

13 December, 2013

AUSTRALIAN WINE INDUSTRY UNVEILS BLUEPRINT TO LIFT PROFITABILITY

An action plan to lift the profitability of Australian wine businesses has been released today by the nation's peak industry body for winemakers.

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA) has launched its "Actions for Industry Profitability 2014-2016" to position the country's wine sector for growth in both domestic and export markets.

The report comprises 43 specific "Actions" in the key issue areas for industry including capturing the demand opportunity for Australian wine internationally, the wine and health debate, and working with national wine retailers on growing the category locally among consumers.

WFA President Tony D'Aloisio says the Actions are underpinned by independent expert analysis on the state of the industry and were developed by a highly experienced and representative WFA Board following close consultation with other wine industry bodies and small, medium and large wine businesses.

"The Actions are all designed at improving industry settings to grow domestic and export markets and lift industry profitability," he said.

"This growth and lift in profitability is important for regional jobs and to attract the capital required to re-invest in infrastructure and in necessary innovation for the sector to retain and improve global competitiveness."

The Actions include initiatives to help wine businesses in entering and succeeding in key overseas markets such as the US and China; continue the sector's commitment to responsible consumption and a balanced regulatory framework; bring the supply and demand for Australian wine into better balance; retain with some changes to the wine equalisation tax rebate; and develop a voluntary code of conduct with national wine retailers.

The Actions have been finalised after the release in August of suggested Actions and an independent expert review of industry dynamics followed by and with the benefit of an extensive consultation period with industry during September and October.

As part of the consultation period, WFA undertook 11 regional road shows and received more than 70 written submissions from winemakers, producers, retailers, wine associations and individuals. All comments made were captured and shared publicly through the WFA website.

"The invaluable input from the consultations has led to the Actions increasing from 33 to 43 and with modification of others. These changes have been clearly identified in the report so that those who participated can see that their views mattered," said the CEO of WFA, Paul Evans.

"We believe we have a solid and robust industry blueprint which has very wide support.

“We now look forward to maintaining the momentum and to continuing to work with our members, governments and other stakeholders to implement these Actions.”

The expert review and development of the Actions were supported by funding from the Wolf Blass Foundation and the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation.

The actions and supporting documentation can be found at www.wfa.org.au

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

Kieran Hall on 0422 147 151 or kieran@hughespr.com.au or

Daniela Hongell on 0418 847 903 or daniela@hongellandme.com.au