

CI 38 M Mazengarb

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Q1:

Both. There are important classification matters that need to be addressed urgently (such as the introduction of an R18+ rating for computer games).

The review should identify important matters that may be considered, and recommendations implemented, in the process of completing a larger, overall review of the classification system.

Q2: To provide unambiguous, consistent advice to consumers regarding the content contained within the media prior to consumption.

Q3:

Yes, not all media platforms deliver content in the same way.

Whilst the delivery of the same content via different means (i.e. film shown in a cinema compared to the same film shown via the internet) is of little concern, particular consideration should be given to whether content is delivered in an active or passive manner. The relevant comparison is drawn through comparison of content delivered through film and through computer games.

Film is largely a passive medium, with viewers observing the content delivered through the medium. Computer games are largely an active medium and as such, offer an interactive experience for consumers. This suggests content delivered through computer games may have a stronger impact in consumers. Consideration to this point should be given during the classification process.

However, I would like to recommend that further research into the potential for active media to have stronger impacts than similar content delivered through a passive medium be explored.

Q4:

Q5:

Q6:

Content classification should be specifically limited to the content of concern. Consideration of the potential market reach and constituent audience of the content should be outside the scope of the classification system.

There are several reasons for why this is important.

Firstly, the eventual level of influence of much of the content currently subject to the classification system (film, television, books and computer games) is unknown at the time of classification. To account for the level potential market reach would require the use of significant predictive resources to be used by the relevant classification board (How would the classification system account for the unpredictable effects of viral advertising?). Given the unpredictability of the retail performance of many mediums, these resources will often be squandered through incorrect forecasts

of market impact and therefore result in improper classification of content.

Secondly, special consideration of the market reach of particular content may cross the fine line between classification and censorship. If a classification board is seen to be targeting a particular product due to its popularity, or the medium through which it is presented, it may create a classification system susceptible to political influence to which the public may react with claims of undue censorship.

It is important that the classification systems have regard solely to the content in question and with classification decisions made independently of the potential market reach and audience of the content.

Q7:

Q8:

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Q10:

Q11:

Q12:

Q13:

The provision of an effect, Government subsidised, voluntary Internet filter represents the best option for limiting the content received online via minors.

A program similar to the former NetAlert package; an Australian Government offered Internet filter, should be reintroduced.

Q14:

Q15:

Visual media (Film, Television and Computer Games) should be required to present classification markings on packaging (as required currently) in addition to repeating classification recommendations at the beginning of the relevant content for all material classified above a particular ration.

i.e. classification recommendations should be presented at the beginning of DVD recordings, television programs and computer games for all content rated 'M' or higher.

Q16:

Q17:

Q18:

Q19:

Q20:

Q21:

The classification categories for computer games should be extended to include an R18+ classification level.

In addition to the need for this classification level as being explored by the current Australian Government, there is a need to introduce this additional level specifically for computer games to achieve a common classification structure across the relevant material subject to the Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games.

Parity of the classification structure across mediums is important as it provides unambiguous advice to consumers and strengthens the role the recommendations made to consumers via the classification process.

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Q23: Yes, it adds simplicity to the documentation and legislation surrounding the classification scheme.

Q24:

Q25: Yes

Q26:

Q27:

Q28: Yes

Q29:

Other comments: