

Bruce Tyrrell and Dan Jago 'unfairly damaged'

7 Dec 2007 by JR

Ooo, many a man- and woman- hour has clearly gone into cleaning up the mess after the reported slanging match resulting from Dan Jago's presentation at the recent Australian Wine Industry Outlook conference, as described [here](#) yesterday.

Here's the official version from the Winemakers' Federation of Australia and the Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation:

Misrepresentation creates storm in a wine glass

This week has seen some strong words in the Australian and international media relating to a presentation given by guest speaker Dan Jago, Director, Beers, Wines and Spirits, Tesco Stores UK Ltd, at the Wine Industry Outlook Conference 2007 on Tuesday 27 Nov.

Unfortunately the journalist who began the debate, Maxine Frith of the Sun Herald, was not present at the conference and, lacking the real context of the story she was covering, chose to portray comments she was given after the event in a somewhat sensationalist light.

Most visible, and the catalyst for this week's controversy, has been the statement Frith attributed to Bruce Tyrrell of Tyrrell's wines in the Hunter Valley. Tyrrell has responded:

"I didn't, and wouldn't, say about Dan Jago what Ms Frith quoted in my name in the *Sydney Sun Herald* on Sunday 2 Dec.

"I was not able to attend the conference, but on reading Mr Jago's presentation since, I have to say that I completely agree with his viewpoint. Mr Jago applauded Australia's regionally specific wines and suggested that we could gain additional ground in the UK market by producing lighter styles – this is exactly what the Hunter Valley has been doing for generations.

"I would like to distance myself from the comments made in the press by Maxine Frith. She has misrepresented me entirely, the views she portrayed are not the views I hold," *said Tyrrell.*

Stephen Strachan, Chief Executive of the Winemakers' Federation of Australia made the following comment:

"The wine sector is always evolving. Dan Jago called on the Australian wine industry to continue to demonstrate the leadership for which it has become renowned, and he specifically drew attention to the UK market's growing preference for lower alcohol wines.

"He also highlighted the importance of innovation, social responsibility and environmental issues such as carbon ratings and packaging waste in the future business environment. These issues have all been front and centre in our thinking in the preparation of the Wine Australia: Directions to 2025 strategy.

"We put a huge amount of effort into planning and understanding our markets – both domestic and international – and this is the reason that we brought Dan Jago out to speak at our conference. No- one is closer to the UK consumers that we are trying to reach than a retailer like Tesco.

"Any one who was present on the day will know that Dan was not attacking the Australian wine industry, far from it. He gave all those present at the conference some constructive advice on how we could grow our market share. Anyone with questions relating to any presentations given at the Outlook Conference can always contact the Federation directly.

"We recognise that it is in the nature of the media to sensationalise any story a certain amount to entertain the readership. However it is when such stories misrepresent basic facts that the general public can be misled, and this can be unfairly damaging to those involved."

General Manager Market Development, Paul Henry, made the following statement on behalf of the Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation (Wine Australia).

"As an industry we aim to build relationships with all our customers – trade, media and consumers. Dan Jago offers valuable insight into the UK market and his presentation reflects this.

"Our marketing strategy is about anticipating the market and influencing the consumer. Developed in consultation with industry and trade, the strategy is based on global trends in the beverage sector, including occasion and demographics for wine purchases. Each sub- brand or personality reflects a different aspect of the industry and is about the ultimate pursuit of quality, diversity and sustainability through every part of the supply chain."

(Twas this same Paul Henry who took part in the recent [Len Evans Tutorial](#) marathon tasting.)