

CI 1545 N Parker

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Q1:

The development of a new framework, or the streamlining of the existing framework that will be uniform and simple for all Australians to understand across all media platforms.

Q2:

The implementation of a simplistic uniform system that can be used across all media platforms and all media types. The creation of a system that is universal, understandable and consistent throughout all forms of media within Australia. It is also important that the Australian public is made aware fully of all classification types and their meanings, and where possible which of these classifications are transferable between different forms of media (film, music, gaming, publication etc).

Q3:

This is currently impossible and will continue to be so in the immediate future. A system such as this would be unable to restrict all content that is available due to the many ways that a consumer may access the media regardless of whether it is physical or virtual. All forms of media should carry a classification so that the consumer can make an informed decision independent of the platform being used.

Q4:

Depending on the nature and severity of the complaint, which of course may never have been lodged in the first place if all forms of media were subjected to a functional classification framework prior to release into the market. All complaints should be dealt with appropriately, with all complaints being investigated and acted upon. This does not mean that the framework needs to be amended every time a complaint has been lodged, as this is what causes a system that is confusing to consumers and developers which often leads to failures in the communications and the proper handling of complaints that go largely unnoticed.

Q5:

Classifications should be made for all forms of media across all platforms, regardless of consumer age.

Q6:

Provided that a functional cross-platform framework can be established that has simple explanations for each criteria, there is no reason why the developer cannot provide the classification for their product(s). Developers that inappropriately classify their product(s) intentionally may be subjected to a review process by a governing body (notably, the ALRC or Ombudsman {where applicable}).

Q7:

Exhibitions should not necessarily be required to carry classification statuses. However, a parent should be given the opportunity to question whether or not the contents of a featured exhibit may expose their children to inappropriate content. An effective example of this would be for the exhibit promoter to provide a prominent display that explains the nature of their exhibit at the entry to help parents make informed decisions for underage persons.

Q8:

Classifications should be made for all forms of media across all platforms, this includes audio books and sound recordings.

Q9:

This question is simply ridiculous. To imply that individuals should be exposed to classifications of material but not necessarily when they are in groups as the target audience is far greater? It is impossible to govern which individuals in a group can be exposed to what and at what times, the costs in resources to contain an environment like that is not financially viable and often is the responsibility of one or more individuals.

Q10:

The widespread exposure of media in everyday life spans across the public and private domains. Regardless of how much a parent may want to limit certain content from their children, for example, they may still be exposed to the content outside of the home environment. There is no effective way of containing this unfortunately.

Q11:

A functional classification system should be simple and easy to follow for every Australian. If the classification is to be issued by the developer/creator and is found to be dishonest or misleading, then the classification should be reviewed following a review or complaint.

Q12:

Previous systems and policies implemented in the online domain have proven ineffective and not financially viable. An example of this is in the alcohol and tobacco industry, where a consumer must enter their date of birth before accessing a site. Any underage person with the coherence to understand this system can easily exploit it and do so without consequence. To date, the only effective and proven ways to control online content is in education, awareness and parental supervision for underage persons.

Q13:

Parental supervision and subsidies for the purchase of filtering systems may be possible for parents who wish to use the service. To date, any government body wishing to filter online content at a national level has always been met with hostility due to freedom of speech, freedom of information and access to resources. The consumer should have the choice whether or not they wish to filter content or not (again, a subsidiary filtration system could be implemented for this reason).

Q14:

The implementation of ID checks like in the alcohol industry could work at point of sale, but outside the trading environment there is still the risk that underage persons may be exposed to 'offline content'. This can only really be enforced by a parent or guardian, and is not something a governing body can really protect or enforce.

Q15:

Any locations and places where the sale and trade of all product(s) are made available publicly to the consumer.

Q16:

"The industry should regulate the content, the consumer should monitor the content and complaints should be directed to the government." - B. Power (submission CI 670).

Q17:

Industry regulated models seem to be more realistic and practical when implemented in real time, and this could easily translate into practical outcomes for classifications across all media platforms. Government bodies may be allowed to step in when industrial regulation may fail to observe and respond to complaints effectively.

Q18:

In a simplified and cross-platform multimedia classification framework, there is no reason why virtually all content cannot carry a form of classification.

Q19:

If the Government is committed to creating a national classification system that will help individuals and parents make informed decisions about the contents of media then the entire program should be made available to developers/creators at no charge, especially if the end product(s) is made available publicly at no cost. By having fees in place for a national system like this, it prevents competition from entering the media industries, and doesn't provide any incentives for developers to create product(s) that could potentially revolutionise (or at least assist) the experiences of every Australians.

Q20:

Perhaps whoever is reviewing this document may wish to leave their office and spend a day walking the street asking people how they feel about existing classifications and their understandings of them, only then will you get an understanding on either how successful the existing system has been, or how the department has failed to deliver yet again.

Q21:

A complete review of the current classification system should be undertaken and either it should be extended or scrapped and started again. Australia can look to overseas countries that have had successes with their classification systems. Regulators should not be denying the public access to certain content just because there is no classification for it, even though the product(s) are marketable in other countries abroad.

Q22:

The creation of universal descriptors that can be given to classifications so that they can be used across all forms of media (film, television, magazines, gaming, etc). Do not create confusion by using the same classification name across multiple forms of media but each having a different descriptor that creates separation in their uses.

Q23:

Yes.

Q24:

The freedom to access all forms of information is what should be available to all Australians, with the consumer being able to choose what they wish to be exposed to. While there is inappropriate and illegal content online, much of it is already filtered under Google's search system. May I remind any Government department reading this that Google's (The #1 visited site in the world employing some corporate responsibility) search system doesn't cost the government \*anything\*. A free, existing system to filter content that is already more effective than anything our government could possibly implement. Sounds like a money saving investment to me.

Q25:

See above. Particularly the part about saving money, which the government really can't afford to be spending right now anyway.

Q26:

Every person involved in the process from the developers/creators to the consumer would benefit from a uniform nationalised classification system. There are so many different rules and regulations across varying states that certain products cannot be sold in some states while freely available in others, even though the purchase of content is still widely available online) or can be sent from interstate. Do yourself a favour and abolish state and territory laws governing classifications.

Q27:

The federal government should create a uniform classification system for industries to follow. Industry should then be allowed to regulate and classify their own materials. The consumer should be able to make informed choices and if they find certain products are not appropriately classified they can complain to a government body, who can review the developer/creator/distributor and issue fines where intentional abuse was evident.

Q28:

Yes.

Q29:

Consultation with the Australian public prior to the implementation of any new regulation should be performed first, remembering that the sole purpose for a classification system is for the benefit of the consumer and not the government. That when a member of the public lodges a complaint or provides feedback, that it is taken seriously and acted upon responsibly since we all know much of the feedback that goes to government departments often fall on deaf ears.

Other comments:

- Remember that there is no such thing as internet censorship. If someone is determined enough to get around something, they will regardless of how much money our government invests into the infrastructure.
- Remember that members of the public are allowed to make their own decisions based on the information that they have been informed about. That if a parent or guardian wishes to protect an underage person(s) from being exposed to certain content, that it is their responsibility to provide that level of protection.
- That a uniform classification system controlled at a national level will save time, money, resources, and be easier for the public to understand.
- That providing industry with the ability to provide classifications to their products free of charge will allow for greater competition, growth and innovation.
- That by creating a functional base for classification that can be rolled out across all forms of media and platforms will create a more stable and easy to identify system that the public will be able to recognise.

...and more.