



## STORM DEPARTURE OPENS THE DOOR FOR THE CENTRAL COAST BEARS

The Melbourne Storm's decision to cut ties with the Central Coast only strengthens the Central Coast Bears' case for admission to the NRL in 2013, according to the club's General Manager Greg Florimo.

Florimo, a veteran of 284 games for the red-and-blacks, said the Storm's departure highlighted the need for a dedicated Central Coast-based club.

"The Central Coast is one of the richest rugby league nurseries in the world and yet as of next year there won't be a direct pathway in place to take players from the local junior league all the way to the NRL.

"The Bears intend to fill the breach by establishing junior representative teams on the Coast, before launching the Central Coast Bears NRL side in 2013.

"We are committed to Rugby League on the Coast and committed to providing Central Coast players with a pathway to the elite level of the game."

Florimo said the Central Coast Bears would look to launch sides in the Harold Matthews (u/16) and SG Ball (u/18) competitions, to be known as the Central Coast Cubs.

"As soon as the relevant authorities agree to sign off on the plan, we'll move to establish the junior representative teams straight away.

“We want to ensure that the next crop of Central Coast juniors get the opportunities they deserve with the Central Coast Bears.

“The Storm may have departed, but we’re champing at the bit to take their place.”

For Further information call Bears General Manager Greg Florimo on 0421 695 594 or Darren Flynn on 0418 595 954.