



Press Release

25 November 2015

Australian Garden Council Launches in Canberra

The first nationally recognised body for gardening- the Australian Garden Council was launched in Canberra on Wednesday afternoon to an audience of senior Government officials. Founded by Graham Ross, the Australian Garden Council has a board comprising of some of Australia's gardening and horticultural experts on the board, including the ACS principal, John Mason.

The Council is designed to reinstate gardening onto the national agenda by incorporating and promoting gardening, gardening tourism and gardening education into one not-for-profit charity. The Council hopes to help the horticulture and gardening industry develop and operate at its full potential which would in-turn positively influence the Australian economy and job market.

The AGC was launched and introduced to a host of senior Government officials, including the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, Hon. Richard Colbek (Federal Minister for Tourism & International Education), Andrew Robb (Federal Minister for Trade), Hon. Louise Markus (Federal Member for Macquarie) alongside a dedicated group of nationally and internationally acclaimed gardeners and horticulturists, for the inaugural meeting of the Council.

The Council was founded by Graham Ross, one of Australia's most respected and recognised gardeners. At today's launch he detailed how the Australian Garden Council aims to improve domestic gardening, focus on professional horticultural recognition, improve secondary and tertiary gardening educational opportunities and attract inbound tourists through international garden tourism events.

"For too long gardeners and horticulturists, the essence of a multi-billion dollar domestic industry, have been ignored, taken for granted and undervalued in Australian business, government, educational and community circles", Graham told ministers gathered in Parliament House.

"With Australia's changing residential landscape, and the new digital age, our children are growing up without the opportunity of getting dirt under their fingernails, and we want the AGC to change that."

Horticultural education has dropped to its lowest apprentice numbers in history while ironically the demand for skilled gardeners and suitably qualified landscapers and nursery staff has never been higher. "Comprehensive training standards, remuneration and integrated career planning all needs rethinking", Graham added



The Australian Gardening Council's board will be chaired in 2015 by Graham Ross VMM, John Mason, Jim Mitchell, Mick Conway, John Robb, Robert Reynolds, Kent Ross, Professor Tim Entwisle, Penny Fowler, David Glenn, Lawrence Smith AM, Colin Barlow, Trevor Nottle and Anthony Vander Staay.

John Mason said "This is an exciting step forward for the gardening and horticulture industry and I am looking forward to contributing to the Australian Garden Council and helping to shape a new and exciting future for the Gardening industry within Australia.

For more information on the Australian Garden Council, visit www.gardencouncil.org

If you would like more information on this press release, please contact admin@acs.edu.au

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