

WINE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE AUSTRALIAN WINE SECTOR'S COMMITMENT TO PROMOTE HEALTHIER CONSUMPTION PATTERNS OF WINE BY AUSTRALIANS, TO ENHANCE THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR SECTOR AND TO TAKE EVERY MEASURE POSSIBLE TO ENSURE WINE IS ALWAYS ENJOYED IN MODERATION.

An introduction to Wine and Social Responsibility

Australia's wine industry has much to be proud of.

Responsible for the jobs of more than 60,000 Australians, the generation of more than \$3 billion in export income and the backbone of many regional communities, our wine sector produces a product that is responsibly enjoyed by millions of people around the world.

When consumed in moderation, in a manner consistent with the Australian Alcohol Guidelines, wine is part of a healthy lifestyle. It can even lead to some positive health benefits. This has been the case around the world for literally thousands of years.

However, when wine or other alcohol products are consumed to excess, over either the short or long term, they can contribute to a range of harms, both social and physical. This abuse of our product is a blight on our sector. That this abuse exists is unquestionable, and our sector must be united in doing everything we can to minimize the occurrence and impacts from excessive and irresponsible consumption of wine and alcohol.

It is also the subject of sustained attacks from those with a "command and control" approach to regulation who would seek to attack the many to address the problems of a minority. Our efforts are focused on delivering practical and positive results through a partnership approach to policy and regulation. Our energy is directed towards targeted programs that address pockets of anti-social behaviour and problem drinkers based on evidence of real outcomes rather than the broad, high profile band-aid approach promulgated by some sectors.

The WFA Wine and Social Responsibility program seeks to adopt a range of proposals that will contribute to the development of healthier consumption patterns of wine by Australians, enhance the social responsibility of our industry and highlight the many measures we take to ensure wine is always enjoyed in moderation.

This is an ambitious and necessary strategy that will require support from across the wine sector to guarantee success. Achieving that success will ensure we continue to have much to be proud of.

Wine and Social Responsibility: our mission & objectives

Our mission

The *WFA Wine and Social Responsibility Strategy* has the following mission:

“To further enhance the social responsibility practiced by the wine sector, maintaining a sustainable market where wine is a widely enjoyed, broadly accepted and responsibly consumed part of Australian life.”

Our objectives

This mission is supported by a series of objectives that highlight the extent of the challenge faced by the wine sector in pursuit of the broad mission.

Specifically, this strategy aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote consumer adoption of responsible patterns of consumption.
- To promote a safe and healthy drinking culture and, where possible, influence change to limit undesirable consumption behaviours.
- Demonstrate wide-spread wine sector commitment to a practical partnership approach with Government on regulation and policy through such measures as the Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code and promotion of standard drinks labelling.
- To improve knowledge throughout the wine sector of the patterns of wine consumption, effects of this consumption and potential for beneficial impacts from moderate wine consumption.
- To make responsible promotion and moderate consumption with food a recognised value of the Australian wine sector.
- To demonstrate to the wine sector the social and commercial risks associated with inaction on wine and social responsibility related matters and enhance our commitment to minimise abuse of wine and alcohol through every available measure.
- To highlight to opinion leaders and throughout the community the contribution of the wine sector to all aspects of the Australian society and economy.
- To maintain a reasonable regulatory regime surrounding the production and sale of wine by demonstrating our commitment to addressing areas of abuse and working in

partnership with Government and other agencies to combat irresponsible consumption of our product.

- To continue a cooperative relationship with other alcohol producers that ensures the adoption of consistent policies that further the aim of establishing responsible consumption patterns and minimising abuse.
- To build partnerships for the wine sector in the health and social services sector that enhance our contribution to minimise harmful consumption patterns and promote a safe and healthy drinking culture.

Wine and social responsibility: our plan of action

A multi-faceted approach to wine and social responsibility is required. This effort seeks to maintain the independence of the wine sector, while working with other alcohol producers, as well as retailers, government and community organisations, where we share common objectives.

These proposals highlight priorities in research, education, communication, corporate responsibility and social change.

Making informed decisions

Wine and social responsibility efforts in the wine industry have been largely driven out of individual companies, with limited coordination through WFA and technical support from the Australian Wine Research Institute. The coordination of policy experts and highly interested members of the wine sector has been limited.

To improve the basis on which future policies and programs are developed and promoted, and to assist in managing the implementation of this strategy, a WFA Wine and Social Responsibility Committee has been established, with the following terms of reference:

- To collect, review and promote the development of evidence that informs the wine sector on the affects of the consumption of wine;
- To collect, review and promote the development of evidence that informs the wine industry on the patterns of consumption of wine in Australia and around the world;
- To make recommendations to the Winemakers' Federation of Australia Board on evidence based policies that promote the responsible consumption of wine;
- To inform the AWRI and other relevant research bodies on priorities for research into the effects of wine consumption and patterns of wine consumption;

- To establish relationships with researchers, the medical community, government and non-government organisations with an interest in the affect of wine consumption;
- To facilitate the release of public information by the wine sector on the affects and patterns of wine consumption;
- To identify or pursue funding opportunities that support wine sector priorities related to the affects and patterns of wine consumption; and
- To assist and advise the wine sector in the preparation of submissions or public comment on the affects and patterns of wine consumption.

The Committee is skills-based and includes wine industry practitioners with a strong interest, training or experience in social policy plus experts on the clinical, pharmacological / physiological and social effects of wine and its consumption.