NEWS RELEASE

Large capital program under way at Herbert mills

Almost 3000 new tubes will be installed in Macknade Mill's boiler seven air heater ahead of the 2016 crushing season.

The $980,000 job is among more than $12 million worth of capital projects Wilmar Sugar is undertaking in the Herbert this year.

Herbert Regional Operations Manager Adam Douglas said installation of the air heater tubes commenced last week and was now a well-oiled production line.

"The cut-to-size tubes are flared at each end before being lifted by a crane, six at a time," Mr Douglas said.

"They are then lowered into position through holes at the top of the air heater and expanded at both ends to be secured.

"We have nine of our Macknade employees working on the job.

"The team aims to install about 200 tubes per day but have already exceeded that target."

A $1.5 million rebuild of Macknade's ash clarifier is also well progressed. The vessel was lifted into position on Wednesday.

At Victoria Mill, a new A side shredder has arrived on site and will be installed in the factory next week.

"The shredder project is worth about $1 million," Mr Douglas said.

"We are also completing stage four of our centrifugal replacement project and spending about $800,000 to replace mill hydraulics."

To improve the Herbert's cane bin fleet, $1.5 million is being spent on 90 new double-axel bogie bins.

Mr Douglas said plans were in place to ensure Victoria and Macknade mills would be ready for the start of crushing.

"There is a lot of capital and maintenance work under way at both mills," he said.

"Victoria Mill is likely to start steam trials in late May, while Macknade will probably be early June.

"We are keen to improve our performance this year and believe the investment we are making in the factories should help us achieve that."

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