



7 APRIL 2025

## **Batteries to the left, nuclear to the right – renewable baseload electricity from sugar cogeneration left right out.**

Australians could be paying more for their electricity because governments and political parties are overlooking the benefits of renewable electricity cogeneration from bagasse - a sugar manufacturing byproduct. This blind spot could push Queensland's projected wholesale electricity prices up by 15% over the next decade.

“Sugar manufacturers can provide renewable baseload electricity from cogeneration right now, yet all the political focus is on more expensive gas peaking power plants, household and grid-scale batteries, and nuclear,” said Ash Salardini, CEO of Australian Sugar Manufacturers.

“Sugar cogeneration already powers 135,000 Queensland homes, with the potential to expand this clean energy source exponentially. With the right market incentives, we can provide an additional 2.1-terawatt hours of electricity p.a., powering a further 420,000 homes.

“If governments partner with us, we could deliver a 10-15% reduction in forecast wholesale electricity prices in the coming decade for Queenslanders, saving consumers hundreds of millions of dollars a year.”

Unlike solar and wind, sugar cogeneration provides baseload synchronous renewable electricity, acting as a renewable baseload power plant for the energy market when the sun does not shine, and the wind does not blow.

“Cogeneration is a solution to an affordable and smooth energy transition, but we need government to address the regulatory and market risks sugar manufacturers face when investing in new capacity,” Mr Salardini said.

“We're stuck with outdated energy rules that favour incumbent electricity generators and solar and wind, while ignoring proven solutions that could slash power bills and fast-track the clean energy transition.”

Current financial and regulatory settings fail to recognise the value of sugar cogeneration. The market also discourages participation by operators who aren't willing to game the system - the very tactics that have driven up wholesale prices and made energy unaffordable for Australians.

“We are in the business of making sugar, we are not here to game energy markets. We are simply putting forward a win-win proposition that will take some original thinking by policymakers, and we call on whomever forms government after the elections to grab this opportunity with two hands.”

AUSTRALIAN SUGAR  
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*Australian Sugar Manufacturers (ASM) is the peak industry body representing the nation's sugar manufacturing sector, contributing \$4.4 billion annually to the Australian economy and supporting more than 20,000 jobs in regional communities. ASM works closely with its members, industry stakeholders, and government to develop and advocate for policies that enhance the sustainability, competitiveness, and long-term economic contribution of the sugar manufacturing sector. From the production of raw sugar, bio-based manufacturing and generation of renewable energy, the sugar manufacturing sector continues to support communities, create jobs, and foster a sustainable future for the industry, and the broader economy.*