



MARGARET RIVER WINE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Margaret River Wine Region – Bushfire Thank You & Update

The Association on behalf of the Margaret River wine industry would like to thank all of those emergency services personnel, volunteer fire fighters and wide range of associated community groups along with government agencies who worked so very hard in extreme circumstances during last week's fire emergency. It was the collective effort of these people working as a team who saved our region.

Association Vice President, Stuart Watson, Woodland Wines said today "The whole Margaret River wine industry applauds their joint efforts without which further property loss would have occurred and we have all been extremely lucky no one has been hurt or lost their lives; while it is quite devastating for those who have lost their homes 'things' can be replaced those we hold dear cannot."

During the fire emergency it was understandable that the rumour mill worked overtime with much speculation abounding. Now that the situation has stabilised there are some facts that will help put the things into perspective for the regional wine industry.

Most of the damage has occurred in national park areas on the coast side of Caves Road that includes part of the semi-rural and residential areas of Prevelly, Gnarabup and Redgate with 34 houses and 9 chalets lost and 23 houses damaged with current estimates suggesting approximately 3,700 hectares of national park and private land holdings have been burnt.

At present there is approximately 4,850 hectares under vine in the Margaret River wine region and this represents 0.018% of the total land area of 270,000 hectares as we are approximately 100 kilometres long and 27 kilometres wide.

No vineyard land has been lost and less than 5 hectares has been 'scorched or singed' and this represents only 0.000019% of the 270,000 hectare area and again only 0.001% of the hectares under vine.

There will be no impact upon the 2012 Margaret River vintage either in volume or smoke damage due to the stage of growth development of grape vines as fruit had not yet reached veraison

Margaret River like many communities in rural Australia band together when the going gets tough and this is the case now. Many initiatives are being put in place to assist those who lost their homes and the Association applauds and is supporting Xanadu's efforts in hosting a Christmas lunch for 200 people on the 16th December.

"Naturally those who love our wines or who visit Margaret River may have been unsure of the of the situation but all vineyards and wineries are very much in the business as usual mode and are looking forward to continuing what we do so well produce fine wines of exceptional quality comparable to the best in the world. The 2012 vintage looks very promising indeed and we encourage all visitors to come and enjoy our wines, our region and our lifestyle", said Mr Watson.

ENDS – Dated 30th November 2011

For further information contact Stuart Watson, Vice President or Nick Power, CEO of the Margaret River Wine Industry Association on 9757 9330 or 0400 516 555.