

MEDIA RELEASE

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Rarawai Mill performance update

The Rarawai Mill opened its 2019 crushing season on 9th July 2019. The mill is in its second week of crushing and has crushed some 15,000 tonnes of cane so far.

Mill start-up teething issues are not a new occurrence, nor is any mill immune to these sorts of things, because starting up mill equipment, which has been dormant for 6-months, does require a period of adjustment.

Furthermore to add perspective to Rarawai's case, the mill is Fiji's oldest mill and the last major refurbishment to the mill was carried out over 10 years ago. Compounded by the fact that the mill's close proximity to the Ba river, has meant that the mill has seen its fair share of successive flooding brought on by cyclones, impacting on the life of plant and equipment.

Considering the above factors and the age and condition of the mill's equipment, much of the mill's start-up issues in the first week of operations, were due to the synchronizing of new and old equipment and getting the equipment to harmonize. We are now seeing improvements in this synchronization as the mill settles.

For the last 8 weeks a specialized crew of steam turbine engineers has been working in all three FSC mills. They will complete their work at Rarawai this weekend, after which a steam generator will be brought on line to generate additional electricity at Rarawai. This will be exported to the national grid.

The refurbished boiler at Rarawai is supplying good quality steam at much steadier pressure than in previous years. This will further stabilize operations.

The Rarawai Mill will be required to crush 500,000 tonnes of cane in the 2019 season. This will require a daily crush rate of between 3,000 and 3,500 tonnes. For Week 2 of crushing, an average daily crush of 3,200 tonnes has been achieved so far.



Above: Tipping of a cane rail truck at the Rarawai Mill opening this year

FSC does not work in isolation, excluding other industry stakeholders – such as, the Sugar Cane Growers' Council, and the Sugar Industry Tribunal. The Master Award governs how each stakeholder should perform and all requirements are met.

In the case of Rarawai Mill, stakeholders were kept informed on the mill's readiness for the season and FSC were in full discussions with the Council and the Tribunal. Furthermore, the FSC was in compliance with the Master Award and the Sugar Industry Tribunal approved the mill start-up as announced.

FSC thanks all stakeholders including growers and lorry operators for their support and words of encouragement thus far and we look forward to a good crushing season for Rarawai Mill as it progresses into its 2019 crushing program.

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