

Australian Sugar Milling Council

# Monthly Wrap

September 2024



*The ASMC Monthly Wrap provides a snapshot to members, the sector and interested stakeholders of key policy, advocacy and industry activities impacting the sugar industry.*

## POLICY & ADVOCACY

### **Call for a National Biofuels Feedstock Strategy**

The ASMC, GrainGrowers and Canegrowers have teamed up to call on the Federal Government for a National Biofuels Feedstock Strategy. The Strategy calls for a comprehensive review of not only the availability of feedstock, but its accessibility, a plan for the freight and logistics infrastructure to support the movement of feedstock, and ensuring low carbon liquid fuel standards recognise the existing sustainability credentials of the various commodities involved.

We are also calling on an industry-government taskforce on this matter, as the sizeable opportunities in biofuels can only be achieved through collaboration between the public and private sectors.

### **NHVR developments**

ASMC has continued to be active in the industry task group that was formed to interact with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), with the aim of making the transition to direct NHVR heavy vehicle law compliance and enforcement responsibilities in Queensland as seamless as possible for the sugar industry.

A key outcome of this process for the ASMC has been working with the NHVR to ensure a practical approach to requirements for securing sugarcane for transportation, where harvested sugarcane can continue to be transported on roads without covering and still comply with NHVR load restraint requirements providing the loads are contained and not spilling billets.

### **Federal Aviation White Paper released**

On 26 August 2024, the Federal Government's Aviation White Paper was released. It has reaffirmed that the near to medium term net-zero future of the Aviation sector will be wholly reliant on sustainable aviation fuel. This is a significant diversification opportunity for the sugar milling sector, and forms a central part of the ASMC's policy and advocacy agenda. The White Paper can be found here: <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/media/publications/aviation-white-paper-towards-2050>

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### **Release of the Climate Change Authority Sector Pathways Review**

On 5 September 2024, The Climate Change Authority (CCA), the independent climate change body, released its Sector Pathways Review that has reaffirmed the central role of biofuels in getting Australian industries to net-zero, particularly in hard-to-abate sectors like transport and aviation. The report can be found here: <https://www.climatechangeauthority.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2024-09/2024SectorPathwaysReview.pdf>

### **National Farmer Rally**

The National Farmers Federation (NFF) is co-ordinating a national farmer rally/protest in Canberra on Tuesday 10 September.

Priority concerns listed for prominence at the rally, of particular interest to the sugar industry, include calls to reject the Government's proposed scrapping of the diesel fuel rebate, the proposed new biosecurity levy on agriculture and a consideration of the community impacts of energy and renewables developments.

The NFF is being supported by Coalition MPs in calling for involvement in the rally by Queensland sugarcane farmers.

### **Bundaberg Bio-economy Forum**

On 3 September 2024, Ash Salardini, CEO of the ASMC, presented at the Bio-economy Forum highlighting the opportunities that sugar provides in the bio-economy, in not only creating new jobs, but maintaining the existing 20,000 jobs that the sugar industry supports.

The key call to action was demand and supply side incentives by governments to kick-start the creation of this market, and a national biofuels feedstock strategy to ensure we have the feedstock available and accessible for this nascent industry.

### **New Sugar Industry Safety Code of Practice and Cane Rail supplement commences on 23 September**

The new Sugar Mill Safety Code of Practice and its Cane Rail Safety supplement will commence on 23 September 2024.

A statutory review of the Code and supplement was started in early 2020 led by the Office of Industrial Relations with oversight by an industry steering group consisting ASMC and milling safety specialists, union representatives and WH&S inspectorate officers.

ASMC and milling company safety specialists who participated in the review are satisfied that the 2024 Code provides a workable outcome that will continue to provide a comprehensive guide for workplace health and safety across the sugar milling industry.

The close involvement of the ASMC Secretariat and member representatives in the process has helped to ensure the code has been designed in a way that is fit for purpose and has provided for the sugar industry to best manage workplace risk.

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## Federal Government Northern Australia Action Plan

The Action Plan was released on 25 August 2024 and purports to 'maximise new and emerging opportunities for northern Australians', which includes Queensland regions north of Gladstone. While the Plan, in the main, repackages existing programs, three identified priorities can be leveraged by the sugar milling sector to promote our sector priorities and its links to the economic development of Northern Australia:

- Addressing current and future infrastructure needs in northern Australia.
- Supporting northern Australia accessing the skilled workforce required.
- Partnering with research organisation to develop research priorities for the north.

The ASMC will engage with Minister Madeleine King to put forward that the milling sector priorities on these matters will progress the Government's agenda. The Plan can be found here: <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/northern-australia-action-plan-2024-2029.pdf>

## IN THE MEDIA

Media release: [A National Biofuels Feedstock Strategy to Give Flight to Aviation's Net-Zero Ambitions](#) | 27 August 2024

Channel 7 (Bundaberg, Townsville, Mackay, Cairns): Central role of sugar as a feedstock to sustainable aviation fuel – 28 August 2024

ABC Far North, Cairns Drive: The need for a National Biofuels Feedstock Strategy – 28 August 2024

Radio 4KZ Innisfail – Low Carbon Liquid Fuel a potential game changer for sugar – 28 August 2024

Australian Rural & Regional News – [A National Biofuels Feedstock Strategy](#) – 27 August 2024

## COMING UP...

Queensland Government goes into caretaker mode at the beginning of October 2024.

Queensland State Elections to be held on 26 October 2024.

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