



Monday 8 October 2007

Defining law for Scotch Whisky agreed

The Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) has today warmly welcomed UK Government plans to introduce new legislation in 2008 to better protect Scotch Whisky.

The announcement follows detailed and positive discussions between the SWA, the UK and Scottish Governments on securing the highest levels of protection for Scotch Whisky and for consumers worldwide.

The new legislation will update and consolidate the rules governing the definition and presentation of Scotch Whisky. Proposals include formal definition of the five categories of Scotch Whisky, the introduction of new labelling rules, new protection for traditional regional names, and measures to tackle misleading practices (see note to editors for full details below).

Gavin Hewitt, Chief Executive of The Scotch Whisky Association, said:

"Scotch Whisky is vital to the Scottish and UK economy, with exports of £2.5bn a year supporting over 65,000 jobs. At a time when international demand for Scotch is growing, distillers will applaud proposals to bring forward this important legislation.

"These proposals will deliver significant benefits to the industry and the wider economy, helping to protect, promote and grow Scotch Whisky globally. Comprehensive and consolidated legislation will ensure Scotch Whisky has the best possible protection from unfair practices and that consumers receive clear information about what they are buying."

- ENDS -

/... Continued (Note to Editors)



Note to Editors:

1. Scotch Whisky has been defined for many years and is protected by law, most recently in The Scotch Whisky Act 1988 and The Scotch Whisky Order 1990. It is also protected at EU and WTO level.
2. In 2004, an industry working group was set up to prepare a package of measures to further codify and update the definition and presentation rules for Scotch Whisky. Its recommendations - approved by the SWA Council and the wider industry following consultation - form the basis of the UK Government proposals.
3. Five categories of Scotch Whisky will be formally defined and it will be compulsory to use the appropriate category name as the sales description on every bottle sold. The proposed categories are as follows:
 - Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Blended Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Single Grain Scotch Whisky
 - Blended Grain Scotch Whisky
 - Blended Scotch Whisky
4. In support of these category terms, it will be made compulsory that the description appears prominently and consistently on packaging. It will also be required that Single Malt Scotch Whisky is bottled only in Scotland.
5. New legal protection will be introduced for the traditional regional names associated with Scotch Whisky production, i.e. 'Highland', 'Lowland', 'Speyside', 'Campbeltown' and 'Islay'.
6. A distillery name will not be allowed as a brand name on any Scotch Whisky which has not been wholly distilled in the named distillery.
7. The misleading labelling of Single Malt Scotch Whisky under a name which, whilst appearing to be the name of the distillery, is not in fact the distillery, will be prohibited.
8. For further information, please contact David Williamson at the SWA on 07730 496 151 or 0131 222 9230.