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MEDIA RELEASE

Target high-risk drinkers, not all drinkers

The Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA) welcomes the efforts of Governments to combat harmful alcohol consumption, but has serious concerns that the current draft National Alcohol Strategy (NAS) targets all consumers rather than those most at risk.

WFA Chief Executive, Tony Battaglione, said the draft NAS being considered by Federal, State and Territory Governments misses the mark. If implemented, it will hurt all moderate and responsible consumers and not help those in real need of intervention.

“There are several ideas in the draft NAS that we support, including national recognition of Responsible Service of Alcohol requirements, improved awareness and enforcement of secondary supply laws (regarding underage drinking) and more effective compliance activities around existing laws,” Mr Battaglione said.

“However, the draft NAS includes population-wide measures such as taxation, pricing and advertising restrictions that will penalise responsible consumers and will not provide direct assistance to those struggling with alcohol abuse.

“We know that risky drinking has significantly declined in a range of demographic groups including underage drinking and young men in their 20's. This draft NAS is a missed opportunity to really drill down into the causal factors behind those successes and to identify specific groups which still need interventions and assistance.

WFA is also very disappointed that the Draft NAS deliberately excludes industry as a stakeholder in the proposed stakeholder Reference Group which will measure the progress of the strategy and its implementation.

“Australian winemakers work hard to create an environment, particularly at their cellar doors, where people can enjoy their wines responsibly. Winemakers want to be part of the solution to combat risky drinking, but we can only do that if we are considered full stakeholders in national strategies.

We look forward to working with all levels of Government to find long-term and effective solutions to harmful alcohol consumption and hope that the final version of the NAS does just that.

[Draft National Alcohol Strategy \(NAS\) Consultation Paper](#) (Department of Health)

[WFA's response to the Draft NAS](#) (Winemakers' Federation of Australia)

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