**

Queensland has 24 affiliated local associations spread throughout the State to facilitate 18,000 players competing in regional competitions with a further 18,000 competing in indoor, social, school and summer hockey.

Hockey has direct funding from the Queensland government and indirect financial, scientific, social and medical support via the Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS). The primary focus of the QAS is to produce world-class athletes through the regional associations.

Hockey Queensland has 14 employed regional coaches/development officers promoting the game, mentoring teachers and coaches, supporting local and representative teams and training elite local players. These coaches are the frontline co-ordinators for the QAS and Hockey Queensland regional athlete development programs.

A full time coach manager monitors both the QAS and the coaching and development program. This ensures all talent ID, coach development, athlete development, high performance programs and regional programs meet Queensland Hockey's requirements and ensure achievement of the key performance indicators and subsequently Queensland Hockey's objectives.

Each sub association of Hockey Queensland has participating leagues from novice (junior) through to adult senior club players. All relying on school and club structures to provide support to the majority of players.

Regional representative competition is the first step in promising players training and competing against each other at U14, U16, U18 and open grade levels. Regional associations are responsible for preparing the players and teams for each grade at the annual Queensland State association tournament.

State representative teams are selected at U14, U16 and U18 following the association tournament. The teams are prepared initially at the athletes home regional association, centrally at State team camps and also by assembling prior to the departure date for national tournament.

State U21 and Australian Hockey League (AHL) squads are the principal teams in each State. Primarily athletes and programs are centralised in Brisbane, although players who are settled outside Brisbane are regionally trained via the QAS programs.

## **Hockey Queensland Regional Training Program Overview**

The Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS) Regional Training Program (RTP) started in 1998 as a commitment to regionally based elite hockey players, coaches and officials. The RTP program aims to produce a high performance hockey environment in regional Queensland. This is achieved by providing the necessary support networks to athletes and coaches through the QAS.

QAS employ leading sports scientists and by utilising QAS facilities are able to train each athlete in the skills, attitudes and processes that are needed to compete at international level.

Hockey Queensland through the employed regional coaches case manage each of the identified QAS regional athletes on a day-to-day basis under the direction of the Hockey Queensland Manager of Coaching.

This form of development has been divided into three categories of athlete or coach. Each level that is obtained generates resources that are continually focussed on and ensuring quality performance at international level.

1. High Performing - Queensland AHL squad members and Australian age group squad members.
  2. Potential Athletes - Identified potential Queensland AHL athlete.
  3. Developing Athletes - Identified age group players.
- 
1. High Performing Athletes: Current AHL and junior Australian squad members are all offered a QAS RTP scholarship.

The aim is to continue their development toward being an elite player and representing Australia from within the region.

Players receive individual and specialised support in the following areas

### On field

- Skills
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

### Off field

- Strength and conditioning
- Sports nutrition
- Psychology
- Medical support
- Athlete career education

2. Potential Athletes: Any potential Queensland AHL athlete as identified by the QAS head coach may receive a QAS RTP scholarship.

The aim is to continue their development toward becoming an AHL player and ultimately continuing the recognised path to become an international player from within the region.

Players receive support and training in the following areas

On field

- Skills training
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

Off field

- Strength and conditioning programs
- Sports nutrition
- Psychology
- Medical
- Athlete career education

3. Developing Athletes: Hockey Queensland RTP underpinning program will feature players identified via the under 13, under 15 and under 18 regional representative tournaments and the Queensland state teams.

Players are developed in a variety of means including small groups, individual sessions and camp trainings that are managed primarily by the regional coach under the guidance of Hockey Queensland's Manager of Coaching.

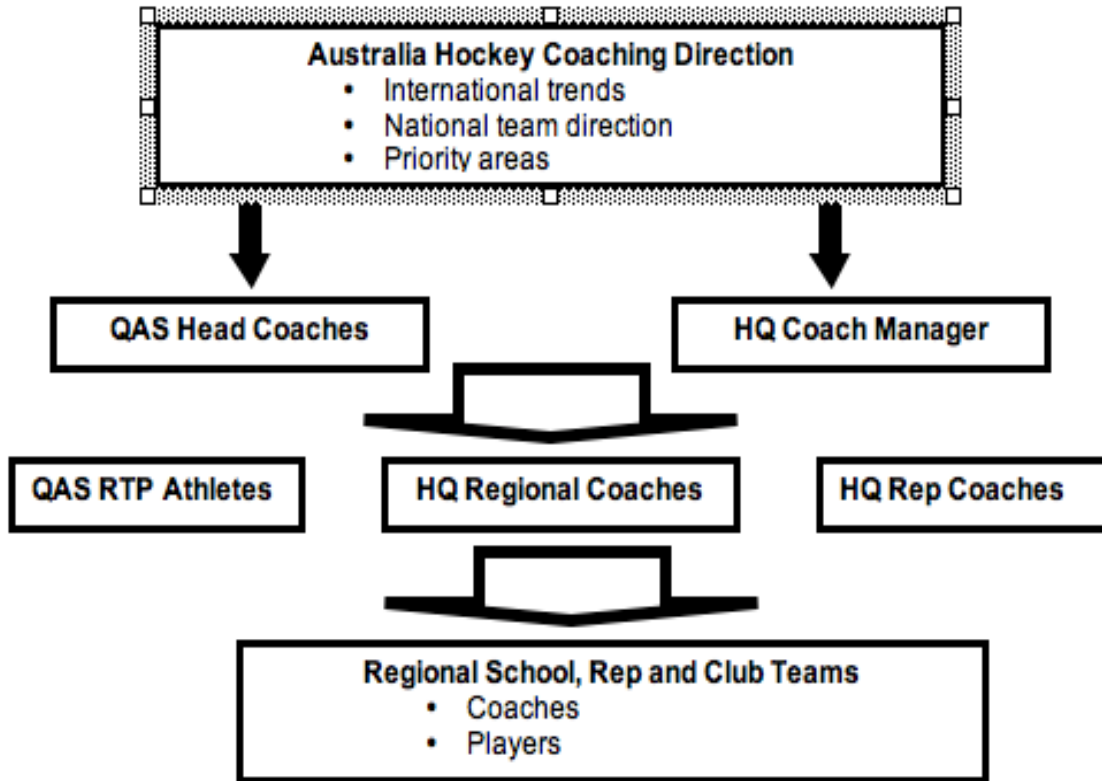
<b>Academy Content</b>	<b>Aust. Squads</b>	<b>QAS</b>	<b>RTP</b>
Individual sessions	✓	✓	✓
Small group sessions	✓	✓	✓
Training camps	✓	✓	✓
Structured training	✓	✓	✓
Strength and conditioning	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>
Sports nutrition	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>
Sports psychology	✓	✓	
Medical support	✓	✓	
ACE	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>
Education support	✓	✓	
Financial support	✓		

**Aust. squads:** Australian national and development squads.

**QAS:** Queensland AHL squads identified talented athletes and Australian junior representatives.

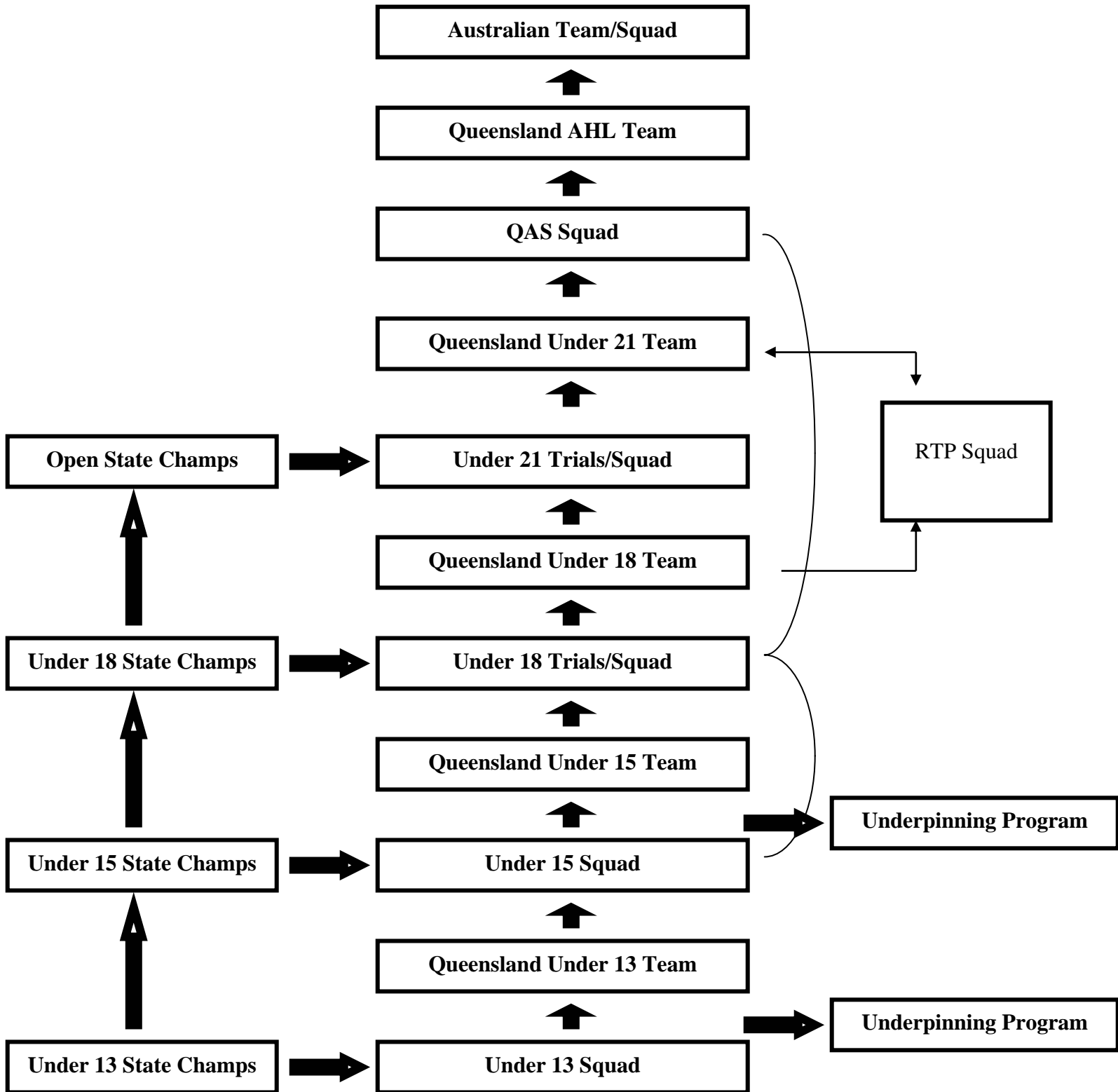
**RTP:** Identified under 13, under 15, under 18 and under 21 athletes.

## Hockey Queensland Academy Information Flow



- Annual Hockey Australia meeting provides the national coaches to influence the coaching direction for the regional academies.
- Through a basic communication flow the information can be distributed firstly to the head coaches of the Queensland academy, then to regional coaches and players.
- Achieves a straight line of communication from National coaching direction to regional club coaches.

### Hockey Queensland Player Pathway



## Summary

- Talent identification begins at an early age meaning players can be part of the Queensland Hockey Academy at age 12.
- Players are individually managed regarding workload, strengths, weaknesses and Athlete Career Education management begins, potentially at age 12 if appropriate, through the regional coaches.
- Hockey Queensland have the ability to monitor training schedules and elements of control over the path of the player and the capacity to manage the player burden during competition and training.
- The structure of Queensland Hockey means that as the athlete, coach or administrator progresses the resources available are appropriate.
- Clear player pathways exist.
- There is a direct communication channel from the national coaches to regional players and coaches.
- There is significant government support for emerging and high performing athletes in the Queensland region.
- Players are encouraged and supported anywhere in the region of Queensland they live, despite the under 21 and AHL programs being primarily centralised in Brisbane, regional athletes are supported in the elite squads.
- Through the existence of established structures, and paid employees managing these, the Queensland development program is robust.
- Not all areas of Queensland are serviced by the QAS, which is a potential shortfall.
- Hockey Queensland regional coaches are only in 14 of the 24 affiliated associations of Queensland, which leaves a significant number unsupported in this area.
- Geographic size of Queensland causes problems for development of junior age group representative teams.

## 5. **German Hockey Development Structure Overview**

German hockey has 14 regional associations countrywide with 80,000 players competing in both indoor and outdoor competitions. Hockey is club based so children join a club at a young age (approximately 5-6 years) and remain with the club structure during all of their hockey participation.

At national level hockey is funded by central government and at regional level the applicable regional government allocates funding. Indirect financial, scientific, social and medical funding is provided through the German Olympic centres. These are distributed through Germany to support current and emerging Olympic athletes.

Each regional association employs either a part time or full time coaching director. Their focus is to develop identified athletes in their area by direct coaching to the athlete and teaching the coaches of the region the latest trends in both international and German hockey.

To ensure German Hockey achieves it's established goals a full time performance director monitors the flow of information to the regions and ensures the structures are in place to develop identified athletes. By managing the identification, development and performance of athletes and coaches through these structures the performance director maintains the tools required for constant achievement.

Each club in Germany has the first contact with players and for the majority of established clubs they have a paid coaching co-ordinator. Primarily the coordinator will look after the content and coaching of the youth players and coaches in the club therefore maintaining an overview of the coaching of each team within the club and monitoring this.

Initially the youth players will compete in a regional club competition either between the clubs within their regional association or between the clubs over two regional associations. National club championships begin after the regional champions are found and begin at U14, U16 and U18 level. This championship is at the end of the season and is a knockout competition.

Regional (provincial) representative competition is the first step in promising players training and competing against each other. Teams are selected at U14, U16 and U18 grades. The regional association, via the coaching director, prepare the players and team for the national tournament held annually. From the regional tournament the first national age group players are identified.

National age-group teams are selected at U16, U16, U18 and U21 level. These squads are named after the national regional tournament. The athlete's initially prepare in their home province, then centrally at team camps and also through

international competition. Each national team has a coaching, medical, management and physical staff that prepares an annual plan to ensure athlete development is continued toward full international competition.

The German national squad is the premier team therefore all regional development and national age-group squads are managed and coached in a direction that ultimately seeks to enhance the national team.

### **German Hockey Academy**

German Hockey through, the employed regional coaching directors, case manage each of the identified players within their province. These are athletes who are in the national programs, age group programs and also regional developing athletes.

This form of development has been divided into four categories of athlete. As a movement from each level to the next is achieved the support and focus on each athlete becomes more heavily biased toward successful international competition.

1. Elite Athletes: German national level
2. High Performing Athletes: National under 21 level
3. Potential High Performing Athletes: National under 16 & 18 level
4. Developing Athletes: Those that have been identified regionally

Each stage of development allows for a large selection of participants to be involved with a view to ultimately finalising representatives for the regional or national team.

1. Elite Athletes: Current German national squad members

The aim is to continue their development toward international level while still remaining involved in their region.

Players receive individual and specialised support in the following areas

#### On field

- Skills
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

#### Off field

- Strength and conditioning
- Sports nutrition
- Psychology
- Medical support
- Athlete career education
- Financial assistance

2. High Performing Athletes: Any potential German international player who is in the under 21 squad, or younger if identified with exceptional talent.

The aim is to continue their development toward becoming an international player.

Players receive support and training in the following areas

On field

- Skills training
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

Off field

- Strength and conditioning
- Sports nutrition
- Psychology
- Medical
- Athlete career education

3. Potential High Performing Athletes: German under 16 and 18 national squads.

Players receive support and training in the following areas

On field

- Skills training
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

Off field

- Basic conditioning
- Sports nutrition seminars
- Psychology seminars
- Athlete career education seminars

4. Developing Athletes: Primarily the regional coaching director develops players through small group, individual and camp trainings.

## Overview of Academy Content

	German Squad	Under 21	U18/16	Region
Individual sessions	✓	✓	✓	
Small group sessions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Training camps	✓	✓	✓	✓
Structured training	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strength and conditioning	✓	✓	✓	
Sports nutrition	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>	
Sports psychology	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>	
Medical support	✓	✓		
ACE	✓	✓	<i>Seminar</i>	
Education support	✓	✓		
Financial support	✓			

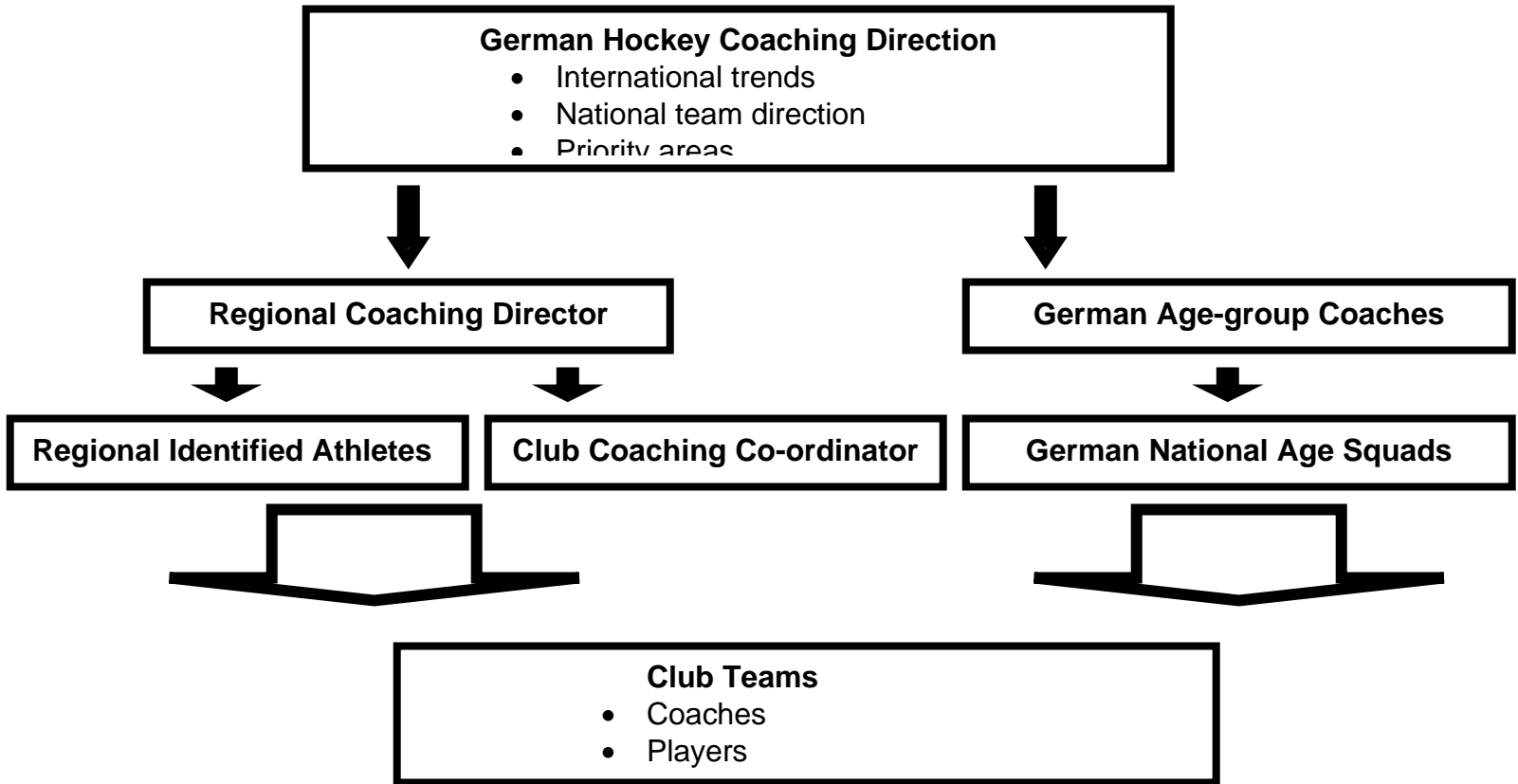
**German Squads:** German National squad

**Under 21:** German national under 21 squad

**U16/18:** German national under 16/18 squads

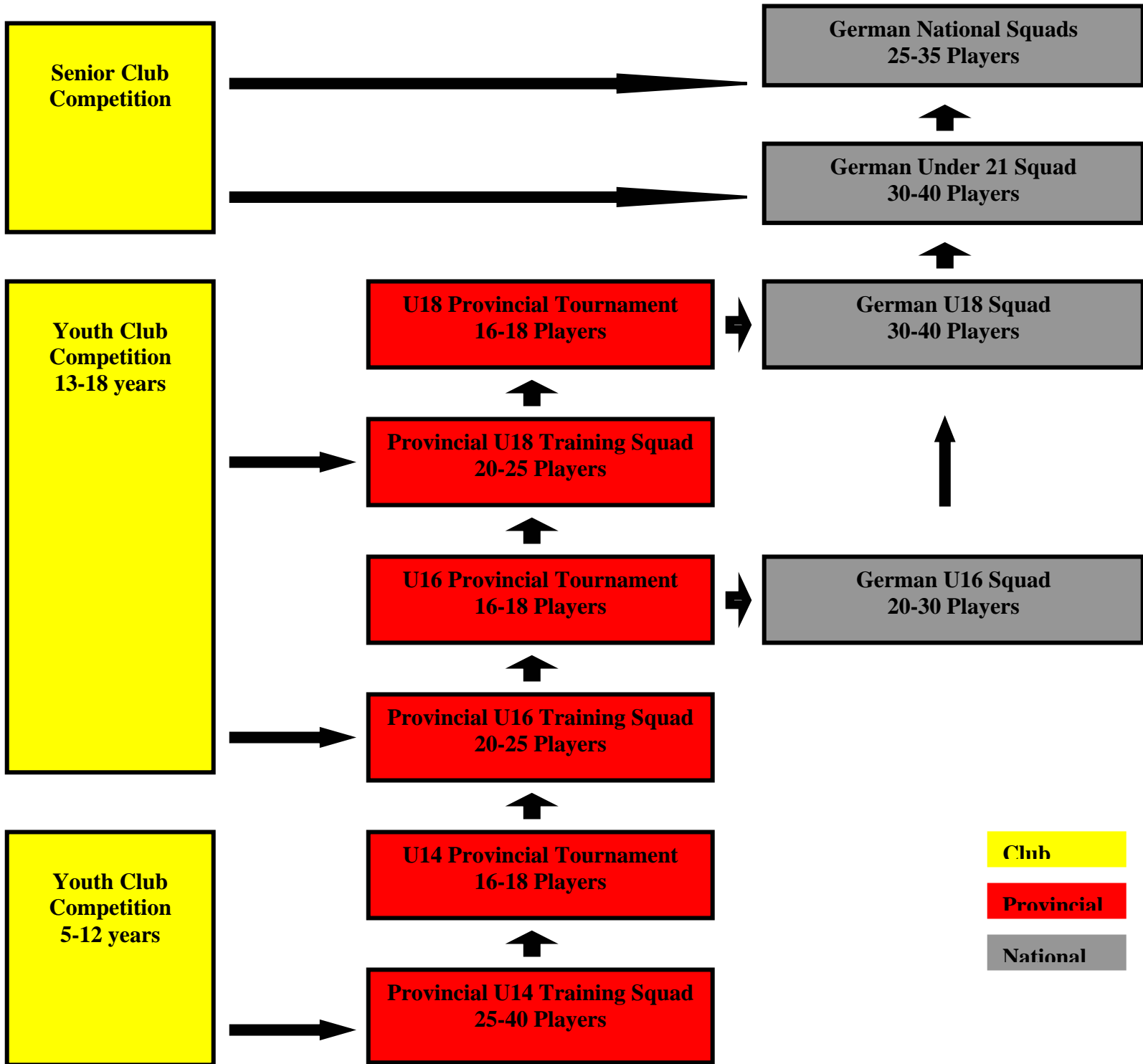
**Region:** Players identified and trained in the regional province.

## German Academy Information Flow



- Annual high performance meeting provides the national coaches a communication channel to influence the coaching direction for the regional players and coaches.
- Regional coaching directors responsible for facilitating the information flow into their respective provinces.

### Player Pathway



## Summary

- Talent identification begins at an early age. Players are part of initial training programs at age 11 to 12.
- Individual management of player training and competition load, strengths, weaknesses and ACE management begin formally at identification stage.
- Hockey German can monitor training schedules and have elements of control over the path of the player and can manage the player's workload.
- The structures in German Hockey mean that as players progress the coaching and support once again work in tandem with the progression to maintain development.
- Clear player pathways exist and are well established.
- There is a direct communication channel ensuring national resources are made available to regional coaches and players so they may work toward the common goal.
- There is significant government support for emerging and high performing athletes in Germany.
- Club facilities feature prominently in player development.
- Not all areas of Germany have Olympic training centers, which may be a potential shortfall.
- Limited financial backing for players may create pressure and impact performance.

## 6. Hockey New Zealand

New Zealand has 32 affiliated local hockey associations spread throughout the country. 43,000 players compete in regional, provincial and school competitions.

Hockey has direct funding from the New Zealand government and indirect financial, scientific, social and medical support via the New Zealand Academy of Sport (NZAS). The primary focus of the NZAS is to produce world-class athletes.

Hockey New Zealand has 15 employed regional development officers promoting the game, recruiting players, development of teachers & coaches, supporting local & representative teams and coaching local players. These development officers are the frontline co-ordinators for Hockey New Zealand

A full time manager monitors the national coaching and development program while a full time high performance manager monitors the national program support structures to ensure effectiveness.

Each association of New Zealand has participation sections from beginner through to senior club players who all rely on association, school and club structures to provide coaching support to the majority of players.

Provincial competition is the first step in promising players training and competing against one another. Teams are selected at U11, U14, U16, U18, U21 and open grades and the regional association prepare the players and team for the national tournaments and competitions held annually.

New Zealand also has a comprehensive school program where regional associations provide a competition grade for school teams. Teams also are able to compete in national school tournaments.

New Zealand selects age group national teams at U16, U21 and senior teams (the BlackSticks men and women's teams).

### Proposal

What is proposed is the establishment of Regional Training Centres that would be formed around the national league (NHL)/regional under 21 teams. **This would enable Hockey New Zealand to push the majority of athlete development into the regions and decentralise player development.**

Associations would combine into regions based around the NHL/U21 teams working at a level between Hockey New Zealand and the 32 local associations. This will enable improved communication, pooling of resources, greater competition and enhanced development initiatives. Hockey New Zealand can therefore retain the identity of the regional associations while more effectively fulfilling the development requirements of the national squads by identifying and growing a greater number of potential elite athletes.

Hockey New Zealand would actively monitor players within the proposed regional training centers as part of their overall player development model. This would provide a clear player pathway for players to be improved regionally with Hockey New Zealand guidance and support through the national age group program and the national squads.

## **SWOT evaluation of current development structure and proposed regional development program**

### **Strengths**

- Excellent player pool
- Established development positions exist in 15 regions
- Most associations have paid administration support
- Excellent turf facilities in place
- Direct access to strategies of national team and under 21 team coaches
- Comprehensive school system
- Age group tournament structures
- Established national programs
- Full time national coaches
- Blacksticks gain increased exposure
- Player mentality improved

### **Opportunities**

- More paid coaches
- Staff focusing their efforts on key areas
- Integrated development pathway
- Clear communication channels
- Planning of tournaments to aid player development
- Access to funding by coming from a different point of view/approach
- Hockey NZ influencing the regional development structure
- Implementation of structures to support regional programmes
- Hockey Associations will buy in
- Alignment of NHL, U21, U18 and provincial age group teams.
- Alignment of national, junior BlackSticks, national U18, TigerTurf and regional academies
- Stronger NHL, U21 and U18 programs and competitions
- Strength in the regions

### **Weaknesses**

- Lack of quality coaching for age group, school and club players (non elite)
- Coaches have an inability to acquire the latest international trends
- 16,17,18 year olds are overloaded with low quality hockey
- Too much low intensity competition
- Too much low intensity training
- Paid development staff covering too many areas of development and mastering none.
- Limited funding for teams and players
- Turf access for talented players is limited
- Player pathway from junior-regional-national teams is unclear
- Youth player lack of awareness and direction regarding requirements of international play

### **Threats**

- Lack of provincial support in concept
- Inability to raise finance
- Players financially paying for school, representative and academy
- Academies at every level
  - School
  - Representative
  - Regional development
- Resistance to change

## **Regional Academy Overview**

Queensland Hockey (QH), German Hockey and Canterbury Rugby (CRFU) show 5 common points as to why their development programs consistently deliver world-class performers.

1. Initial structures are in place in the players region, which support youth players
  - Schools program (CRFU)
  - Underpinning program (QH)
  - Provincial training program (German)
2. Identification, training and monitoring process
  - Broad regional identification
  - Regular access to training
  - Identifying players for further opportunities
  - Monitoring and guiding of the top players
3. The best coaching - Communication flow between top coaches and athletes
  - Latest trends
  - National direction
  - Player progress
4. Increase in support as athlete progresses through each stage
  - Regionally
  - Underage national teams
  - High performing players
5. Robust
  - Structure which lasts
  - Not reliant on individuals
  - More paid coaches

## **Hockey New Zealand Player Pathway**

Hockey New Zealand, through the establishment of regional training centres, will add an infrastructure for competition and youth training on a regional basis. This will align youth development to have the following stages from talented regional athletes to international players.

1. Elite players- National squad
2. Potential Athletes - National Under 21 and Identified youth players
3. Developing Athletes - Regional developing athletes

1. High Performing Athletes: Carded players who are either playing for New Zealand or have the potential to play for New Zealand.

The aim is to continue their development toward being world class and performing for New Zealand.

Players receive individual and specialised support in the following areas

On field

- Skills
- Tactical awareness
- International competition

Off field

- Strength and conditioning
- Sports nutrition
- Psychology
- Medical support
- Athlete career education
- Financial support
- Education support

2. Potential Athletes: Athletes who are sitting beneath the national squads. They may be part of the youth program at under 21 or under 18 levels.

The aim is to continue their development toward becoming a national squad member and become a resource to the national coach.

Players receive support and training in the following areas:

On field

- Skills training
- Tactical awareness
- Competition

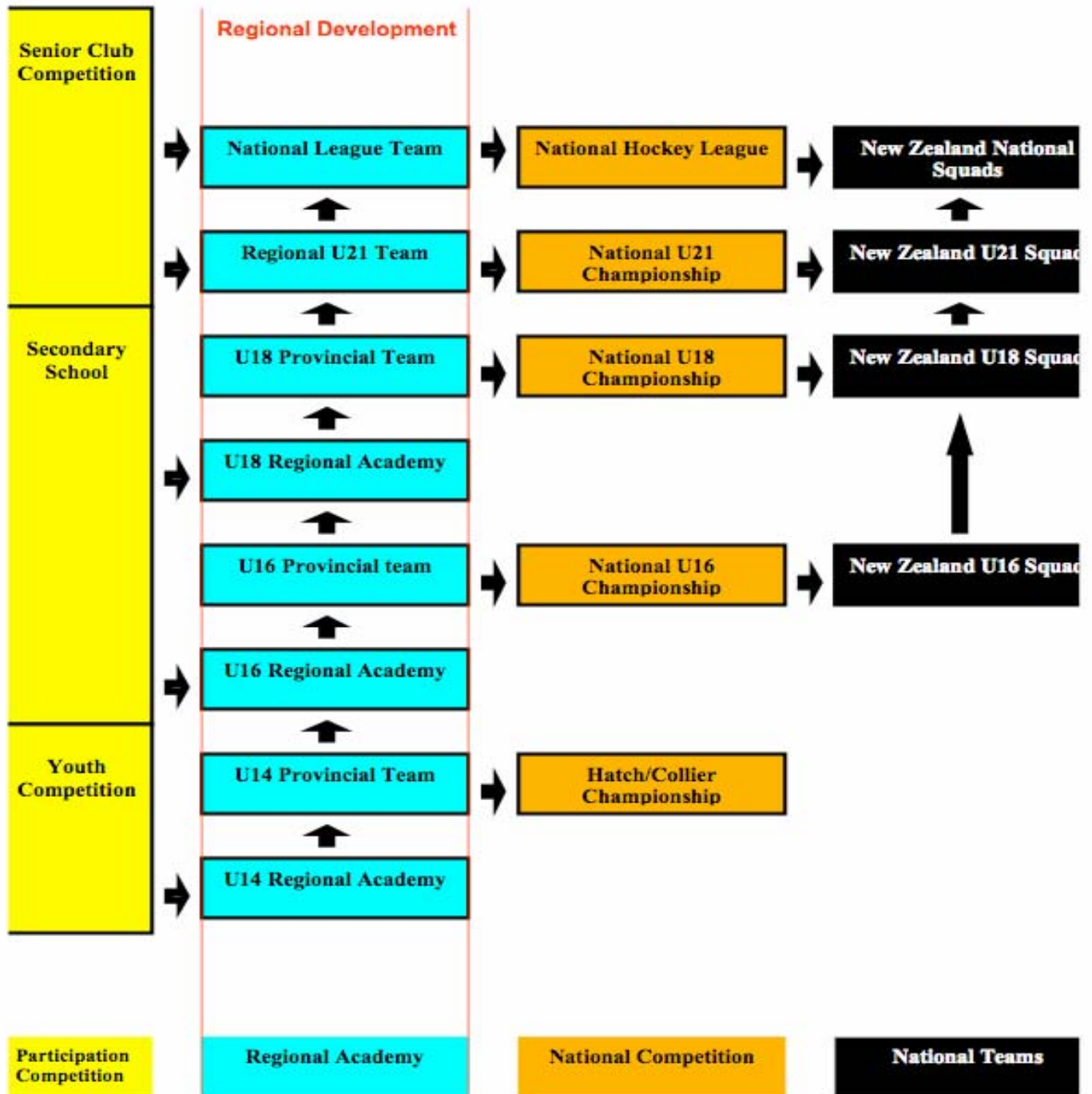
Off field

- Strength and conditioning
- Sports nutrition
- Psychology
- Medical
- Athlete career education

3. Developing Athletes: Age group players who will progress through the regional academy. They will receive ongoing hockey development, physical programming and training, life skills and mentoring.

Players to be developed through small group, individual and camp trainings.

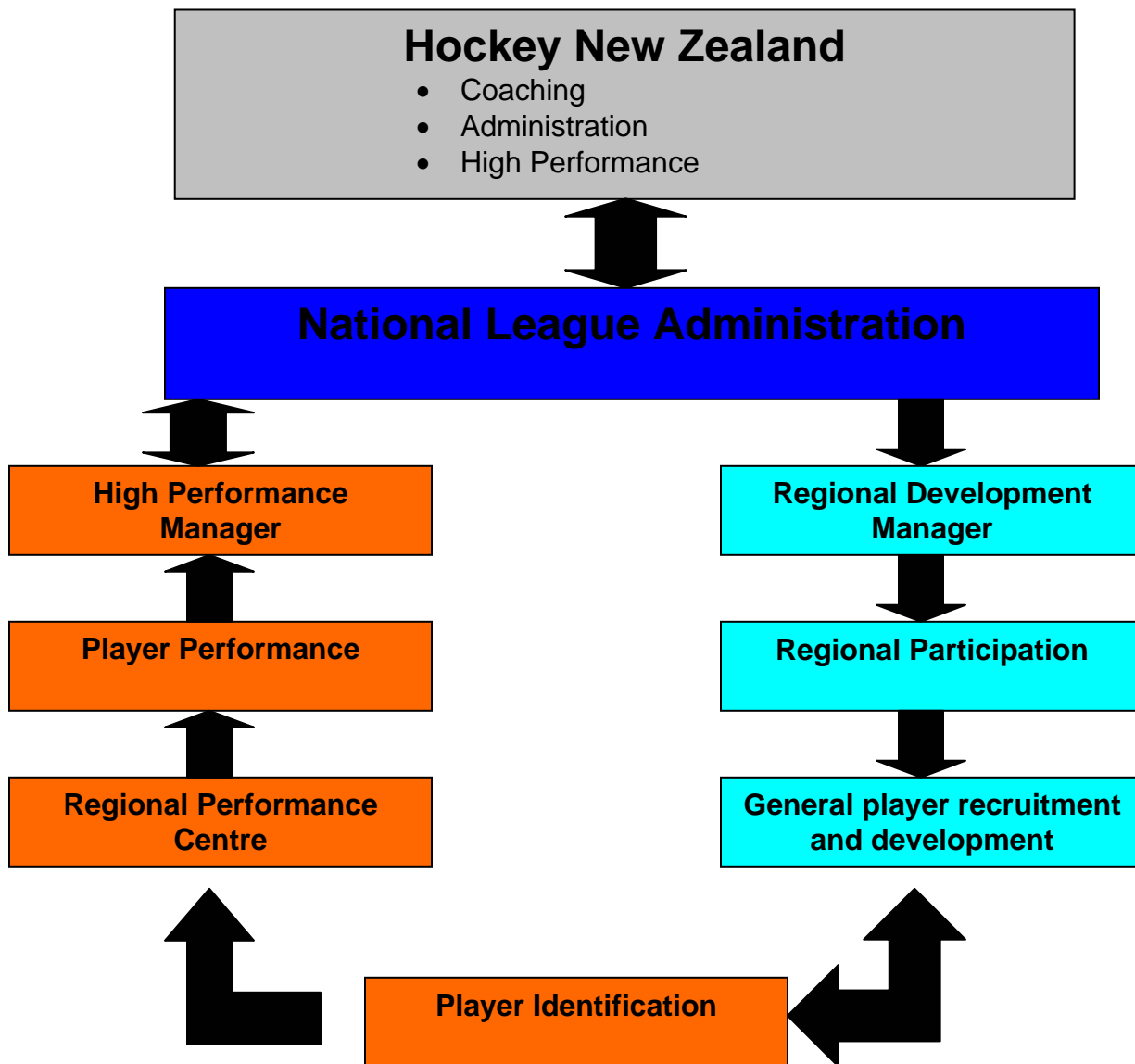
### Player Pathway Model





## **Regional Training Centers Responsibilities**

- i. Forming annual (or other agreed period) under 18, under 21 and national league programs
  - o Build adequate structures off the field
    - Trainers
    - Physio
    - Management
    - Video analysis
    - Training: content and times
  - o Improve performance
    - Attract international players
    - Build local talent
    - Build culture
    - Improve training ethic
    - Improve off field performance
- ii. Forming of the regional training academy
  - o Players and coaches with opportunities to develop
  - o Build culture in the region
  - o Break the association barriers down
  - o Build sponsorship and funding revenue
  - o Create a clear player pathway
  - o Monitor talented players
- iii. Courses for identified club, school and representative coaches. Flowing the latest trends to the key coaches including:
  - o Direction of the BlackSticks
  - o Key skills for youth players
  - o Monitoring and supporting representative programs
  - o Courses for coaches and topic presentations
  - o Helping mould the structures within schools and associations to coaching youth
  - o Attending and supporting the school and provincial tournaments
- iv. Supporting the regional associations to provide superior competition within the region.
  - o Regional provincial competition
  - o Senior regional championship
  - o Regional schools league
  - o Association competition
- v. Communication flow
  - o Communication with associations
  - o Communication with Hockey New Zealand

### Proposed Employment Model Example for a National League Franchise



#### Key

-  Participation Structure
-  Performance Structure

- Regional associations have two distinctive areas to develop
- Regional Development Managers focus on the recruitment, development and retention of players
- On the performance stream the High Performance Manager concentrates on identifying, training and monitoring talented players