

The Bundaberg District Canegrower

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Chair's Update

How time flies with preseason harvest about to start on 21 May and the start of the core season only 3 weeks later on the 11 June. The weather has been a bit of a mixed bag with intermediate showers delivering some handy falls. It would be good to see some cooler weather to help the crop ripen up as it is still very green.

With the official crop estimate for the 2025 season of 1,350,000 tonnes, this season will take the combined effort of us all working efficiently to get the crop harvested and crushed in a timely manner. We have been working closely with Bundaberg Sugar to ensure that upgrades are sufficient to process the increased crop size in a timely manner.

We have set the starting base CCS at 13.0, the same as last year and will review this regularly as the season progresses. Updated allowances for the 2025 season are included on page 3.

At this week's Board meeting we set the crop insurance indemnity for 2025 Season at \$55/t with a 50t excess and resolved that Bundaberg CANEGROWERS will cover the additional cost of top up crop insurance from \$35/t to \$55/t, with the initial cost for \$35/t covered by Qld CANEGROWERS. Directors also resolved to leave the Bundaberg CANEGROWERS levy and Cane Analysis levy set at the same level as last year.

We will have full auditor coverage at the mill once again this year with Courtney and Katie covering the position. If anyone has a query regarding delivery advices or CCS discrepancies, please call the office to have it investigated.

Sugar Services Harvest Breakfast was held on 1st May with presentations from

Bundaberg Sugar, SRA and QSL. If you would like a copy of the booklet containing the presentations, please call in to the office.



The final Oreco payments have been received in full and will be distributed to growers as soon as possible with an interest payment to follow. Delayed payments throughout the 2024 Season are not acceptable and we hope they can honour their contract for 2025 Season and beyond.

We are holding a casual get together on Friday 6 June and your invitation is included on page 10.

Here is to a smooth, prosperous and safe harvest season and I hope to see you all on the 6th.

Mark Pressler
Chairman

Top Five (5) Issues We Have Been Working On

1. Pre-season planning and preparations for the 2025 crushing season
2. Reviewing auditing arrangements to ensure coverage during the season
3. Reviewing Groundwater Area B proposed changes
4. Receiving NHVR update on additional compliance targets for the 2025 harvest
5. Ensuring growers are prepared for upcoming Reef Compliance audits in June



TRUCK DRIVERS WANTED

SUGAR CRUSHING SEASON

JUNE TO DECEMBER

FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE PHONE

07 41 522355

2024 Season Indicative Advances Program

Based on QSL reports 25 April 2025

Applicable From	Uncommitted Pool Advance (AUD/tonne IPS)		QSL Standard Advance Rate
Payment Date	Payment Change	To	
Initial	\$0	\$420	65.0%
15 Jun 24	\$-21	\$399	65.0%
11 Jul 24	\$0	\$399	65.0%
17 Aug 24	\$0	\$399	65.0%
14 Sep 24	\$17	\$416	65.0%
16 Oct 24	\$32	\$448	70.0%
20 Nov 24	\$77	\$525	72.5%
18 Dec 24	\$29	\$554	77.5%
15 Jan 25	\$16	\$570	80.0%
19 Feb 25	\$28	\$598	85.0%
19 Mar 25	\$21	\$619	87.5%
16 Apr 25	\$20	\$639	90.0%
21 May 25	\$12	\$651	92.5%
18 Jun 25	\$18	\$669	95%
By 31 July 25	\$35	\$704	100.0%

Notes:

Under QSL's Advances program, supplying growers and millers are paid a proportional amount of their current estimated final sugar pricing result. The program is indicative only and may change during the course of the season, and so should not be taken as a commitment by QSL with regard to either the Advance rate or date of increase. The QSL Board reviews the program periodically to determine whether scheduled increases should be approved or amended, weighing factors such as movements in the marketing and shipping plans, sugar price and currency movements and the timing of cash flows. Suppliers' positions in relation to any pricing elections may also impact the timing and size of Advance payments. Based on indicative pool values, with a estimated combined QSL Harvest and US Quota pool value of \$704/t IPS as of 25 April 2025.

Note: The 'Applicable From' payment dates listed below may differ from your own payment dates due to your local milling arrangements and bank processing times.

This figure is an estimate only for the default QSL pricing position of 98% Harvest Pool + 2% US Quota Pool based on pool values as at the date specified. Please note that the pool values used to calculate the default payment will change as the season progresses. The default payment figure incorporates a weighted average Shared Pool allocation, with the Shared Pool allocation applied to grower payments varying in each region due to regional costs (regional Shared Pool details are available at www.qsl.com.au). The estimated payment figure quoted also does not include any applicable Loyalty Bonus, GST, allowances, deductions or any other adjustments incurred by the grower or passed on by their miller.

Accelerated Advances

Accelerated Advances Program participants receive 90% of their eligible products' indicative value by December each year. Under this scheme, Advance rates paid for tonnages in these products remain at 90% from each season, reverting to the QSL Standard Advance Rate from the subsequent May payment.

Sugar Services Membership levies

The Board of Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited has announced that the membership levy for the upcoming 2025 season will not be increased.

Following a thorough review of the budget, Directors resolved to maintain the grower levy at 11.28 cents per tonne. This decision provides a sense of stability for growers and underscores the Board's commitment to supporting its members. ■

2025 Season Membership Fees

Membership fees have been set for the 2025 Season. In the establishing of these fees the directors have taken into account the level of services available and the need to set a reasonable fee. It was resolved that Bundaberg CANEGROWERS levies would not be increased for the 2025 Season. ■

2025 Season CANEGROWERS levies are as follows:

Administration:	60.96 cents/t
Crop Insurance:	0 cents/t
Cane Analysis:	4.50 cents/t
State Levy:	22.23 cents/t

Visit the ACCC'S new small business web page

Small business is an enduring ACCC priority. The ACCC has recently launched a new small business web page designed to support small business owners, including farmers.

This centralized, easy to navigate resource brings together key information, tools, and guidance tailored specifically for small business needs. Whether you are just starting out or already running a small business, the page is designed to help you better understand your rights and responsibilities when dealing with customers, competitors and suppliers.

What you'll find

At the core of the new web page is the small business toolkit. This practical resource provides clear and accessible information on dedicated topics including unfair contract terms - a current ACCC compliance and enforcement priority.

Other features of the new web page include

- Guidance on how to report an issue affecting your business through the ACCC'S Info center
- Information on how the ACCC supports small business through advocacy, education, and enforcement.

- News updates on the latest small business developments, with a link to the ACCC news center
- Easy access to relevant industry codes of conduct
- Quick links to other ACCC resources.

Visit the web page regularly to stay informed and access reliable and relevant information.

For more information on the ACCC's role in supporting small businesses, visit <https://www.accc.gov.au/business/small-business>. ■

2025 Allowances

The Mill will be running in continuous crushing mode this year.

As such the Continuous Crushing Allowance 18.3 (a) and (b) will apply:

18.3 Allowances

(a) Continuous Crushing Allowance

The Mill Owner will pay a Continuous Crushing Allowance for cane harvested on a weekend for supply to each Mill operating in continuous mode based on the following principles:

- \$0.70/tonne
- the allowance will be shared equally (cents/tonne) across all cane delivered by all growers to Mills while they are operating in continuous mode
- the allowance will be included with the final pay
- the allowance increases or decreases

in proportion to movements in the sugar price above and below \$330 per tonne

(b) Harvesting Allowance

When a Mill is operating in a continuous mode the Mill Owner will pay Growers supplying a Mill in continuous mode a Harvesting Allowance for cane harvested on a weekend based on the following principles:

- the allowance is \$0.80 per tonne for cane harvested on weekends
- the allowance will be included with the delivery pay, except where a Grower has given authorisation, the allowance will be paid to the particular harvesting contractor on a weekly basis
- the allowance will be adjusted on 1 April according to the movement in

the minimum weekly wage rate for a cane harvesting employee (Level 1) under the Sugar Industry Award 2020 for the previous twelve (12) months.

The adjusted Harvesting Allowance for the 2025 season will be \$1.34 per tonne for cane harvested on weekends.

Base CCS

Base CCS is set to start at 13.0 and will be adjusted as necessary, when necessary.

Haulage Allowance

The Haulage Allowance is increased by CPI each year. The All Groups CPI Index weighted average of eight (8) capital cities is 2.40% for the year. The 2.40% increase on last year's allowances is shown in the following table: ■

CPI adjustment		2.40%	
Distance (metres)		\$/tonne	Variation to last season
From - To		2025	
0	1,000	0.00	0.00
1,000	2,000	0.70	0.02
2,000	3,000	1.05	0.04
3,000	4,000	1.39	0.05
4,000	5,000	1.74	0.06
5,000	6,000	2.09	0.07
6,000	7,000	2.44	0.09
7,000	8,000	2.78	0.10
8,000	9,000	3.13	0.11
9,000	10,000	3.48	0.12
10,000	Plus	3.83	0.13

Member Only Crop Insurance

All Bundaberg CANEGROWERS members have crop insurance cover, the cost of which is jointly covered by Qld CANEGROWERS and Bundaberg CANEGROWERS.

This year the cover is set at \$55 per tonne with a 50 tonne excess and covers growers for:

- total crop loss from unharvested cane after a fire,
- partial crop loss from reduced yield of a harvested crop after a fire and

- the loss of a trash blanket and the costs of re-establishing the crop after the fire in the trash blanket.

Growers are able to apply to "Top Up" insurance beyond \$55/tonne with a 50 tonne excess.

This option may be used if growers have some significantly higher priced forward pricing locked in for this year.

Before applying for the Top Up insurance

growers also need to be aware that the underwriters liability under the Fire Perils Crop Insurance policy is the maximum value of indemnity selected or 90% of the value of the cane at the mill, whichever is the lesser amount.

Top Up Insurance can be applied for by contacting Bundaberg CANEGROWERS on (07) 4151 2555, completing the Top Up Insurance document and paying the additional premium.■

Cane Fire Notice for Burning Tops and Trash

Before growers burn cane or trash this season they need to ensure they are following the conditions of the Cane Burning Notice or the conditions on their permit. Failure to do this leaves growers exposed to legal action.

To burn cane or trash under the Notice, **all** conditions of the Notice need to be met. This includes number of people in attendance and the types of equipment in attendance. Also, to use the Notice with the property neighbouring a road, the road must be a local road according to the QFES Fire Warden Finder mapping service. If a fire is to occur on a farm that borders a main road, according to the Fire Warden Finder mapping service, any fire on that farm requires a permit not just those blocks against the road.

If growers are unsure if they can comply with the Notice and to avoid any confusion growers should apply for a permit from their fire warden for any cane or trash fires. Information about the Notice and all the relevant links about burning cane including a fact sheet can be found at www.qfes.qld.gov.au/safety-

education/using-fire-outdoors.

Whether using the Notice or a permit, the following should also be complied with:

- checking the weather conditions including temperature, wind direction and wind speed.
- If there is the possibility of smoke affecting visibility for road users, smoke hazard signs are most likely required. A smoke hazard sign is to be erected if the area to be burnt adjoins or is within 100m of a road of any description. Smoke Hazard signs are available from some of the wardens as well as the QFES the Bundaberg Rural Fire office.. Please contact by phone on (07) 4154 6120 to make arrangements to collect the signs.

Growers need to contact Firecom on 1800 354 621 before each and every fire is lit, whether it is under the Notice or a permit to assist QFES with calls from the public and identifying uncontrolled fires.

Neighbours are to be notified of growers'

intention to burn at the beginning of the season and again prior to the burn so they can make preparations to minimise the impact of smoke and ash. It is a requirement of a permit that the neighbours are aware of the intention to apply for a permit.

Contact with the QFES Rural Fire Bundaberg office can be made via (07) 4154 6120 and a request for a community message can be posted indicating an approximate time for burning and any potential issues such as smoke across a road. In situations where farms neighbour a large number of residences, provided there is enough notice, the Bundaberg Rural Fire Brigade may be able to use its' community resource to notify the neighbours. Sample letters of an intention to apply for a fire permit and intention to burn are available at reception of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS.

If growers are unable to comply with the Notice they are still able to get a permit to burn from their local warden and follow the conditions of the permit to burn cane, trash and tops. ■

Chain of Responsibility

Growers are reminded that under the Chain of Responsibility Laws for Heavy Vehicles, that any person who has influence along the supply chain may be responsible for any laws that are

breached. The best way to discharge or lower the level of responsibility is for easy-to-understand contracts to be in place which state who is responsible for what roles in the operation. These

include but are not limited to fatigue management, overloading and vehicle dimension. Template copies are available upon request at reception or by calling the office on 4151 2555. ■

Reef Compliance Audit Update

The March Reef Compliance Audits have been completed with the growers who used Matt Leighton to assist in the preparation of the audit having all the information required on hand.

If a grower receives a letter, email or call from the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation for a meeting to discuss Sugarcane Legislation, the Department are sending staff to conduct an audit to make sure growers are compliant with the Reef Regulations, especially the records.

Another round of audits are being conducted in the region in May to early July with several local growers receiving letters in the latest round. In the letter there is a list of information which is required.

While the list of information required may seem complicated, Bundaberg CANEGROWERS has several templates such as the Property and Person record and fertiliser application record available. Other information such as mill maps and soil maps can easily be accessed. If

growers have used Bundaberg Sugar Services to take soil tests, the results can easily be added and used to create the Nitrogen and Phosphorus budget. Other things that assist during the audit is the bag tag of the fertiliser or a fertiliser card with the analysis of the fertiliser applied.

If growers have been contacted for an audit or just want to get prepared by starting their record keeping, please contact Matt Leighton on 4151 2555 or 0437 084 035. ■

Superannuation changes

Superannuation Guarantee

From 1 July 2025, the super guarantee, that is - the percentage of a wage that an employer is required to pay to an employee's super account, will increase from 11.5% to 12.0%.

Pay day super

While Payday Super is not yet legislated, it is proposed to start on 1 July 2026. Under Payday Super, employers will be required to pay their employees' superannuation at the same time as their salary and wages. ■

Reporting Illegal dumping

With a cost of living crisis, increasing waste fees and changes to what can be disposed of at the nearest waste centre there has been an increase of illegal dumping occurring. While the Council has been collecting illegally dumped items from inside the farms there has been whispers that this will stop and only items on the side of the road will be collected. If this occurs, what happens and who pays when items such as car tyres are dumped in a farm becomes front of mind.

Bundaberg CANGROWERS has become aware of a reporting process for illegal dumping. This process is the online Littering and illegal dumping reporting form goes to the Department of Environment and Science. There are a range of questions about vehicle type, colour and registration number if the dumping is seen as well as questions about location, in which a map can be used, as well as the type and quantity of the waste.

If you are unable to access the online report <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/circular-economy-waste-reduction/litter-illegal-dumping/report> the illegal dumping can be reported to the council either via the Snap Send Solve app or the <https://www.bundaberg.qld.gov.au/Environment/Environmental-health/Littering-and-illegal-dumping> website. There is a final method that involves emailing the Department on illegaldumping@des.qld.gov.au ■

Check your Employee's Drivers Licence

Did you know that you can check if a Queensland drivers license is current by using the Queensland Transport online service found at www.service.transport.qld.gov.au/checkdriverlicencestatus

To check the status of a drivers licence you will need the:

- Licence number;
- Licence holder's first and last name;
- Licence holder's date of birth.

The service is intended for use by the drivers licence holder, or persons who have been provided the driver licence as evidence of the drivers licence holder's authority to drive.

The service only checks the status of a driver licence. It will not check the driver licence class or type, or any special conditions imposed on the licence. ■



Farm Safety - Side by Sides or Quad bikes

There has long been a push for farmers to move away from quad bikes and move to side by side ATV's to improve farm safety. What has been shown is that without using the safety recommendations of the ATV's, they too can become deadly for the user and any passengers, especially during a roll over. To ensure the safe use of all farm machinery from vehicles to tools farmers need to always follow the manufacturers safety recommendations.

Unfortunately as farmers transition away from quad bikes and move to ATV's they are bringing the same high risk locations and use patterns to a new vehicle type and the injury and death reports are rising. To ensure the safe use of the equipment growers are reminded to follow the safety guidelines that come with the machine. If growers are unable to find the safety guidelines there are some generic information available at www.sidebysidesafety.com.au and www.atvsafety.com.au to assist them.

In general the following advice should be followed:

- Operators should be at least 16 years of age
- Never carry more passengers than seats
- Always wear about a helmet, seatbelt, eye protection and appropriate clothing
- Keep doors or nets closed
- Be cautious on steep or uneven ground. ■

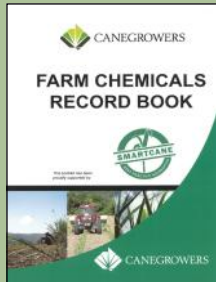
Flashing Lights Required When Driving Tractor On Road

NHVR have recently been pulling growers over for not having a flashing light on their tractor whilst driving on the road.

Even though some tractors are not oversized, NHVR advised they require a flashing light and that hazards lights are not sufficient.

This and other conditions of driving on the road are listed on the registration certificate. ■





**FARM CHEMICALS
RECORD BOOK**

Completing this book assists Growers to meet their record keeping obligations as part of the Reef Regulations.

To collect a record keeping book call into the office or contact us on 4151 2555.

Increased enforcement in relation to Heavy Vehicle Road Movement

National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) Compliance team have confirmed they will be looking at the sugar industry this harvest season for a range of compliance issues. The first is fatigue management which will be dealt with under another article as it is quite different to the other compliance checks. The other compliance issues relate to load restraint and vehicle road worthiness.

With load restraint there are issues with vehicle integrity and also load placement. If the loaded section of the vehicle has damaged mesh or the mesh is large enough for billets to escape the vehicle may be defaulted or a fine

applied. The other issue with load restraint in cane is overloading the transporter in such a way that billets may spill from the bin onto the road. This can be countered by having appropriate amount of freeboard as described in the CANEGROWERS document, 2024 Sugarcane Transport Load Restraint Guide. Any billets, trash or dirt that sits on the frame, axle or guards need to be removed before the vehicle exits the paddock and drives along the road. While this may add the time taken for a round trip to the siding the Chain of Responsibility implications as well as the fines and demerit points will have a longer impact on the workers.

The road worthiness of a vehicle is expected when operating on a road, especially in a truck under NHVR law, however now there is increased focus on tractors used in haulage as well. Targets of road worthiness include compliant seatbelts, no oil leaks in the engine bay, no oil leaks around the brakes. The road worthiness of the trailer also needs to be considered with the focus around the braking system if it is installed. While this may seem new to growers and contractors it is the availability of staff in NHVR for enforcement that has led to the increased focus on vehicle and load safety during the crush. ■

Updates to Fatigue Management of Agricultural vehicles

At the recent National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) update at Childers there was a discussion about increased enforcement of the sugar industry this harvest season. Part of the discussion was about load restraint and vehicle road worthiness, which is discussed in another article. The other part was fatigue management including work hours and the recording of "work" hours under NHVR law.

At the time of writing the following was still awaiting confirmation from NHVR, however the office's understanding in reading the fatigue management guidelines is as follows. That any vehicle or vehicle combination (tractor and trailer) where the total combined GVM or GCM exceeds 12 tonnes is a relevant fatigue management vehicle. This definition means that there are additional responsibilities to the employers in managing "work" hours to manage fatigue as well as additional responsibilities for the employees in recording the "work" hours.

"Work" hours under NHVR are very specific and relate to a 24 hour and 7-day cycle. The 24 hours "work" cycle starts once a person begins a specific set of tasks in which NHVR have deemed as "work". These include the obvious of driving the heavy vehicle, however also

include refuelling, maintenance, waiting to load or unload or performing marketing tasks such as filling out mill paperwork, sitting in the driver's seat with the engine running, attending to the load and recording of the information on the work diary. This "work" includes time spent in the paddock as well as on the road. Other work that an employee may get paid for is not counted in the heavy vehicle fatigue management guidelines but may increase an overall level of fatigue.

Once the "work" starts on day 1 that is the starting time for the rest of the week. The other big shake up, especially with the harvest rosters recently coming out is that the operator can work for 6 days with up to 12 hours of "work" each day but must have a 24 hour break on day seven from "work". For a clearer description how to count and record time, more information is available on the NHVR website at <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/safety-accreditation-compliance/fatigue-management/counting-time>.

Further to counting the time of "work" employees or those operating the fatigue management relevant vehicles, it must be recorded. Using the NHVR definition, driving that occurs within 100km of the drivers' home base or starting point is defined as local area work. "Work" /

driving more than 100km from base requires a work diary while local area work can be recorded more simply as work and rest times on a work sheet. The work sheet must contain certain base level information including drivers name and contact details licence number and state where licence was issued. Also included is the dates when driving a fatigue managed heavy vehicle, base of operations as well s total work times and rest times for the day and week. Full information about what is required for local area work is available on the NHVR website <https://www.nhvr.gov.au/safety-accreditation-compliance/fatigue-management/local-area-work-diary-requirements>. On that webpage is a link to a local area work template document which is also shown below.

Further to this the employer who may also be a driver must keep the "work" records for a period of up to three years.

If anyone is seeking further clarification about what this all means they can contact Matt on 0437 084 035. ■



Local Area Record Template

Driver name:		Driver Licence Number:		State/Territory of licence:	
Driver contact details:		Record location/Base:		Week ending:	
Date / / Registration No.	Start Time _____			Daily Total Work:	
	Resting from Work _____ to _____			Rest:	
	Resting from Work _____ to _____				
	Resting from Work _____ to _____				
	Finished Work _____				
Date / / Registration No.	Start Time _____			Daily Total Work:	
	Resting from Work _____ to _____			Rest:	
	Resting from Work _____ to _____				
	Resting from Work _____ to _____				
	Finished Work _____				
Date / / Registration No.	Start Time _____			Daily Total Work:	
	Resting from Work _____ to _____			Rest:	
	Resting from Work _____ to _____				
	Resting from Work _____ to _____				
	Finished Work _____				
Date / / Registration No.	Start Time _____			Daily Total Work:	
	Resting from Work _____ to _____			Rest:	
	Resting from Work _____ to _____				
	Resting from Work _____ to _____				
	Finished Work _____				

Farm Safety During the Harvest

Growers are reminded of the need to provide a safe place to work for themselves, family members and the harvesting crews who operate on their farm.

It is easy to get complacent, especially as growers live and work on the farm each day and may have had the same harvesting crew for 20 years or more. Each year growers need to take stock of what is on the farm, what has changed and whether this impacts the harvesting crews who will be working on the farm.

For example, a new lateral move irrigator may mean new hydrant locations as well as the parking of the irrigator in a paddock or on a headland where a

harvester or haulout may encounter it in the early morning.

As part of providing a safe place to work, it is recommended that growers complete an induction for the harvesting crew and any regular visitors such as chemical and fertiliser delivery drivers.

For the harvesting crew, items such as hydrants, power poles, powerlines, tram lines, and parked equipment are vitally important to be identified as part of the induction process. Delivery drivers need to be inducted to the hazards around the sheds or delivery points such as access points/doorways to buildings, powerlines, and contact details if no one is at the shed. The important thing is that these are

updated if there are any changes (e.g. if the lateral move irrigator has been moved so that the remainder of the farm can be harvested).

The Managing Sugarcane Farm Safety manual is available from Bundaberg CANEGROWERS reception. The workbook has a checklist that enables growers to identify hazards and provide a risk assessment that enables plans to be made that provide a safe place to live and work on the farm. Completing the relevant sections is the first step to demonstrating a commitment to workplace safety, which is especially important if there is a workplace incident on the farm. ■

Safety Near Powerlines

Growers are reminded that powerlines have a general (3) metre exclusion zone around the wires and the safest way to operate around the wires is to have a trained safety observer watching the operation of the machinery and the wires. The exclusion zone can be reduced if a trained observer (completed a Safe Working Near Exposed Live Parts course or similar) is used at the site where equipment may encroach the three (3) metre exclusion zone.

Additional information on safety near powerlines, specifically for the sugar industry, can be found on the Look Up & Live app which also has a map function that identifies the location, type and exclusion zone for powerlines on your farm.

What to do if contact occurs with powerlines

If equipment touches a powerline, growers are to stay inside the cab of the vehicle. The only reason to leave is if the vehicle is on fire. If forced to leave the cab, the best thing to do is to jump as far away from the vehicle as possible, landing with your two (2) feet close together to prevent creating a circuit with your legs. Then continue to

hop away keeping your feet together. Another option is to shuffle away keeping your feet together, constant contact with the ground, and get at least 8-10 metres away from the vehicle.

By having your feet apart you've got one foot on the 9,000 volt line and the other foot on the 8,000 volt line, the electricity will flow through your body causing electric shock and possible injury or death. ■

1 STAY in the car **CALL** 000 **WAIT** for help

2 If there's an immediate danger, like fire, and evacuation is **ABSOLUTELY** necessary, assess your escape route and check for fallen powerlines.

3 Exit the vehicle by jumping - make sure to land with both feet together.

4 When jumping, **don't touch** the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

5 Once landed with both feet together (careful not to stumble or fall), jump or shuffle with your feet together away from the vehicle.

6 Move in this way until you are at least 10 metres away from the vehicle. **DO NOT** go back.

What to do if your vehicle brings down powerlines

Queensland Government | **ERGON ENERGY NETWORK** | **energex**

Part of the Energy Queensland Group
13 16 70 | 13 19 62



Rotamarkers incentive program

To assist the construction, agriculture and aviation industries, Ergon are currently offering to install up to 10 rotamarkers per property at a reduced cost of \$100 each (more than ten markers per property may incur extra installation costs). These rotamarkers have been shown to significantly increase the visibility of powerlines. When installed they become a daily

reminder that there are more powerlines nearby and extra caution is recommended.

Use the **lookupandlive.com** app and if you identify an area of concern on your property or site, please submit the **Powerline Marker Application Form** found at <https://www.ergon.com.au/network/contact-us/forms/powerline-marker-application-form>. ■

CANEGROWERS Contractor Training

CANEGROWERS have organised the delivery of a program to assist sugarcane industry contractors meet their WHS and HR obligations.

Covered separately in two 90 minute online webinars, these sessions will give confidence and knowledge to run a more professional, compliant business. Content will be delivered in a practical, down to earth, easy to understand way.

In addition, you will have access to a range of templates and links that will support the information and assist making change in your business.

You will also have the opportunity for two phone or zoom conversations with WHS & HR expert Bec Fing to discuss any concerns specifically relevant to your business.

The program will be delivered by Rebecca Fing from House Paddock

Training and Consulting, and will cost \$249 per participant

Live online sessions:

- 3pm Thursday 29th May - HR
- 3pm Thursday 5th June - WHS

If you can't make the sessions, you can sign up for self-paced learning and receive access to recordings and resources.

To register please visit: <https://www.housepaddocktraining.com.au/canecontractors>

"Every contractor needs to do this course"
- Scott, farming and earthmoving contractor, St George

WHS & HR

BOOTCAMP FOR AG CONTRACTORS

*Running a contracting business in agriculture?
Maybe spraying, harvest, farming, earthmoving, freight, mechanic/welding?*

Join us for 2 webinars to cover your legal WHS & HR obligations

Leave with information and templates to manage your business risk and that of your clients.

Using AI to assist with WHS Procedures

Artificial intelligence is emerging as a valuable tool in streamlining the often complex and time-consuming process of developing Work Health and Safety (WHS) procedures. For the sugarcane industry, with its unique set of risks associated with heavy machinery, manual labour, and environmental factors, AI offers several key advantages in crafting effective safety protocols.

One primary application lies in leveraging AI's ability to process vast amounts of information. Imagine feeding an AI model relevant WHS legislation, industry best practices, safety guidelines from similar agricultural sectors, and even your own company's historical incident data. The AI can then synthesize this information to identify essential components and recommended language for various procedures, such as operating specific harvesting equipment, handling chemicals, or managing heat stress. This can significantly accelerate the initial drafting process, ensuring that key regulatory requirements and industry standards are addressed.

Furthermore, AI can assist in tailoring procedures to specific tasks and equipment. Instead of generic

guidelines, AI can help generate more granular instructions. For example, by inputting the specifications and operational steps of a particular cane harvester, the AI could draft a procedure outlining pre-start checks, safe operating parameters, and emergency shutdown protocols specific to that machine. This level of detail enhances clarity and reduces the potential for misinterpretation by workers.

Natural Language Processing (NLP) capabilities are particularly useful here. AI can generate clear, concise, and easy-to-understand language for WHS documents. It can also ensure consistency in terminology and formatting across different procedures, making the overall WHS manual more user-friendly and accessible. Moreover, AI could potentially translate procedures into different languages, catering to a diverse workforce.

Beyond initial drafting, AI can also contribute to ensuring comprehensiveness. By analyzing incident data and near-miss reports, AI can identify gaps in existing procedures or highlight areas where new protocols might be needed. It can also cross-reference different procedures to ensure

they don't contradict each other and that all relevant safety aspects are covered.

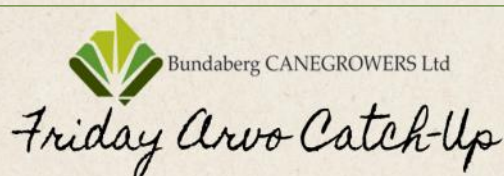
However, it's crucial to understand the limitations. AI-generated procedures should always be reviewed and validated. The final responsibility for the accuracy and effectiveness of WHS procedures rests with human experts.

In conclusion, AI offers a powerful toolkit for writing WHS procedures in the sugarcane industry. Its ability to process information, tailor instructions, generate clear language, and enhance comprehensiveness can significantly improve the efficiency and quality of safety documentation. By combining the analytical power of AI with human expertise, the industry can develop more robust and effective WHS procedures, ultimately contributing to a safer working environment for all.

There are many AI tools available with the most common being ChatGPT, CoPilot and Google Gemini.


If you would like further information please contact the office on 4151 2555.


By the way, this article was written by AI. ■




Fancy a relaxed Friday arvo catching up with fellow growers, Directors and staff from Bundaberg CANEGROWERS?

We're hosting a casual get-together

 Young Aussie Hotel, North Bundaberg


 Friday, June 6th


 From 5 pm to 7 pm


There'll be good company and easy chats - no presentations or speeches, just a chance to connect.

We'd love to see you there!

RSVP:

 4151 2555

 reception@bdbcanegrowers.com.au

 0409 485 154

Training Opportunities



The SmartAg Queensland project continues to go from strength to strength having delivered training to more than 1000 farmers across Queensland since June 2024. QFF, alongside peak body members and delivery partners Cotton Australia, CANEGROWERS and Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers, have delivered priority training to the cotton, cane and horticulture sectors across Queensland. ■

Course	Date	Subsidy
Forklift Training (Strategix)	3-5 June 10-12 June	50%
Forklift Training (ASTA-Formal Course Work)	16 June	50%
Pilot/Escort Training	TBA	50%
Chemical Safety Training	27 May	50%
Truck Training and Licensing	Contact Bundaberg CANEGROWERS	75% off MR, HR, HC 50% off MC
Remote Pilot License Training	Contact Bundaberg CANEGROWERS	50%

If you or your employees are interested in undertaking any of the training listed above, please contact the office on 4151 2555 or by email to bdb_office@bdbcanegrowers.com.au with participant details including full name, address, date of birth, phone number, email address and invoicing details. These details will be passed on to the relevant training organisation to ensure you receive the subsidy upon enrolment. ■



**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE REPRESENTATION, LEADERSHIP AND SERVICES,
AND PROMOTE UNITY IN THE INTEREST OF GROWERS**





Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd

Representation on Your Behalf

The Chairman, Elected Members and Staff of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS represented cane growers on a number of occasions. Executive members also attended many Branch meetings and other engagements in their own time.

DATE	MEETING	PURPOSE	FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
02.04.25	Paddock to Reef Annual Integrated Science forum	To receive updates	Matthew Leighton
03.04.25	Paradise Dam Reference Group	To represent irrigators	Mark Pressler Tanya Howard
08.04.25	Monthly SRA catchup	To receive updates	Tanya Howard
15.04.25	QCA Electricity Information session	To represent members	Tanya Howard Dale Holliss
02.05.25	Cane Analysis Auditor meeting	To progress arrangements for 2025 Season	Tanya Howard
06.05.25	Transport and WHS Compliance Workshop	To receive updates	Matthew Leighton
08.05.25	BSL Harvest Contractors	To represent members	Anna Attard Tanya Howard
19.05.25	Monthly District Manager Meeting	To receive updates	Tanya Howard

CLASSIFIED & JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

As a free service to financial members, small suitable classified & employment advertisements of up to thirty (30) words only will be printed.

Advertisements will be accepted from non-members, charged at \$11 per seven (7) word line or part thereof.

Contact

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Office on telephone no. 4151 2555 or email bdb_office@bdbcanegrowers.com.au.

CLASSIFIEDS

House needed for rent

2-3 bedroom house needed for rent, must be suitable for pets. Family of two quiet workers, and one retired/elderly. Good rent payers. Can pay up to \$800pw. Phone Crystal - 0405614898.

JOBS BOARD

Looking for full time haulage work

Dean Gretton, looking for a career change. Qualifications: Holds a HR licence, Car license, boilermaker trade and diesel fitter trade. Previous employment at LJ engineering, Carbine machinery hire, previously helped plant cane in Gin Gin area. Available anytime, lives in Emu Park but willing to move.

Ph: 0419 103 221

Email: daygretton75@outlook.com

Looking for Cane Production/ Haulage

Merlyn Stewart, Field work/ Cane Cutting experience, 30 Years wheel tractor farm work + Contract slashing. Extensive experience with cattle. Qualifications: LRO Ro, Car, Tractor. Ph: 0427 135 695. Email: Mjstewart.Rsz@gmail.com

Disposal of Farm Tyres

In response to an inquiry from this office, Queensland CANEGROWERS has raised the issue of the lack of affordable and sustainable tyre recycling services with the National Farmers' Federation (NFF) Farming Systems Committee who will now take this issue forward. Initial advice was sought from Tyre Stewardship Australia (TSA) which was established in 2014 to implement a stewardship scheme for tyre collection and recycling. They are

funded by tyre retailers and manufacturers.

TSA advised that only 13% of old agricultural tyres are disposed of through a recycle scheme. This seems to be an issue of resourcing. Agricultural tyres are defined as "Off-The-Road" tyres (along with those from mining), and there are few OTR recyclers and collectors around because the size and structural features of the tyres makes

collection and handling difficult. Also, the mining sector is permitted by most state governments to bury their old tyres onsite.

Tyre Stewardship Australia is planning a pilot project to explore the costs and benefits of collecting and recycling farm tyres. CANEGROWERS has proposed Bundaberg as the ideal location for the trial, and project planning is underway.

Mill Production - Extraneous Matter

Extraneous Matter is - Trash, mid, dirt and rubbish/contamination and the effects on milling are:

Trash

Too much trash can result in:

- Reduced bin weights, more bin movements required. Tippler can only tip a bin per minute or 60 bins per hour. At 6tonnes per bin that's 360t/hr. at 5 tonnes per bin that's a maximum rate of 300t/hr. At 4.5 tonnes per bin that's 270t/hr, resulting in low milling rate and excess bin movements.
- Reduced rate through the milling process due to issues with cane feeding at the front of the factory. Causes chokes on the transfer stations, chokes in conveyors and elevators. Results in lost time to milling. Flow on effect is a cut back in bin supply to groups the next day.
- NHVR- Trash will be the issue and could cause the loads to be covered. Current message is that if there's no spillage of cane there's no problem. If there's spillage there will be enforcement of the law.
- CCS reduction. It is well documented that high trash loads will reduce the CCS result due to the Pol reduction in the sample. High trash also reduces the miller's ability to extract all the sugar from the cane as the trash attaches to the sugar and takes it out with the bagasse.

Mud

Normal mud loadings in the mill during dry periods like last year were between 1.5 and 3%, this means that for 3% mud in cane there is 3 tonnes of mud/dirt in every 100 tonnes of cane. On average 10 tonnes of dirt comes into the mill every hour. When the levels increase to 6% or higher during wet periods, it means in excess of 20 tonnes of mud per hour. The effects of mud/dirt loads are-

- Reduced rate due to the clarification process, high mud levels means that the milling rate must be reduced to eliminate dirt carry over into the juice stream that will eventually end up in the sugar.
- Reduced rate due to handling issues in the feeding process with belts and elevators not conveying the product. This causes chokes and lost milling time, effects are reduced bin allocations the next day.
- Increased wear on milling components, shredder tips, scraper plates on the mills, boiler tubes wear faster due to dirt carry over in the bagasse. Results in boiler down time and lost milling time or rate reduction. Sometimes the lost time can be days.
- Filters- high mud loads increases the loads on the mud filters. Reduced crush rate.

Rubbish/Contamination

Rubbish/Contamination in the bins over the years has included pigs, gas bottles,



refrigerators, topper knives and base cutter blades, oil filters, air filters, irrigation hoses, 20L plastic drums, cane bin wheels sets, lots of steel parts from farm machinery and harvesters.

Effects-

- Shredder - Tip and grid bar breakages and wear, out of balance issues requiring the shredder to be stopped and tips changed prematurely leading to maintenance days.
- Belts - Rags etc get hung up on idlers causing them to stop. Mill stops to remove.
- Steel - issues with elevators ripping plates out and getting caught up in the mills causing feeding issues. All steel parts end up in the juice pumps causing stoppages or in the boilers sluice system causing chokes. Also jams bagasse feeders causing low steam events which result in reduced or stopped milling.

If you realise that something may have gone into a bin of cane, notify your GSO so he can inform the mill as to what rake or bin it's in and they can check it when it comes into the mill. It's better to do this than cause some of the above issues. The end result of which will affect all harvesting groups with allocation reductions the following day. ■

Articles appearing in *The Bundaberg District Canegrower* do not necessarily represent the policies and views of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS.



If undeliverable return to:



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