

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? Improving key elements of the existing framework

Why classify and regulate content?

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

- Ensure that classification reflects community standards.
- Give consumers and parents accurate information about the nature of the classified material.
- Protect children from unsuitable material.
- Prevent the distribution of material that violates community standards or is harmful.

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? Yes as various platforms will have differing impacts and medias, so assessments should suit the individuality.

Question 4. Should some content only be required to be classified if the content has been the subject of a complaint? No, parents and citizens should not be exposed to evidently unsuitable subject matter in that uncontrolled manner.

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

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? No, markets vary but the impact on the individual can be profound and damaging.

Question 7. Should some artworks be required to be classified before exhibition for the purpose of restricting access or providing consumer advice? Yes parents and citizens should be alerted to what is 'classified' as they may consider a safe venue to take their children. Artwork depicting children in a manner that is exploitative or offensive, including any sexualised depictions of children, should be Refused Classification regardless of any alleged artistic merit.

Question 8. Should music and other sound recordings (such as audio books) be classified or regulated in the same way as other content? Yes, we are effected by all our senses accordingly audio should be subject to classification. Music with lyrics which demean women by treating them as sexual objects have been permitted for sale in Australia, showing that the current self-regulation system for music is inadequate.

Question 9. Should the potential size and composition of the audience affect whether content should be classified? No

Question 10. Should the fact that content is accessed in public or at home affect whether it should be classified? No

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 filtering of internet content at the ISP level is the best way to exclude all material that would be classified RC, X18+ or R18+. Opt-in access to R18+ could be provided if there is age verification.

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

Filters that screen this out.

Question 14. How can access to restricted offline content, such as sexually explicit magazines, be better controlled? All publications classified as Restricted (R) should only be allowed to be sold in an enclosed area which children are not permitted to enter. Not have it displayed at the public entry point.

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

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? No, self regulation does not favour the consumer but the business selling the material.

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

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? No. Why should we subsidise profitable concerns.

Classification categories and criteria

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

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?
classification categories be removed or merged?

- The existing classification categories should remain, apart from the X18+ category for films which should be abolished. Films containing explicit depictions of sexual acts should be Refused Classification. Such films exploit and demean women. They have been implicated in the sexual abuse and premature sexualisation of children.
- No R18+ classification should be introduced for computer games, because the violence in these games is associated with an increase in violent attitudes and behaviour.

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? Be consistent.

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? To be consistent it may have merit to do so.

Refused Classification (RC) category

Question 24. Access to what content, if any, should be entirely prohibited online? Access to all material that would be classified RC, X18+ or R18+ should be prohibited to the general user. Opt-in access to R18+ could be provided, subject to strict age verification procedures.

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? Yes by diligent transparent education programs

Question 27. If the current Commonwealth, state and territory cooperative scheme for classification should be replaced, what legislative scheme should be introduced?
No

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? No

Other issues

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