

List of Questions

Approach to the Inquiry

Question 1. In this Inquiry, should the ALRC focus on developing a new framework for classification, or improving key elements of the existing framework?

While the existing framework has worked moderately well, modifying it would require pro-active public education as to changes that have been made. A new system (one that is obviously different) would make public education easier as people are more likely to take the initiative to educate themselves about the changes. Either way the system needs an overhaul.

Why classify and regulate content?

Question 2. What should be the primary objectives of a national classification scheme?

- 1. Ease of consumer knowledge on what the product contents are.*
- 2. More restriction of adult content in family shows/films. With the aim of protecting children from harmful or inappropriate content.*
- 3. National classification scheme should include OUTDOOR ADVERTISING. All outdoor advertising should be suitable for young children to view- as they WILL be viewing it.*
- 4. Restriction of excessively violent or pornographic material, as these have been shown to increase harm in society.*

What content should be classified and regulated?

Question 3. Should the technology or platform used to access content affect whether content should be classified, and, if so, why?

The laws should try to include all technology as children are increasingly gaining access to new technology. The aim of the scheme should be to try to protect children from harm.

Question 4. Should some content only be required to be classified if the content has been the subject of a complaint?

No, as this is the equivalent of shutting the gate after the horse has bolted. Harm should be reduced by prevention. Content should always be assessed for harm prior to release.

Question 5. Should the potential impact of content affect whether it should be classified? Should content designed for children be classified across all media?

Absolutely.

Question 6. Should the size or market position of particular content producers and distributors, or the potential mass market reach of the material, affect whether content should be classified?

Question 7. Should some artworks be required to be classified before exhibition for the purpose of restricting access or providing consumer advice?

No artwork involving the sexual exploitation of children should be allowed classification- child sexual abuse is under no circumstances acceptable and should never be passed off as "art". Other explicit artwork (violence or sexual) should be classified and unable to be viewed by minors under any circumstances. Advertising for such artwork should also be limited to circumstances when only adults will be viewing it as well. That is advertising should not be in public places or on prime time television.

Question 8. Should music and other sound recordings (such as audio books) be classified or regulated in the same way as other content?

Absolutely . The sale and hiring of adult content recordings should be restricted to adults. They need to be clearly labeled as to content.

Question 9. Should the potential size and composition of the audience affect whether content should be classified?

Question 10. Should the fact that content is accessed in public or at home affect whether it should be classified?

Both need to be clearly classified. What people do in private with the content is their choice, however they should be able to make in informed choice based on the classification.

Question 11. In addition to the factors considered above, what other factors should influence whether content should be classified?

How should access to content be controlled?

Question 12. What are the most effective methods of controlling access to online content, access to which would be restricted under the National Classification Scheme?

Mandatory internet filtering for content classified R18+ for all. An opt-in system when the user has verified their age would then be appropriate. Any material containing child sexual exploitation or information on carrying out terrorist acts should be restricted.

Question 13. How can children's access to potentially inappropriate content be better controlled online?

As above in Q12

Question 14. How can access to restricted offline content, such as sexually explicit

magazines, be better controlled?

They (magazines, DVDs) should be restricted to being sold only from adult shops or in a section of a shop restricted to adults only. Their covers are usually inappropriate for children to view.

Question 15. When should content be required to display classification markings, warnings or consumer advice?

Who should classify and regulate content?

Question 16. What should be the respective roles of government agencies, industry bodies and users in the regulation of content?

Question 17. Would co-regulatory models under which industry itself is responsible for classifying content, and government works with industry on a suitable code, be more effective and practical than current arrangements?

Question 18. What content, if any, should industry classify because the likely classification is obvious and straightforward?

Content that is educational with no sexual content or adult themes should be allowed to be non-classified.

Classification fees

Question 19. In what circumstances should the Government subsidise the classification of content? For example, should the classification of small independent films be subsidised?

Classification could be subsidised/waived on the condition that a percentage of royalties were to be paid in lieu of the fee.

Classification categories and criteria

Question 20. Are the existing classification categories understood in the community? Which classification categories, if any, cause confusion?

As a community we tend to believe that PG films (or content) are suitable for family viewing and as such are shown in public locations such as trains and aeroplanes. Some films, for example "What Women Want" are not suitable for families- this was played on a tilt train trip I took 11 and 12 year old girls on- this led to questions that were inappropriate for me (a camp leader) to be addressing. Any media viewed in a public place- should be suitable for viewing for young ages. As a parent I have a prep aged daughter, she is anxious to spot sight words- I do not wish to have her asking questions about sexually explicit ads or films that she has viewed in a public area. As an adult, I would myself like to have an appropriate understanding of a films content prior to viewing it. The line between M and MA movies is often blurred and I have viewing films in both classifications that I believe should have been in the other category.

Question 21. Is there a need for new classification categories and, if so, what are they? Should any existing classification categories be removed or merged?

Suggestion for new categories

C- Children (Suitable for young children)

F- Family (Suitable for a variety of ages but with no sexual content and minimal violence)

GG- Guardian Guidance Recommended (Suitable for older children and families, some themes that require parental or guardian supervision)

A15+ Themes appropriate for Teenagers/Adults- Some violence, sexual references, drug references.

A18+ Themes appropriate for adult only- Any films that contain portrayals of drug use, sex scenes or violence.

R18+ Films restricted for sale/hire only through adult only shops.

Question 22. How can classification markings, criteria and guidelines be made more consistent across different types of content in order to recognise greater convergence between media formats?

There is a need for a universal framework of classification and restriction of access to categories in ALL media types. Any media viewed in a public setting should be restricted to a category that is suitable for children to view (in the above system- category F)

Question 23. Should the classification criteria in the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 (Cth)*, National Classification Code, Guidelines for the Classification of Publications and Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games be consolidated?

No- it should be a universal system for all media types.

Refused Classification (RC) category

Question 24. Access to what content, if any, should be entirely prohibited online?

Child pornography, sexual exploitation of any person (man, woman, young or old) and instructions for carrying out acts of terrorism.

Question 25. Does the current scope of the Refused Classification (RC) category reflect the content that should be prohibited online?

Reform of the cooperative scheme

Question 26. Is consistency of state and territory classification laws important, and, if so, how should it be promoted?

Question 27. If the current Commonwealth, state and territory cooperative scheme for classification should be replaced, what legislative scheme should be introduced?

A uniform, national classification system that can be applied to existing and emerging media types.

Question 28. Should the states refer powers to the Commonwealth to enable the introduction of legislation establishing a new framework for the classification of media content in Australia?

Yes. Provided a better system is introduced.

Other issues

Question 29. In what other ways might the framework for the classification of media content in Australia be improved?