

CI 2124 D Kelly

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Q1:

Focus should be toward improving elements of the existing framework. Developing a new system is unnecessary and would ultimately lead to complications and misunderstandings. The current format is widely understood and recognised, however there is need for it to be expanded to encompass an R18+ rating for other media forms such as video games.

Q2:

1. To ensure that Australia has a classification scheme that can handle increases in technological change and media available to the public.
2. To ensure that children are adequately protected and adults have a recognisable system available when exercising their freedom of choice.
3. To enhance the public's understanding of content that is regulated and to ensure that media will be RC if it contains content that is deemed to breach criminal law within Australia.

3. To treat all forms of media equally by using the same classification system.

Q3:

Absolutely not. It is completely unnecessary to alter the way media is classified on the basis of how it is accessed. Ultimately it is the themes that are addressed that need to be classified; how it is accessed is irrelevant and would place a stigma that will (and has already started) polarise groups and how they are viewed when they express their freedom of choice on what forms of media they access.

Q4:

Whilst public consultation and opinion is an important aspect of Australian society, each form of media should be classified on its own merit and the themes that it addresses. All forms of media need to be classified equally. Subjecting content to classification on the basis of a complaint may lead to unfair prejudicial classification outcomes.

Q5:

The impact of content is the basis of the classification system. However, the 'potential impact' is a broad question. Content should be classified regardless of age.

Q6:

The size, market position or market reach of a product is irrelevant. All content entering Australia can be accessed by anyone of the public and therefore needs to be classified equally and fairly.

Q7:

Yes, artwork that may be potentially offensive may benefit from a classification system and restriction of access to certain age groups.

Q8:

Yes, this can also be extended to podcasts, however how one would regulate this with an MA15+ category is uncertain. How would age be verified?

Q9:

Absolutely not. Content needs to be classified regardless of the composition and size of an audience.

Q10:

No, all content should be classified regardless of the environment in which it is accessed.

Q11:

An adult expressing their freedom of choice, but also being able to rely on a system that is both relevant and recognisable. Not only for their own benefit, but for their children as well.

Let us not get carried away with sensationalist propaganda thrown at us by minority groups attempting to incite fear in us. As a country we need to move forward for once and embrace the future and not hang so tightly to the past where things have become outdated.

Q12:

There is no effective method of controlling access to online content. Entertaining this fact is ludicrous, a waste of resources and tax payers money.

Q13:

Providing information to parents on how they can control content is appropriate and sufficient. Children's access to inappropriate content is ultimately up to the household to control. Government intervention should only be through education and by providing tools to interested parties to help control content in their households.

Q14:

Introduce harsher penalties to business owners who do not ask for age verification.

Q15:

All classified content should be required to display classification markings and warnings.

Q16:

To ensure that Australia has a modern classification system that is relevant and continue to be so in light of the rise and expanding use of technology to access forms of media and entertainment. The current system does not provide adequate information or protection and needs to be updated to be in line with other first world nations.

Q17:

Yes. Working alongside industries who know and understand the content they deliver is an excellent model that would lead to better classification outcomes. The current arrangement has provided classification outcomes that are not consistent.

Q18:

No content should be solely classified at industry level. A co-regulatory model that has both industry and government input is more appropriate and should be implemented regardless of how obvious and straight forward classification would be.

Q19:

Small independent film and gaming development studios would benefit from the government subsidising the classification of content. It could possibly allow for these areas to flourish and grow.

Q20:

The current classification system is widely understood and recognised by the community. However, it can be demonstrated that it has not translated effectively to video gaming. Video gaming needs an R18+ category as there have been a number of games released in Australia that should have been under an R18+ classification but have been sold under an MA15+ category.

With the current system being recognisable, there is confusion around the M15 and MA15+ categories. Renaming these to ensure the meaning is understood could be developed.

Q21:

There is a dire need for an R18+ category to be created for video gaming. Video games that have received an R18+ rating in countries such as the USA and UK, have received an MA15+ rating here. This is not affording children the protection from forms of media that is unsuitable for their viewing. This current classification system fails to provide parents with information for them to make informed decisions when purchasing or hiring video games for their children.

Adults who make the choice to play video games should have the right to be able to play them without censorship or have them banned for sale in Australia purely on the basis that our country lacks an R18+ category for video games. Video games should of course be refused classification if they depict themes of rape, extreme violence etc. However, video gaming and technology has advanced to a point where adult themes are explored (not just violence), therefore the current classification system needs to be improved to accommodate this. Consumers also have a right to be informed of the classification and themes that a game explores.

It is not a question of a new classification being created, rather an already existing classification category being implemented to a form of media that has seen advancements and needs to have an added level of classification. If this is not done, we will continue to have games released in Australia that are more suited to an R18+ category being sold under an MA15+ category.

Q22:

If consistency is the outcome that is wanted, it would be wise to continue using the existing classification markings, symbols and criteria. Having differing classification markings and criteria would just lead to confusion which is the exact opposite of what this review is attempting to achieve.

Q23:

Yes. Consolidation of the Act, Code and guidelines will produce one set of criteria which will lead to an easier system to recognise and that can be applied to multiple media types.

Q24:

Prohibition of content should not be considered. Harsher penalties should be introduced for those who access content that is deemed offensive criminally, i.e. child pornography.

Q25:

See answer to question 24.

Q26:

Yes, a national system is an absolute must have. Promotion could be achieved by national campaigns through advertising educating people on the classification system.

Q27:

The current cooperative scheme for classification needs to be replaced with a national system which sees the same classification regulations and guidelines applied to all the states and territories in Australia.

Q28:

Yes. Give the power to the Federal Government rather than the attorney generals who do not necessarily represent my views.

Q29:

Engage in more public consultation so as to avoid bias that is already

Other comments:

Simply refusing classification of software and computer games on the basis that there is no classification level that exists in itself highlights that the current system lacks an ability to adapt to today's standards of technology advancement. Consenting adults should have the right to play games that contain adult themes and have the ability to express their freedom of choice. Similarly, parents should have the ability to make an informed decision to purchase a game for their children through the aid of a clear and unambiguous classification system.

Studies examining whether there is a positive correlation between an individual's interaction with video games and an increase in violent or anti-social behaviour have all yielded differing outcomes. It is not a fair or correct assessment to declare that video games contribute to violence in society. There are many other variables, (far too many to mention) that must be taken into account when making an assessment of an individual's aggression levels.

It is about time that we as a society accepted that information technology and forms of digital entertainment are on the rise which...We need to abstain from using video games as a scapegoat to antisocial behaviour in society and move forward to ensure our classification system can compete with the uprise in this form of digital expansion.