The Australian Wine Industry moves towards 100% adoption of pregnancy warning labelling

December 2016

Winemakers' Federation of Australia

1. INTRODUCTION

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA) is committed to promoting the National Health and Medical Research Council's advice that the safest option for women is to abstain from drinking alcohol if they are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding.

To help promote this message to the public, WFA has worked with DrinkWise Australia towards a goal of 100 per cent uptake of the pregnancy warning logos (the logos) on all Australian wine products for retail sale.

In a recent annual audit, (summary below) 90 per cent of Australian wine stock keeping units (SKUs) in the top 75 per cent of the market, across a range of packaging types, had incorporated the logos. This shows continued improvement over previous audits. WFA is targeting the remaining wine producers in the top market bracket who have not yet incorporated the warning messages into their labels to encourage faster adoption.

While there is very good uptake in the major market share categories, WFA is aiming for all Australian wine products, including those from small producers, to include the logos. WFA is working with state and regional wine associations and their members to increase the use of the pregnancy logos across all market segments.

This voluntary action by the wine industry demonstrates the benefits of industry and Government working together to achieve a positive outcome through a voluntary measure, without the costs and burden to industry of regulatory red tape. The continuing improvement in uptake shows the wine industry's commitment and support for this initiative.

Adoption of the pregnancy logos remains a key plank of WFA's Responsible Winery Initiative. The WFA will be working closely with DrinkWise Australia and major retail outlets in 2017 to promote awareness of the logos in a point of sale campaign, which will also include cellar doors. WFA will also repeat this audit annually to monitor improvement.

State and federal health Ministers will assess industry efforts to voluntarily adopt pregnancy labelling in 2017. WFA believes that these results which show continued improvement clearly demonstrate that mandatory regulation is unnecessary.

2. AUDIT RESULTS

2.1 Summary and Methodology

Product Category	Total	Found[1]	No logo	Yes logo[2]
All wine (75% market share)	490	481	59 (12%)	422 (88%)
Exclude non-Australian wine products (NZ and other)		**426**	43 (10%)	383 (90%)

There are 490 wine SKUs which make up 75 per cent of the market share (by volume) sold through major retail outlets. As with the previous audit, WFA believes that analysis of market share by volume is a more effective measure of logo reach, than a random shelf audit of products on any given day. One of the strengths of this audit result is the very high number of found SKUs, collated from retail visits and information from companies.

Representatives from WFA visited several retail outlets including Dan Murphy's, BWS, Liquorland and IGA Liquor stores during September, October and November 2016. Pictures of the labels of all products found were taken and recorded, including vintage information.

Given the relative consolidation of brand ownership within the top market share, company representatives were able to confirm the presence or absence of logos when the specific SKU could not be found. This was also cross-checked with evidence of found SKUs of similar packaging from the same brand/companies to confirm a brand/company-wide policy regarding labelling. These were included in the yes/no totals.

This confirmation and follow-up with specific companies is important, as SKU availability on the shelves on an audit visit does not provide enough found SKUs to confidently build a picture of the top 75 percent market share.

Of those 490 SKUs, 9 were not found at local outlets during several visits, nor could an assumption be made about the presence or absence of a logo as there were not similar products of the same brand and type or packaging that could reasonably support an assumption. Of these 9 SKUs, 4 were not Australian product, 4 were cask wine and 1 was described as 'end of bin assorted wine' (a sale category covering a range of products at any one time).

[1] This also includes products not found, but which are the same brand/company and type of others found.
[2] This also includes 9 SKUs of older products on shelves that did not include the logo, but where there were also SKUs of similar packaging types of the same brand that included the logo – demonstrating overall brand adoption and changeover of labels in progress.

Of the 481 found SKUs, 88 per cent (422 SKUs) carried a form of the logo as recommended by Drinkwise. This includes assumptions relating to 9 SKUs which did not include the logos, but where there was evidence of label changeover found in other similar packaging types of the same brand. This was also confirmed by company representatives. Of the 12 per cent of SKUs not carrying the logos, 16 SKUs are non-Australian wine (NZ or other). Of the 88 per cent of SKUs carrying the logo, 39 SKUs are non-Australian wine (NZ or other). If these are excluded from the audit, the conforming SKUs reach 90 per cent.

Of the 10 percent of Australian SKUs not carrying the logo, 12 SKUs are from one company. WFA is confident they will introduce the logos over the next twelve months, which would reduce the non-conforming Australian product to seven per cent.

In looking at the percentage of Australian wines without the logos by wine type, the actual SKU numbers are relatively small in most categories so percentages are not meaningful. There is no one wine type which shows significantly less or more rates of logo adoption. Given the spread, it illustrates the point that most producers sell products across a number of wine types and are generally likely to adopt the logo across the entire range, or not.

2.2 Analysis by wine type

Logos Present	'Yes' Austn + Int (422 SKUs)	'Yes' Austn only (383 SKUs)	'No' Austn + Int (59 SKUs)	'No' Austn only (43 SKUs) (% of Austn only)
Shiraz	48	46	3	3 (6%)
Cabernet Sauvignon	29	29		
Merlot	17	16	1	0
Cabernet Merlot	14	14		
Shiraz Cabernet	10	9		
Pinot Noir	3	2	3	1 (33%)
Other red blends	18	14	3	2 (13%)
Sauvignon Blanc	39	17	7	2 (11%)
Chardonnay	32	32	2	1 (3%)
Semillon Sauvignon Blanc	18	18		
Pinot Grigio	12	10		
Moscato	7	7	2	2 (22%)
Riesling	4	4	3	3 (43%)
Other white blends	13	13	6	5 (28%)
Sparkling	52	46	12	7 (13%)
Ginger Wine	2	2		
Cask (fortified)	7	7	2	2 (22%)
Cask (red)	34	34	5	5 (13%)
Cask (white)	55	55	6	6 (9%)
Fortified (non-cask)	8	8	4	4 (33%)

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