

Real Salt Lake: Roster Efficiency & Player Value Report

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Real Salt Lake demonstrates one of the strongest roster efficiency profiles among all teams analyzed, with the highest percentage of valuable players and a strongly negative average impact. The single greatest strength is the 2024-2025 Designated Forward group, which delivers elite negative percent change values (-8.5% to -14.5%). The most urgent roster need is the 2025 Designated Midfielder (+5.65%), who is actively harmful, though RSL's overall DP efficiency remains strong relative to most MLS teams.

2. PLAYER ABSENCE IMPACT METRIC

The *Player Absence Impact* metric, derived from the Lasso regression model, quantifies an individual player's marginal contribution to team performance. The process simulates the team's Pythagorean Expectation (PE) score with the player on the roster and then recalculates it after removing that single player.

The resulting **percent change** (% change) is the key indicator:

- **Negative percent change** (e.g., -14.5%) means the team's PE score *decreases* without the player, identifying a **valuable** asset.
- **Positive percent change** means the team's PE score *increases* without the player, identifying a **replaceable** or potentially harmful contract.

This metric allows the front office to evaluate roster construction efficiency by isolating each player's true on-field impact.

3. ROSTER HEALTH OVERVIEW

- **Genuinely Impactful (Percent change < -5.0%): 20.4%** (31 of 152 player-seasons). These players significantly hurt the team if removed.
- **Not Impactful / Replaceable (Percent change > 5.0%): 9.9%** (15 of 152 player-seasons). The team performs better without these players.

Team Summary (from team_summary.csv):

- Total player-seasons analyzed: 152
- Percentage of roster that is valuable (percent change < 0): **67.8%** (highest among teams analyzed)
- Average percent change across all players: **-1.18%** (strongly net-negative, meaning on average the team is significantly better with these players)
- Average impact magnitude: 2.7%

4. DESIGNATED PLAYER ROI AUDIT

Player	Year	Salary	PE % change	Value Verdict
2021 M	2021	\$2,351,667	+1.27%	Marginal
2022 F	2022	\$2,224,292	-5.48%	Core
2023 F	2023	\$2,088,746	-4.48%	Core
2023 F	2023	\$1,749,292	-3.91%	Core
2024 F	2024	\$2,088,746	-14.47%	Elite Core
2024 M (Intl.)	2024	\$1,797,108	+2.02%	Marginal
2024 D	2024	\$1,330,000	-6.34%	Core
2024 M	2024	\$1,000,000	-1.32%	Core
2024 M (Intl.)	2024	\$658,653	+0.23%	Marginal
2025 F (Intl.)	2025	\$1,858,426	-8.50%	Elite Core
2025 M (Intl.)	2025	\$1,797,108	+5.65%	Harmful
2025 D	2025	\$1,330,000	-2.78%	Core
2025 M (Intl.)	2025	\$708,653	+1.46%	Marginal

- **Flagged (Percent change < 0 - Valuable):** 9 of 13 Designated Player seasons show negative percent change. Forward DPs are consistently elite to core; defender DP is valuable.
- **Flagged (Percent change > 0 - Harmful):** 4 players – all are midfield DPs. The 2025 M DP (+5.65%) is the most concerning. RSL should be cautious about DP investment in midfielders.

5. ALLOCATION MONEY EFFICIENCY (TAM / U22-INITIATIVE)

- **TAM Contributors (Negative Percent change):** TAM players show excellent results. Valuable TAM contributors include a 2022 F TAM (Intl.) (-4.66%), 2022 F TAM (+5.09% - *positive*), 2023 F TAM (Intl.) (-3.93%), 2023 F TAM (+5.82% - *positive*), 2024 F TAM (Intl.) (-13.23%), 2025 D TAM (+1.82% - *positive*), 2025 M TAM (-0.12%), 2025 F TAM (Intl.) (-8.00%). Overall, TAM efficiency is strong, particularly for forwards.
- **U22-Initiative Impact:** U22 slots are generally effective:
 - 2023 M U22 (Intl.): -0.76% (valuable)
 - 2024 F U22 (Intl.): -8.11% (elite valuable)
 - 2024 M U22: +0.25% (marginal)
 - 2024 M U22 (Intl.): +0.33% (marginal)
 - 2025 M U22: +0.58% (marginal)
 - 2025 F U22 (Intl.): +1.82% (marginal)

Top 3 TAM "Steals" (Most Negative Percent change):

1. **2024 F TAM (Intl.)** (\$820,000, -13.23%)
2. **2025 F TAM (Intl.)** (\$626,500, -8.00%)
3. **2022 F TAM (Intl.)** (\$820,000, -4.66%)

6. HOMEGROWN PLAYER EVALUATION

Player	Year	Salary	PE % change
2025 F Homegrown	2025	\$160,000	-8.17%
2025 F Homegrown	2025	\$93,345	-9.68%
2025 D Homegrown	2025	\$86,604	-1.13%
2025 D Homegrown	2025	\$80,622	-1.25%
2024 M Homegrown	2024	\$129,294	+0.03%
2024 GK Homegrown	2024	\$125,583	-1.71%
2024 F Homegrown	2024	\$84,124	-0.87%
2024 D Homegrown	2024	\$77,383	-4.38%
2023 M Homegrown	2023	\$108,294	-0.04%
2023 F Homegrown	2023	\$101,444	-3.91%
2023 D Homegrown	2023	\$85,444	-6.64%
2022 M Homegrown	2022	\$88,294	-0.17%
2022 M Homegrown	2022	\$81,500	-0.21%
2022 F Homegrown	2022	\$81,500	-4.37%
2022 D Homegrown	2022	\$65,500	-2.12%
2021 M Homegrown	2021	\$67,841	-0.08%

- **Ready for Roster Promotion (Negative Percent change + Low Salary):**
 - **2025 F Homegrown (\$160,000, -8.17%) & (\$93,345, -9.68%):** Elite-level negative impact from two homegrown forwards.
 - **2023 D Homegrown (\$85,444, -6.64%):** Excellent value from a homegrown defender.
 - **2024 D Homegrown (\$77,383, -4.38%):** Strong negative impact approaching the elite threshold.
 - **2022 F Homegrown (\$81,500, -4.37%):** Solid value from a homegrown forward.

7. INTERNATIONAL SLOT OPTIMIZATION

Player	Year	Pos	Salary	PE % change	Justifies Slot?
2022 F TAM	2022	F	\$820,000	-4.66%	Yes
2023 F TAM	2023	F	\$820,000	-3.93%	Yes
2023 M U22	2023	M	\$343,167	-0.76%	Yes
2023 D	2023	D	\$198,150	-4.69%	Yes
2024 M	2024	M	\$1,797,108	+2.02%	No
2024 F TAM	2024	F	\$820,000	-13.23%	Yes
2024 F U22	2024	F	\$675,500	-8.11%	Yes
2024 M	2024	M	\$658,653	+0.23%	No
2024 D	2024	D	\$469,875	+0.33%	No
2024 M U22	2024	M	\$373,167	+0.33%	No
2024 F	2024	F	\$274,883	+5.69%	No
2024 D	2024	D	\$218,688	-4.30%	Yes
2024 M	2024	M	\$89,716	+0.17%	No
2025 F	2025	F	\$1,858,426	-8.50%	Yes
2025 M	2025	M	\$1,797,108	+5.65%	No
2025 M	2025	M	\$708,653	+1.46%	No
2025 F TAM	2025	F	\$626,500	-8.00%	Yes
2025 F	2025	F	\$546,875	-6.08%	Yes
2025 D	2025	D	\$494,875	-0.41%	Yes
2025 GK	2025	GK	\$460,000	+6.40%	No
2025 F U22	2025	F	\$336,859	+1.82%	No
2025 D	2025	D	\$313,688	-0.86%	Yes
2025 F	2025	F	\$80,622	-9.73%	Yes

- **Flagged Slot Misuse (Percent change > 5%):**

- **2024 F (\$274,883, +5.69%)** – international slot misuse
- **2025 M DP (\$1.80M, +5.65%)** – DP slot misuse
- **2025 GK (\$460,000, +6.40%)** – international GK slot misuse

8. POSITIONAL DEPTH AUDIT

Position	Senior Count	Supplemental Count	Critical Upgrade Need?	Strength Area?
F (Forward)	17	6	No	Yes (DP forwards are elite; TAM forwards are strong; homegrown forwards are exceptional)
M (Midfielder)	18	7	Yes	No (DP midfielders are marginal to harmful; TAM midfielders are neutral; U22 midfielders are marginal)
D (Defender)	19	7	No	Yes (DP defender is valuable; homegrown defenders are strong; TAM defenders are mixed)
GK (Goalkeeper)	6	4	No	Mixed (Most GKs show near-zero impact; 2025 international GK is harmful)

- **Critical Need:** Midfielder position at the DP level. RSL should be cautious about investing DP slots in midfielders.
- **Strength:** Forward position is an elite organizational strength, with DP, TAM, and homegrown forwards all delivering strong negative impact.

9. SALARY vs. VALUE MATRIX

Quadrant	Definition	Players (Top 5 or All)
CORE ASSET	% change < 0 & Salary > \$500K	2024 F DP (\$2.09M, -14.47%), 2024 F TAM (\$820K, -13.23%), 2025 F DP (\$1.86M, -8.50%), 2025 F TAM (\$627K, -8.00%), 2024 F U22 (\$676K, -8.11%)
HIDDEN GEM	% change < 0 & Salary ≤ \$500K	2025 F Homegrown (\$160K,

Quadrant	Definition	Players (Top 5 or All)
		-8.17%), 2025 F Homegrown (\$93K, -9.68%), 2023 D Homegrown (\$85K, -6.64%), 2024 D Homegrown (\$77K, -4.38%), 2022 F Homegrown (\$82K, -4.37%)
OVERPAID	% change ≥ 0 & Salary > \$500K	All in this quadrant: 2025 M DP (\$1.80M, +5.65%), 2025 GK (\$460K, +6.40%), 2024 F (\$275K, +5.69%), 2023 F TAM (\$673K, +5.82%), 2023 F (\$603K, +7.30%), 2023 GK (\$350K, +6.72%)
REPLACEABLE	% change ≥ 0 & Salary \leq \$500K	Several senior midfielders with marginal positive percent change, some U22 players, and a portion of the supplemental roster.

10. YEAR-OVER-YEAR TRENDS

- **Designated Player ROI: Excellent for forwards, marginal for midfielders.** Forward DPs are consistently elite (-3.9% to -14.5%). Midfielder DPs are marginal to harmful (+0.2% to +5.7%). RSL should continue investing DP slots in forwards.
- **TAM Efficiency: Excellent for forwards, mixed elsewhere.** TAM forwards deliver elite negative impacts (-4.7% to -13.2%). TAM players in other positions are mixed.
- **U22 Efficiency: Good but inconsistent.** Some U22 players are elite (-8.1%), while others are marginal. Overall, this mechanism is being used effectively.
- **Homegrown Impact: Exceptional across multiple positions.** Real Salt Lake has the strongest homegrown player performance among teams analyzed, with forwards, defenders, and midfielders all showing negative impact. This is a best-in-class organizational strength.
- **Goalkeeper Trend: Neutral to poor.** Most GKs show near-zero or positive percent change. The 2025 international GK (+6.4%) is concerning. This position could be an opportunity for improvement.

11. SUMMARY FIGURES

Figure 1 - Designation Analysis
 (Negative % = Team Gets Worse Without Player = Valuable Player)

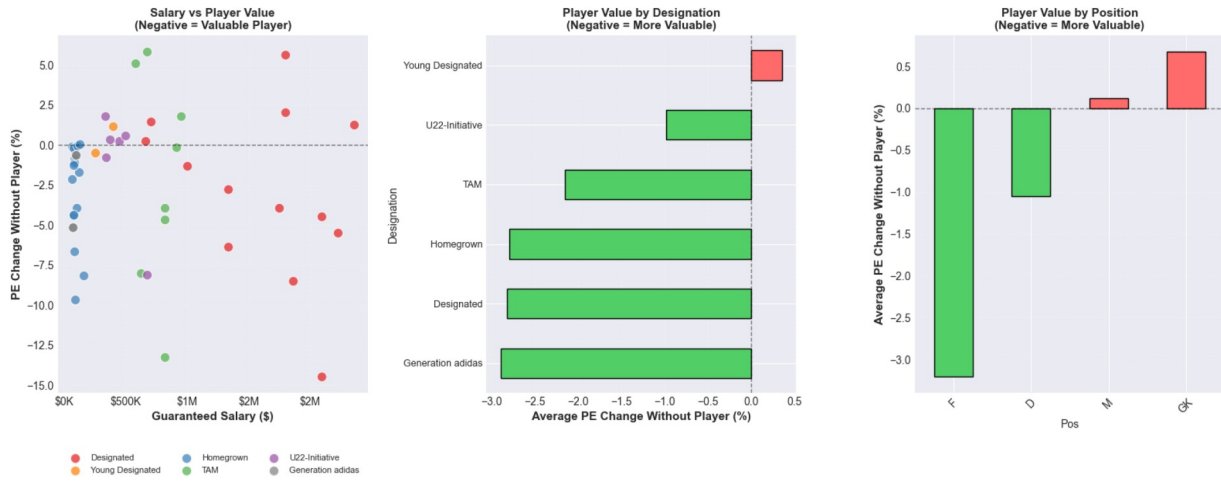


Figure 2 - International Analysis
 (Negative % = Team Gets Worse Without Player = Valuable Player)



Figure 3 - Senior/Supplemental Analysis
 (Negative % = Team Gets Worse Without Player = Valuable Player)

