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NEWS RELEASE

Wilmar Sugar launches new loco

The newest locomotive in the Australian sugar industry is about to start its maiden season.

Wilmar Sugar's new 26 tonne locomotive, *Brisbane*, is the first new model introduced to the company's fleet since 1991.

Significantly, it's the first new cane rail loco designed and built from the ground up by a milling company for cane haulage in more than 140 years.

Wilmar Sugar Senior Project Engineer Calvin Smith said *Brisbane* had been designed to meet all of the company's requirements for a mid-sized loco.

"This has been a really important project for the company and for the team," Mr Smith said.

"We started the conceptual development by looking at what we wanted in a mid-sized loco, in terms of operational performance, fatigue life, cabin design and driver comfort.

"Then we engineered it from the ground up to meet all of our business needs across all of our milling regions."

It boasts several new features, including an improved gearbox design, a soft-mounted engine to reduce chassis vibration, a fit-for-purpose automotive-grade control system and new remote shunting unit for single driver operation.

The new loco also uses about 25 per cent less fuel than the model it will replace, and is part of a broader Wilmar strategy to reduce carbon emissions across the business.

Wilmar is also considering a trial of renewable fuel later this year.

Asset Manager for Mobile and Services, Carl Schmidt, said the Wilmar 26 tonne loco project had taken almost three years to complete – from concept to delivery – and cost about \$2 million.

"It has involved a lot of very dedicated and skilled people from different parts of the Wilmar business, as well as external contractors, and we're extremely proud of the result," Mr Schmidt said.

He said *Brisbane* would be based at Wilmar's Victoria Mill in the Herbert region, starting operations this season.

Two more of the new model locos are currently under construction, with two more planned for 2024.

Railway historian John Browning said the new Wilmar locomotive was a significant achievement.

“After more than 140 years, it is the first main line cane haulage locomotive designed and produced by a milling company in Queensland,” he said.

“Cane locomotives must be robust and purpose-built to operate 24/7 under demanding conditions.

“Wilmar’s understanding of these requirements means that in-house manufacture is preferable to going to a locomotive builder, most likely overseas, with no familiarity with Queensland conditions or experience in producing this type of loco.”

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FACT FILE

- *Wilmar Sugar owns and operates 74 locomotives across its milling regions*
- *The fleet comprises three different sized locos – large 40-tonne locos, mid-sized 24- to 26-tonne locos, and smaller 18-tonne side-rod locos.*
- *Wilmar started a major overhaul program in 2016, rebuilding its large, 40-tonne locos from the chassis up.*
- *The upgraded 40-tonne locos have a new Mercedes Benz engine Allison transmission and purpose-built Renk-Maag reversing box – a combination that delivers fuel reductions of around 30 per cent.*
- *So far 20 of the 40-tonne locos and four of the mid-sized Baldwin locos have been rebuilt.*
- *The new Wilmar 26 tonne loco will replace the aging Baldwin locomotives.*



Senior Project Engineer Calvin Smith with the new Wilmar 26 tonne loco, Brisbane.



Brisbane was designed and engineered from the ground up for Wilmar’s cane haulage operations. It is 25 per cent more fuel efficient than the model it replaces.



The new Wilmar loco underwent commissioning trials last year, and is about to start its maiden season.

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