



## Media Statement

31 May 2023

### **Digital campaign highlights job opportunities in the sugar manufacturing sector**

A local third-year apprentice boilermaker from Mackay Sugar's Marian Mill is one of the faces of a new digital campaign launched by the Australian Sugar Milling Council (ASMC) to highlight the training and apprenticeship opportunities available throughout regional Queensland and the sugar milling industry's significant economic and social contributions to the state.

Maddy McConaghy is one of eight apprentices from Queensland sugar mills to feature in the campaign, which coincides with the start of the annual sugarcane crushing season in Queensland. Ms McConaghy said the apprenticeship was providing her with the opportunity to learn new skills and maintain her work-life balance.

"I learn lots of new skills and I get to be home every night," she said.

"Each day brings new tasks. Lots of mill repairs, fabricating new pipes, and getting to use a big range of welding equipment.

"Everybody works really well together and it's a great work-life balance."

ASMC Chief Executive Officer Rachele Sheard said the sugar industry is the lifeblood of many regional communities along the Queensland coastline, supporting over 19,000 jobs and injecting close to \$3.8 billion directly and indirectly into the state economy.

"The sugar manufacturing sector is part of the economic fabric of regional Queensland communities and offers attractive and skilled career pathways," Ms Sheard said.

"This campaign puts a face to our apprentices and highlights the important role the factories play in providing training and career opportunities, financial security and a great lifestyle in regional Queensland.

The Sugar Milling Apprentice campaign will be promoted through social media, industry events and partnerships, and also profiles apprentices from Tully Sugar, Wilmar Sugar's Victoria Mill (Ingham) and Pioneer Mill (Brandon), Mackay Sugar, and Isis Central Sugar (Bundaberg Region).

Ms Sheard said she hopes the campaign will help raise awareness of the important role the sugar industry plays in Queensland's economy and inspire more young people to pursue apprenticeships in the industry.

"Having diversified sources of employment and investment has never been more important for our regional communities, who without the agriculture sector, would have been severely impacted during the pandemic.



“Not only do our sugar factories offer rewarding career pathways and financial security to regional Queenslanders and their communities locally, but we are a progressive, future-focused sector that will make a significant contribution to our state’s renewable energy agenda over the next decade.”

Minister for Skills and Training, Brendan O’Connor, endorsed the Sugar Milling Apprenticeship campaign, highlighting the importance of securing the next generation of skilled workers.

“The sugar industry is so important for Australia, and we need the next generation of skilled workers to support it into the future,” he said.

“An apprenticeship in the sugar sector can lead to a rewarding, secure and well-paid job in a vital Australian industry.”

Visit [www.asmc.com.au](http://www.asmc.com.au) to view the campaign and for more information about careers in the sugar manufacturing sector.

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For more information, please contact:  
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## **Background**

ASMC is the peak organisation for the sugar manufacturing sector, working to transform Australian sugarcane *by diversifying the industry, expanding trade opportunities, and creating new markets*. ASMC represents five sugar manufacturing companies which collectively produce 90 percent of Australia’s raw sugar at their 16 sugar mills in Queensland.