



Members of the House Industry Committee at the world's largest alumina refinery, the Queensland Alumina Limited (QAL) facility in Gladstone. Left to right: Mal Washer, Allan Morris (Committee Deputy Chair), Rennie Fritschy of QAL, Geoff Prosser (Committee Chairman) and Ian Macfarlane.

Getting more value from raw materials

Case studies of five of Australia's major industries are continuing as part of the House Industry Committee's inquiry into value-adding for raw materials.

The House Industry Committee is using the case studies – of the aluminium, dairy, grains, magnesium and wine industries – to determine how Australia can maximise the value of its mineral and agricultural resources.

Over the past seven months the Industry Committee has travelled to Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales to quiz representatives of the five industries on what has driven their successes, and what they see as the main obstacles to their future growth. In Queensland and Western Australia the Committee also held discussions with community representatives about regional industry development.

Committee Chairman Geoff Prosser (Member for Forrest, WA) has been keen for the inquiry to make on-site visits to get practical on-the-ground knowledge.

"In October we travelled to Brisbane and Gladstone to meet the businessmen and researchers leading Australia into the light metal industry of the future, magnesium," Mr Prosser said.

"We also inspected Australia's largest aluminium smelter, Boyne Smelters, and the world's largest alumina refinery, Queensland Alumina Ltd, and spoke with the staff at both facilities.

"In the agricultural sector we have consulted large agribusiness companies and industry bodies, as well as small innovators like Grain BioTech Australia in Perth and the premium winemakers of the Margaret River region."

The evidence collected to date is available through the House Industry Committee's web site at: www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/isr

For more information

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What the Wine Industry says

The Winemakers Federation of Australia represents small, medium and large winemakers. The Federation's members produce around 90% of Australian wine.

Their evidence to the inquiry addresses seven broad areas of concern – Government regulation, taxation, investment incentives, innovation issues, market access, access to efficient and competitively-priced inputs and infrastructure, and labour and skills issues.

Some of their major points include:

- Frustration about differences in legislation between States, for example in Liquor Licensing and Environment Protection Acts;
- Concerns the industry is opening itself up to dubious practices and potential scandal because of the removal of wine processing standards and practices which could somehow be construed as 'barriers' to trade by the World Trade Organisation (Europe and US, our major export markets, are still highly regulated);
- Concerns over resource issues: rural property rights and resource security; water supply and sustainable use for irrigation; native vegetation clearance; greenhouse issues (are vineyards a 'Kyoto forest'?);
- Intellectual property and human resource development: because human resources and innovation are key drivers behind the industry's growth, the Government must provide quality training and education, support for R&D, and ensure appropriate legal protection for Australian branding and initiatives.

The full Winemakers Federation submission can be found at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/isr/Val_Add/subs.htm

Did you know?

Australian wine exports rose from \$10.8 million in 1986 to more than \$1 billion in 1999.