

CI 434 M Hoskin

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Q1:

I believe the existing framework for classification is sufficient for the needs of the Australian public. There may be some areas for improvement, such as adding the overall tone or context of a work, however the system as it is right now is still more than sufficient for most people's needs.

Q2:

To provide a clear and understandable summary of the content and context of media, so as to allow healthy adults the choice of whether or not to consume the content.

Q3:

There are some circumstances that require a different method to traditional media classification, such as online streaming video, where a community based submission system would be more effective, allowing the community to vote on what rating they'd assign to a certain work.

Q4:

Yes, as not all content requires classification, and the sheer amount of new content that is generated daily on the internet would make traditional classification schemes next to impossible to implement with any reasonable accuracy or efficiency.

Q5:

It is impossible to quantify the "impact" of a work of media on a person, thus there's no reason to even attempt to add a new metric to the current classification system. Content that is designed for children doesn't necessarily need classification, as almost all content creators are aware of the needs regarding content and children, and those that disregard those needs do so at the risk of alienating both the children and their parents, which can have serious negative consequences for the producer, such as bad publicity and the withdrawal of sponsors, making government intervention unnecessary.

Q6:

Q7:

Art is by its very nature highly interpretive, so attempting to add a classification on art would be difficult, if not impossible. Furthermore it is not the place of the government to restrict content that may be seen as offensive, the only circumstances where we accept some form of regulation and restriction is in pornography, which is a very limited scope. There is also the matter of community regulation, where the community itself will provide the means of regulating and controlling what media does and does not get released into the community through publicity and market power, such as making a public boycott of a potentially risqué art exhibition, or complaining to the sponsors of a work that is seen as offensive. These means are far more effective at providing opinions and information to the public, without the need for the government to intervene, which is expensive and inefficient.

Q8:

Music, like art, is very interpretive, and thus difficult to classify in the same manner as other media (television, films etc.). I believe that the current method of providing information, by attaching a warning sticker on potentially offensive music, provides all the information that adults need to make an informed decision.

Q9:

No, size and composition do not change the content itself, having a larger audience doesn't make any content more or less offensive. Content must be judged on its own merits, preferably at the behest of its producer, and should not be required for the dissemination of that content.

Q10:

This is similar to Q9 in that the way in which the content is accessed does not change the content itself. Furthermore it shouldn't be up to the government to step in and attempt to regulate whether a work is suitable for public release, it should only provide classification that is requested, either by the content producers or through requests from the community. If society does not think that the public showing of a work is suitable then it will take action to punish those who attempt to display it. Take for example a bar, that decides to hold a movie night in the car park, and decides to show a potentially offensive film. Provided it has the permission to use that work (such as having purchased the appropriate license) then there should be no restriction on what that establishment can display. If society determined that the bar had acted in a way that put people at risk or had caused harm, then it would act accordingly, with bad press and a boycott or picket line. This system of checks and balances already exists, and does not need further disruptions from the government.

Q11:

Q12:

There is no efficient means of controlling access, nor is such control desirable or morally justifiable. It is not the government's place to determine what content a healthy adult can or cannot consume.

Q13:

There is no efficient means of doing so, and even if there were, controlling the content that a child could access would be doing a disservice. There is a fundamental lack of trust between adults and children in this country, and in many countries around the world, that I believe is at the heart of the problem. A parent that trusts their child, that has ensured that their child knows their own boundaries and has the means to judge whether something is appropriate for their own consumption, has done the child a great service. By providing children with a means to test themselves, to learn about the true nature of the world, is to allow them to grow into healthy and well adjusted adults. Any attempt to control them will ultimately fail, any attempt to shield them from the bitter truths of life will leave them incomplete, and more importantly, unable to cope with the real world when they emerge into adulthood.

Q14:

The current method of requiring the purchaser to be of a certain age, represented with a photo ID, is as efficient as system will ever get. At some point society must trust that the people distributing sexually explicit content will do the right thing and follow the law as it has been written. The current system is not perfect, there is the means for abuse, but it is still the most efficient and least intrusive means of restricting access. Furthermore it is becoming more marginalized, as the internet has taken over the distribution of such content to such a large extent that in a short time offline media will no longer be around at all.

Q15:

If it is not intrusive or doesn't break from immersion then content should ideally display it's classification at all times, such as on the box of a DVD, or at the beginning of a broadcast. I believe that the current means of displaying classifications, coupled with access to more information at the classification website, provides the best means of ensuring that consumers have all the information they need to make an informed choice.

Q16:

Ideally there shouldn't be any formal regulation at all, the market is more than capable of self-regulating content and it's distribution. The only situation where regulation is considered necessary is pornography, and even then measures must be taken to ensure that regulation does not exceed what society, as a whole, considers acceptable.

Q17:

In general, yes, as this allows the industry to ensure that it's own interests aren't unfairly dismissed by society whilst still ensuring government oversight. However any regulation on content must be designed so that it does not ban or restrict the ultimate access to said content, that only measures are taken to ensure that the necessary information is available to the public.

Q18:

Content designed for children usually doesn't need as much classification as more serious content, such as violence or sex, as there are general boundaries that most, almost all, content producers abide by, simply because of market pressure. A content producer that doesn't self regulate content designed for children will usually find themselves out of employment very quickly.

Q19:

If a complaint based system of classifying works was implemented then there would be no need to subsidise the voluntary classification of content, only in the cases of a complaint based appeal would it be seen as fair to both the party making the complaint as well as the content producer that the government provide a subsidy. To do otherwise would see an abuse of the complaint systems by allowing pressure groups to protest content that they do not like, in an attempt to force the producer out of the market through the costs of seeking classification on their works, much like how copyright or patent claims are commonly used as an offensive tactic against parties that do not have the financial means to defend themselves, regardless of whether they have done anything wrong.

Q20:

I think that the current classification categories are sufficiently clear for an adult to understand them. There are many other ways of seeking more detailed information, such as reading a review or accessing the classification website, such that additional categories or changes in general would be more harmful than beneficial.

Q21:

Please see my answer to Q20

Q22:

Q23:

I don't believe such as consolidation is necessary, the current status of the classification of media in this country is already stable and efficient.

Q24:

There is no content which should be prohibited, nor is there an efficient means of doing so.

Q25:

No, the refused classification category already oversteps the boundaries of government classification by attempting to restrict what content is allowed for healthy adults, where as all content should be available to anyone seeking it, provided they fully understand the nature of that content.

Q26:

Consistency should always be a goal of state laws, so as to not cause confusion, however I believe the current status of classification laws in Australia is not one of the areas that needs any changes at this time.

Q27:

If the community as a whole deemed it necessary then the best method would be an open system whereby content can be voluntarily submitted for classification without any restriction on distribution of unclassified content, as long as it is advertised as such, with an appeal available to the community in the event they deem a work to need further classification. This would allow for the generation and distribution of content without placing unfair restrictions on independent and small producers, whilst still allowing the community to influence what content is easily available through market pressure.

Q28:

That is up to each state, most of which I would think wouldn't be very enthusiastic about relinquishing power. In general such as move shouldn't be necessary, as the states will move towards a consensus on their own.

Q29:

Other comments:

If the government wishes for the public to take it's actions seriously then it should avoid ignoring submissions from the public that it disagrees with, such as the previous submissions taken regarding

the classification system for video games, which was overwhelmingly in favor of an R18+ rating, but has since been ignored as somehow not being representative of the wishes of the community.