



MEDIA RELEASE

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Wine industry welcomes merger legislation

A wine industry proposal to create a single statutory authority to support Australia's winemakers and wine grape growers took an important step forward today with the introduction of enabling legislation into Parliament.

The Bill seeks to establish the new Australian Grape and Wine Authority through the merger of the existing Wine Australia Corporation (WAC) and Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation (GWRDC).

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA) and Wine Grape Growers Australia (WGGA) – the industry's representative bodies – proposed the merger last year.

"We are pleased with the support we received from the Government and the Opposition when we raised the idea and even more so to see the matter brought before the Parliament so quickly," said WGGA Chair Vic Patrick.

"Minister Ludwig and his Department are to be congratulated for responding to our request and recognising the industry's needs."

WFA President Tony D'Aloisio, AM, said the merger had been strongly backed by industry during a consultation period.

"We were aware that merging two successful statutory authorities was a big step, but the clear message from both WFA and WGGA members was that a single organisation would be in a better position to effectively and efficiently meet their needs," he said.

"It will have a better capability to identify and deliver aligned industry strategic imperatives and R&D goals, and deliver industry programs."

Mr D'Aloisio said the wine industry was developing strategies to help it work through one of the toughest trading periods in two decades, and welcomed the Government's support.

It was hoped the Bill would pass through Parliament in time for the merged entity to take effect from the middle of 2014.

All four national organisations – WFA, WGGA, WAC and the GWRDC – are co-located in the National Wine Centre in Adelaide.

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