

Tuesday, 28 May 2019

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **New warning lights enhance cane train safety**

Cane trains are on the move in the Burdekin again as the local sugar industry prepares for next week's start to the 2019 crush.

In the lead-up to the season, Wilmar Sugar Australia has completed major safety upgrades at two high-traffic cane rail crossings.

Additional warning lights have been installed at the Sheep Station Creek crossing on the Bruce Highway, just north of Brandon, and at the Airdale crossing on Ayr-Dalbeg Road.

Wilmar Electrical Work Coordinator Cecilla McCallum said the new warning lights had been installed about 200 to 350 metres on either side of the railway crossings.

"The idea is that motorists will notice the warning lights in advance of the flashing lights located at the actual crossing, which gives them more time to slow down and stop for passing cane trains," Ms McCallum said.

"We work with the Department of Transport and Main Roads every year to make decisions on cane railway crossing upgrades, with the ongoing goal of increasing safety."

Ms McCallum said there were now four level crossings in the Burdekin that were protected by pre-warning lights as well as crossing lights.

"Wilmar installed pre-warning lights at the cane rail crossing on the Bruce Highway just south of the Haughton Bridge several years ago. Then last year we installed pre-warning lights at the McDesme crossing on the Bruce Highway."

Burdekin Cane Supply Manager Peter Luke said cane trains would soon be operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week throughout the region.

"I'd like to urge drivers not to get complacent on roads they frequently use," Mr Luke said.

"We'll be working with growers to prioritise harvesting paddocks with cane that impedes road views of cane railway lines.

"We've got about 8.24 million tonnes of sugarcane to get from paddocks to the mills this year, and we want to make sure that's all done safely."

The first cane of the season is scheduled to be crushed at Wilmar's Kalamia and Inkerman mills next Tuesday (4 June).

Invicta and Pioneer mills are set to follow suit on the 11 June.

**ENDS**

PHOTO:



*CAPTION: Wilmar employees install a new early warning light system at the Sheep Station Creek cane rail crossing on the Bruce Highway, just north of Brandon.*

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