



MEDIA RELEASE

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Mackay Sugar starts record crush at Mossman Mill

Mackay Sugar commenced crushing at its Mossman Mill yesterday, with a record crop of more than 1 million tonnes expected to be processed at the mill this season.

Mossman Mill previously crushed 1 million tonnes in 2002, yet in recent years throughput steadily declined as the mill faced ongoing operational challenges. However, following Mackay Sugar's acquisition of the mill in mid-2012, a cane supply agreement was re-established with Tablelands growers which will this year lead to the mill more than doubling last year's throughput of 587,000 tonnes.

Over the next 29 weeks (until end of November), sugarcane will be harvested from 8,150 hectares of land in the Tablelands region and 7,342 hectares in the Mossman coastal area.

Mackay Sugar's Mossman Mill Manager Haydn Slattery said that although the mill had experienced a few teething problems during the start-up, the operations were now running satisfactorily.

"During the maintenance season, we completed a major upgrade of our boilers and several other associated projects to ensure we have the plant reliability and capacity to handle this year's increased tonnage.

"We experienced Cyclone Ita in mid-April, which left some cane lodged and fields flooded; however the crop hasn't been significantly impacted.

"Site maintenance works were the only thing impacted by the cyclone, with the necessary shutdown resulting in the crush start being delayed by one week.

"This season will be a challenge for not only mill workers, but our growers and harvesters; however, there's a genuine commitment to making this work from all fronts, because I think everyone realises the benefits of a sustainable mill," Mr Slattery said.

Over recent months, Mackay Sugar has had an additional 30 employees join the Mossman Cane Supply and Operations teams, lifting the total employees to 140.

With consideration of the extensive rail movement activity commonly experienced during the crushing season (May– end November), Mackay Sugar urges motorists within the Mossman and Tablelands region to remain vigilant when approaching railway crossings and travelling on cane transport roads.

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