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NEWS RELEASE

Training with a view

Emergency response team members from Wilmar Sugar's Kalamia Mill in the Burdekin saw the sunset from a whole new angle when they abseiled down the 72-metre stack in early May.

Team member and Kalamia Mill Operations Coordinator Ben Elliott said the scaffolding that was erected around the stack for refurbishment work provided a one-off opportunity to abseil from great heights for emergency response training.

"By training off the highest point in the mill, we can now be confident in any situation that may arise – no matter the height," he said.

The training involved preparing for every aspect of an at-height emergency, such as setting up equipment, checking and double-checking belts, buckles and devices, and performing safety checks.

Vertical rescue for emergency response team members is usually conducted on heights of up to 10 metres.

From the staggering height of more than 70 metres, the team experienced what it might be like to perform a rescue from such a height.

"It was certainly a surreal and daunting experience," Mr Elliott said.

"We're all adrenaline junkies so it was lots of fun. If I'm being honest though, it was a bit scary too."

Naturally, the six team members had to climb to the top of the stack before they could abseil down on 100-metre ropes.

Operations Coordinator Mark Nicolaides set the fastest ascent time, climbing the 36 floors in two minutes 59 seconds.

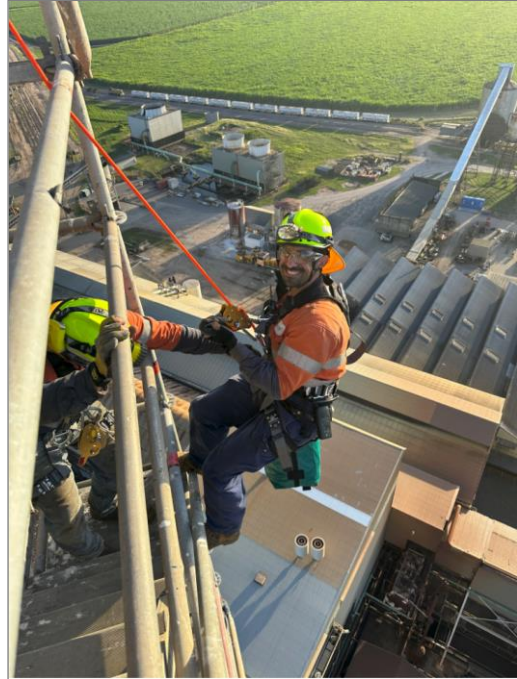
The scaffolding around the stack has been pulled down ahead of the 2023 crushing season, which starts at Kalamia Mill on Thursday 8 June.

The maintenance season work on Stack 1 is part of a multi-year project to transition Kalamia Mill to a single stack factory. Stack 5 – the smaller of the two – will be demolished in 2025.

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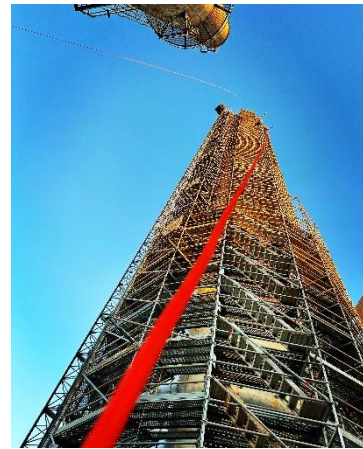
Ben Elliott prepares to abseil 72 metres down Kalamia Mill's tallest stack.



Emergency response team member Joseph Cardillo begins the long, steep descent.



Emergency response team members, from left, Martin Kmet, Ben Elliott, Craig Jepsen, Guiseppa Bonanno, Keegan Bailey and Joseph Cardillo. Absent is Mark Nicolaides.



The temporary scaffolding around Stack 5 provided a one-off opportunity for the emergency response team to abseil from the highest point at the site.

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