

Member Bites: WFA Activities November 13, 2015

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Ministerial responsibilities: Wine industry goes to Minister Ruston

The Prime Minister has issued “charter letters” detailing specific policy responsibilities to each Minister. Senator Anne Ruston, who was appointed as Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources in the new Turnbull Ministry, has been given direct responsibility for the wine industry. This means she is the lead Minister for developing and implementing policies that directly affect the operation of the industry. Minister Ruston has a long history of engaging with the wine industry and of understanding the challenges and opportunities ahead. WFA has congratulated the Minister on the conferment.

Contact: Melissa Cheesman-Faull – 08 8133 4312, melissa@wfa.org.au

WWTG meets in Adelaide

Australia hosted the World WineTrade Group meeting in Adelaide this week. This important group was created to reduce trade barriers to wine throughout the world. Government officials, wine regulators and industry from Australia, Argentina, Chile, South Africa, United States, Canada, New Zealand and Georgia came together to address market access problems. This group exemplifies the close cooperation that has developed between industry and government. Key outcomes from the meeting included negotiations on an arrangement for regulatory cooperation to assist in combating fraud and counterfeit wines. The group also agreed to coordinate and cooperate to reduce a number of market access barriers impacting on wine trade.

Contact: Tony Battaglione – 0413014807, tony@wfa.org.au

Reducing barriers

Among works in progress or under consideration by the World Wine Trade Group is a project to reduce the barriers at the border for sending samples. Another is work to reduce trade barriers in the developing markets of India, Russia, Brazil, and East Africa. This group remains a critical element in our strategy to reduce trade barriers and improve success, and advances are being made. WFA is particularly gratified by the support of the Australian Government through DFAT, Department of Agriculture and AGWA in the group.

Contact: Tony Battaglione – 0413014807, tony@wfa.org.au

Extra 5% off safety devices & services

WFA is delighted to welcome Dräger as a WFA Network Partner. Dräger manufactures, supplies and services a wide range of safety products for general industrial use including gas detection, confined space entry and alcohol testing devices. Dräger is offering WFA Members an additional 5% off prices listed in its *Harvest Specials* promotion. Are you harvest ready? Click [here](#) to view the products and services available. To place your orders, please call Dräger on 1800 372 437.

WET Rebate consultative group's report with government

A consultative group appointed to advise government has now completed its discussions and developed a report. Under the Abbott Government, responsibility for progressing consideration of WET rebate reform lay with Assistant Treasurer Josh Frydenberg. Under the Turnbull Ministry, the management of the reform is being shared between Minister Joyce (Agriculture and Water Resources), Minister Ruston (Assisting on Agriculture and Water Resources) and Minister O'Dwyer (Assistant Treasurer). Cabinet will consider the matter and a decision is expected before year's end.

Contact: Melissa Cheesman-Faull – 08 8133 4312, melissa@wfa.org.au

TPP and ChaFTA

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) moved a step closer with treaty information released for the first time. The TPP aim to level the playing field for Australian exports into the 12 signatory economies which together account for 45% of Australia's total wine exports – or around \$837 million out of the total \$1.9 billion in Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade figures. There's still some legal and other government hoops to go through but we remain optimistic given how distant the TPP was just 12 months ago. Of course there are no silver bullets to trade barriers but every bit counts and eliminating tariffs into Canada as well as gradual removal in others are all positive developments. Meanwhile the Australian Government has officially approved the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement with tariff cuts on tract to start in January 2016. Good news all around.

Contact: Tony Battaglione – 0413014807, tony@wfa.org.au

Future Leaders graduates

Future Leaders 2015 has completed its program with 16 graduates this year. Over the past decade, the FL community has grown to more than 90 from the wine and grape community. The program held sessions in different parts of the country and featured presentations by established business leaders from both within and external to the industry. WFA was proud to support the program again this year. Meet the FL15 graduates [here](#).

Senate Inquiry – report due February 2016

The hearings for the Senate Inquiry into the Australian grape and wine industry have now been held. WFA gave evidence at the final hearing in the Swan Valley, Western Australia, on October 27. WFA President Tony D'Aloisio and CEO Paul Evans spoke of the importance of WET rebate reform and of securing additional funds for AGWA to help grow export demand for Australian wine. The full transcript of WFA's evidence can be accessed on the Senate Committee's website, [here](#). The Committee will now review all the submissions and evidence and a report with specific recommendations for government, must be tabled by 12 February 2016. The Committee's report is not binding upon the Government but the Government is required, within six months of tabling, to issue a formal response. In the interim, WFA continue to lobby the Government for WET rebate reform and for a portion of the savings from these reforms to be returned to AGWA for the express purpose of driving the export demand for Australian wine across traditional markets like North America and the UK and newer markets in Asia like China.

Contact: Melissa Cheesman-Faull – 08 8133 4312, melissa@wfa.org.au

Free VitiCanopy app now available

Adelaide University has developed a free phone app to help manage vines. Using an iPad or an iPhone's camera and GPS capability, it analyses and calculates leaf area index, taking into consideration the canopy shape, density, time and location - all from just the image. An android version of the app is being developed. The aim is to replace traditional labor intensive and often costly measuring techniques and eliminates the need for expensive instruments. The app's GPS capability means information can be electronically gathered and mapped. VitiCanopy is available from Apple's app store. See [here](#) for more information.

Contact: Alexia Deegan – 08 8133 4303, alexia@wfa.org.au

National Alcohol Strategy submissions due 20 November

A discussion paper has been released to aid in the development of the next National Alcohol Strategy (NAS) for 2016-2021. Industry has been invited to express its views on the discussion paper by completing an online survey with the option of then also making a formal submission. The NAS is a sub-strategy of the National Drug Strategy (NDS) which is currently in draft form. WFA has been critical of the NDS and expressed these concerns in a submission and directly with federal and state health ministers. WFA's submission on the NDS can be accessed [here](#). WFA will also be providing a submission on the NAS, due 20 November. Once lodged,

this will also be available on WFA website. Anyone who wishes to read the NAS Discussion Paper and complete the survey (by 20 November), can do so [here](#).

Contact: Melissa Cheesman-Faull – 08 8133 4312, melissa@wfa.org.au

National Industry Scholarship Grants – time running out

Applications for grants of between \$4,500 and \$12,000 to support development of women leaders must be submitted prior to November 30. Women & Leadership Australia is administering the program and is keen to receive applications from women to undertake an accelerated leadership performance program (\$4,500 scholarship level) and an advanced program (\$12,000). See [here](#) for application details and [here](#) for information about the program.

Contact: Ian Johnson (National Industry Scholarship Program) – 03 9270 9000, ijohnson@asam.edu.au

Are there issues you need an update on? Email wfa@wfa.org.au or contact staff above.

2. Upcoming events

November 17: Inaugural Women in Wine Awards announcement ([details](#))

November 19: Earlier, Shorter, Hotter: Managing Compressed Vintages ASVO Adelaide [Seminar](#)

November 19: *Seize the opportunity* Free Trade Agreements Seminar, Bunbury, WA, ([details](#))

November 20: Crush 2015 Grape and Wine Science Symposium ([details](#))

November 20: *Seize the opportunity* Free Trade Agreements Seminar, Perth ([details](#))

November 27: *Seize the opportunity* Free Trade Agreements Seminar, Winchelsea, Vic ([details](#))

December 4: *Seize the opportunity* Free Trade Agreements Seminar, Bundaberg, Qld ([details](#))

July 23-28, 2016: Australian Wine Industry Outlook, Technical Conference & Trade Exhibition:
<http://www.awitc.com.au/> & <http://www.awite.com.au/>

3. Links and Media stories

Wine Australia sets record attendance at ProWine China (theShout) Nov 11, 2015

More than 20 Australian brands joined Wine Australia's ProWine stand in China, TheShout reports. Read about who's there, what they're saying and plans for next year [here](#).

Collectors stash \$2.2B of wine in old UK ammo dump (SMH Business Day, Nov 11, 2015)

The Sydney Morning Herald reports the number of cases stored near Bath, UK, by Octavian has growth to 35% in four years. Read more [here](#).

Concern over wine tax delay (Stock Journal), Nov 10.

"We have come a long way in the process ... and I think we will have a very positive announcement for industry before the end of the year," Ms Ruston is quoted in this week's Stock Journal in relation to the WET rebate. Read the full article [here](#).

The French lost this court case against an Australian called 'Champagne Jayne' (Business Insider), Nov 10

Business Insider reports Jayne Powell's 3-year legal fight to use the word Champaign (she goes by the name Champagne Jane) is over. She was taken to court by Comité interprofessionnel du Vin de Champagne (representing the French champagne industry). The Federal Court of Victoria ruled Powell can continue being known as Champagne Jayne for her business, website, Facebook account and social media. A claim she contravened the Australian Grape and Wine Authority Act was also dismissed. Read [more](#).

Wine Communicator Award winners names (theShout), Nov 10

Wine Communicator and Digital Communicator of the Year is Tyson Stelzer, while Rochard Smart took out Best Trade or Technical Wine Writer category, Uni of Adelaide Best Wine Educator and Alquimie was named Best Wine Publication (trade or consumer). See full list and more information [here](#).

Alcohol in moderation belief flawed: academic (The West Australian), Nov 9

According to this report, a Curtin University academic has raised questions about studies finding that a small amount of alcohol is good for you. Read full article [here](#).

The wine wars: Is cheap wine too cheap? (SMH Business Day), Oct 31

Story from Nassim Khadem suggesting The price of wine could rise if the Turnbull government proceeds with changes to the way Australian wine is taxed. It's an issue that's put the industry at war. Full story [here](#).

Winemakers cry foul as Coles and Woolworth become major wine producers in their own right (Radio National), Oct 30

Home-brand wine produced by Woolworths and Coles make up 18% of the market – and now some big name premium winemakers like Wolf Blass say it's time for stricter labelling so consumers know what they are buying. Read full transcript or listen to audio [here](#).

Wine Equalisation Tax rebate” a rort? (SMH Business Day), Oct 30, 2015

WFA's Paul Evans highlights WET rebate reform outcomes from Treasury consultations likely before year's end. Read [more](#).

Wolf Blass rails against Woolies, Coles (AFR, SMH, The Age), Oct 29, 2015

These paper reported Mr Blass at a business lunch with WFA's Paul Evans, saying vertical integration of both Woolworths and Coles' liquor businesses, where they source bulk wine for their own home brands that have now reached a combined 18% of overall market on some estimates, is distorting the \$4 billion wine sector. He says tougher labelling laws are needed so customers can clearly see if they are buying a private label brand. Full story [here](#).

Wine industry reform a huge benefit for SA (The Advertiser, Daily Wine News), Oct 29, 2015

The Advertiser reports from the Rural Media Association business lunch where WFA Paul Evans outlines the pressures facing winemakers and the need to act swiftly to retain but reform the WET rebate. Minister Ruston agrees to quick change. Full story [here](#).

Coles, Woolies ‘decimating’ wine industry (AFR), Oct 28, 2015

AFR's Julie-anne Sprague reports on the Senate Inquiry into the Wine Industry and WFA's evidence at the Perth hearing, including Coles and Woolworths identifying their home brand wine labels for consumers. WFA outlined its reform plans for the Wine Equalisation Tax to make it more difficult for the large retailers to ultimately benefit from tax rebates. Tony D'Aloisio told the inquiry "price distortion" had emerged because low-cost homebrand wine was made using bulk wine, which was often able to attract a WET rebate.

WFA wants home brand wine identified (TheShout), Oct 28, 2015

The Winemakers Federation of Australia (WFA) has told a Senate inquiry that it would like to see supermarket home branded wine properly identified. The WFA was speaking at the Rural and Regional Affairs Transport Reference Committee's Australian Grape and Wine Industry hearing, which was taking place in Perth. The hearing was one of a series that have been taking place around Australia as part of an inquiry into the wine industry. WFA chief executive told the hearing: "What we would like to see is that home brands are identified so consumers can make their choice." Full story [here](#).