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## **Sugar, a key to regional Queensland's manufacturing future** ***Australian Sugar Manufacturers' election priorities***

Australian Sugar Manufacturers (ASM) has released its election priorities which target continued growth for regional economies and reinforce sugar's status as a key element of regional manufacturing in Queensland.

The \$4.4 billion sugar industry employs over 20,000 people and contributes around \$2.5 billion annually to Australia's export revenues. Beyond sugar, the sector offers major opportunities in baseload renewable electricity and biofuels.

"While chasing the latest shiny industry or manufacturing opportunity is appealing, I urge politicians *not* to lose focus on the immediate opportunities for supercharging our existing manufacturing capabilities here in Australia," Ash Salardini, CEO of the ASM said.

"We are key part of a solution to cost-of-living pressures. We power 135,000 homes with baseload renewable electricity and, with the right government support, can power 500,000 Queensland homes in total – reducing projected Queensland wholesale prices by up to 15% in the process."

"For context, this means that sugar manufacturers could generate enough renewable electricity to power every home in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Toowoomba and the Sunshine Coast."

"Sugar is the logical next step for domestic biofuels. Sugar manufacturers can also support national security by ensuring liquid fuel supply for our armed forces, with the majority of our factories located adjacent to North Queensland's defence capabilities."

"The cost of inaction by our governments in bioenergy and biomanufacturing is too great - higher energy prices for Queenslanders, fewer jobs for regional communities, and missed opportunities in advanced manufacturing", Mr Salardini concluded.

The realization of these opportunities will require the sugar industry, and Federal and Queensland Governments to work hand-in-glove. The Australian Sugar Manufacturers Federal Election Priorities (*attached*) provides a blueprint for the next Australian Government to:

1. Support an affordable energy transition by de-risking investment in electricity cogeneration, including contracts for difference that set a floor price for sugar-generated power exported to the grid.



2. Undertake pre-feasibility assessments on creating biofuels manufacturing in North Queensland to fuel Australia's Defence capabilities.
3. Invest \$60 million to upgrade the cane rail transport network – Queensland's second-largest freight task – to boost the sugar industry's global competitiveness and limit the amount of harvested sugarcane for processing being transported on regional roads.
4. Secure improved international market access through Government investment in promoting the sugar industry's superior sustainability performance.
5. Provide funding for a sugar industry skills and workforce strategy, ensuring that Australians living in regional Queensland continue benefit from well-paid jobs in the sugar industry.
6. Commit to a \$1.75 million annual contribution to a new Centre of Excellence for Advanced Sugar Manufacturing, creating an industry-owned research and development capacity for innovative technology in sugar, biofuels, biomanufacturing, and bioenergy.

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Click [here](#) to access our election priorities document

*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.*