

CI 2474 J Warren-Davis

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Yes, Regarding the Classification discussion paper, I agree in part with the changes, but I believe that the Classification Board should be given more categories, in between what is currently classified M and the MA15+ classification and the MA15+ and the R18+ classification categories, there should be ten categories for all media, except computer games where there should be nine. An X18+ would not be relevant for the classification of computer games, because of the computer animated format of the games, it would not be technically possible for a game to contain actual sexual activity as to exceed the proposed R18+ classification for games. The current proposal for the R18+ classification would allow for realistically simulated sexual activity as a general rule, but not the real thing, explicit sexual activity depicted in an animated form, would not breach the general rule in any case, because its arguably not the real thing.

I had a look at the commissions report and agreed in part with changes to the classification, but believe that at a 13+ level there should be two categories, an advisory category recommending the film, game etc to teenagers 13 and over as well as a less restrictive version of the current MA15+ classification at a 13+ level, requiring under 13s be accompanied by a parent or guardian, the gap between the M and the MA15+ classifications and the MA15+ and the R18+ classifications in too broad and that the classifications system should be set up like this and use the following impact tests

(C) (Children) very mild

(G) (General) very mild

(PG8) (Parental Guidance Advisory, recommended for audiences 8 years and over) low or mild

(PG13) (Parental Guidance Advisory, recommended for audiences 13 years and over) moderate

(TA13+) (Teen Accompanied) (Restricted, under 13s require an accompanying parent or guardian)  
medium

(MA15+) (Mature Accompanied) (Restricted, under 15s require an accompanying parent or guardian)  
strong

(R16+) (Restricted to persons 16 years and over only) very strong

(R18+) (Restricted to persons 18 years and over only) high

(X18+) (Restricted to persons 18 years and over only) sexually explicit content only

(RC) (Refused Classification) very high

I do not agree that the MA15+ category should become unrestricted and be changed from "Mature Accompanied" to an advisory "Mature Audience" classification, equivalent of the unrestricted M (Mature) category, the move would expose young children to unrestricted access to strong content, although it would not be a concern having 13 and 14 year olds viewing content which is currently classified MA15+ at the low end and that having a restricted 13+ classification, similar to the current MA15+ classification but at a 13+ level, would mean that high end content currently classified M and low end content currently classified MA15+, could be placed in the new category, with an impact test in between moderate and strong known as "medium" and that 13 and 14 year olds, could view such content unaccompanied. The MA15+ classification can be too restrictive for films or computer games, in blocking 13 and 14 year olds without a parent or guardian from viewing the film or playing the computer game, when it has only just marginally exceeded the moderate impact test for the M category. For example for coarse language, the term "cunt" seems to automatically attract an MA15+ classification for strong coarse language, when it is used only once or infrequently within a film, which has happened in films such as Mean Creek, Paris Je Taime, Slueth (which was downgraded to M by the Classification Review Board) and V for Vendetta which has some scenes stylized bloody violence, which the board regarded as strong, as well as single use of the term.

In New Zealand, V for Vendetta received an R13 classification meaning that 13 and 14 year olds could see the film without a parent or guardian, Mean Creek was also R13 in New Zealand, Paris Je Taime was M in New Zealand and Sleuth was cross rated as M after the Review Board's decision to reduce the classification. Also, in the popular Xbox/Xbox 360 computer game Halo, the board found the game-play on individual scenes was moderate in impact but overall the playing impact of the game cumulatively came to strong, in that type of situation there needs to be an impact test in-between moderate and strong

and the restriction relaxed for those aged 13 and 14.

I remember playing the original Halo as a 13 year old back in 2004 and believed that the MA15+ classification was too high, as the violence in its science fiction setting of the game was generally stylized in its treatment and was not serious enough to warrant an MA15+ classification.

If such a restricted 13+ classification were introduced, it should allow for infrequent strong and stylised violence, if not prolonged and justified by context and that infrequent use of strong coarse language should be permitted, if justified by context within that category. There should also be allowed for a stronger impact of themes, that are appropriate for an adolescent audience.

In Ireland for films certified for theatrical release can be given a restricted 16 certificate, which restricts admission to cinemas those aged 16 and over only, which was introduced in late 2004, to narrow the gap between the 15A category (formerly 15PG) which means under 15s must be accompanied by a parent or guardian and the restricted 18 certificate, which means exhibition to those aged 18 and over only, in theatrical certification! Australia for all forms of media, whether through public exhibition films or films classified for sale or hire or computer games etc, should consider an R16+ classification between the MA15+ and the R18+ classifications, so it narrows the gap between the classifications, throughout the classification system and that the impact should be regarded as "very strong" for such material, in-between the MA15+ classification (strong) and the R18+ classification (high) respectively! This would mean that high end MA15+ material and low end R18+ material could be pushed into this new R16+ category, so Australia can have a classification system that is similar to Ireland in its theatrical classification, in the upper end of the classification system and not have such a big gap in-between classification categories.

Regards from Joshua Warren-Davis!