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MEDIA RELEASE

Public help needed for devastated wine region

As the full extent of the devastating Adelaide Hills bushfires becomes apparent, it is clear that the region will require public support through the rebuilding process. The Adelaide Hills is not only a premium grape and wine producer, it is also one of the State's most popular tourist destinations.

Sandy Clark, Chairman of Australian Grape & Wine said 'We would like to express our sympathy to all those who have suffered damage to their vineyards and wineries, both in the Adelaide Hills and elsewhere. We understand that the threat of further losses continues at this time, and we will seek to work with the State and Federal government to ensure the appropriate relief is provided.'

'We have been delighted by the rapid action from the Marshall Government with the establishment of a new emergency relief fund to help people directly affected by the Cudlee Creek bushfire, and pledging \$1 million to kick-start the donation drive. The State Emergency Relief Fund has been activated following a formal declaration of the Cudlee Creek fire as a declared emergency'.

Tony Battaglione, Chief Executive added 'Importantly we now require public support. We need Australians to donate to the relief funds, visit the region, buy its wine and support its other businesses. The rebuilding process will be slow, but the public has already rallied and we, and Wine Australia, have had many expressions of support from across the country and from our counterparts in New Zealand, the United States, Chile and Argentina.'

He added, 'It is not only the Adelaide Hills that has suffered this year. We also express our sympathy to those in other regions who have lost property and vines, suffered smoke damage to grapes and are struggling with drought, and water shortages, leaving many without a crop this vintage.'

The impact of these fires would be much worse without the efforts of our firefighters. I would like to pay tribute to those volunteers of the country fire service and all the firefighters around the country who are doing a fantastic job.'

- Ends-

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