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Q1:

The current system has very little justification for why items are refused classification, the public is misinformed of how the current system works and who it protects, it does not reflect the needs for Australia's growing industries and does not accommodate items from international industries. The current system does not allow people of any age to make an informed choice or the freedom to choose what content they have access to. The ALRC should focus on a new classification framework as the existing system does not support the current and future needs of the games, film and other industries that deal with digital media and distribution. The discrepancies between the classification between film and games need to be addressed.

Q2:

To provide consumers and content producers awareness and access to the information that contains: information about the classifications, how items are classified, the reasons for an item's classification and how items can be developed or changed to fit into the classification system. A national classification scheme should avoid placing prejudice toward a person's judgement based on the judgment of the majority but focus on aiding the public on making informed choices about the items they choose to view or purchase. The scheme should be aiding the public and producers to make informed decisions rather than making the decisions for them.

Q3:

The technology and platform should not affect the content's classification or its need to be classified, based on who and how the content is accessed. If the content is accessed on a variety of platforms and has no significant changes to how consumers access the content, then its classification would be the same regardless of how it is accessed.

I suggest there should be guidelines and regulations to help content producers to make the decision to classify their content or not. They must also be given the means to ensure that there are measures to inform the content's users of the content's classification or lack thereof.

For example:
An art exhibition of primary school students' work does not require a classification whereas an exhibition with content that is best suited for an informed audience of adults may use a classification. An application for a mobile phone that was used for relaying public information such as directions to a location would not require a classification.

An online game may have a classification if the producers felt it necessary to classify it to inform the

potential and current users and to release the game in markets were this is a requirement. If there is no classification on the content, then the producers should provide access to a statement that outlines any content that the user may wish to be aware of. Producers may submit a similar document to the Classification Board to explain why their content has a particular classification or why it has no classification.

The cost of ensuring all content accessed by Australian citizens is classified is staggering given the variety of platforms and developing technology available. It would be more cost effective to allow citizens to decide for themselves or assist them by proving information that can aid them in making informed choices. It may be something as simple as providing online documents to that outline the classifications and provide examples of products that fit these classifications or television campaigns that encourage people to discuss the content with others to help make a decision.

Q4:

If there are a significant number of complaints about the content, then the content's classification status should be reviewed. If the content producers and the Classification Review Board are informed of the reasons behind the complaints, both parties can work together to either classify the content or rework it based on the criticism received.

Q5:

The potential impact of content should not affect if an item should be classified as it cannot be accurately judged due to the unpredictability of human response. If there is wide spread public complaint against the content, then the content should be reviewed to determine if it requires classification. If a producer feels that the content may have an impact on particular consumers, then they should inform the Classification Board of this content and propose a suggested classification to inform potential consumers. The Classification Board should take this proposal and information into consideration before classifying the content.

Content that is specifically designed for children can be classified across all media as it will help parents and children make informed choices about the content they are accessing. If the content is not specifically targeted for children, then parents will need information about the content to decide if the content can be viewed by children.

Q6:

No, it should be up to the content producer and distributor to decide if their content requires classification as they are aware of the most likely consumers of their product. The Content producers should have access to publications that can aid them in producing content for the Australian and International markets. The producer should also be able to propose a classification for their content when it is subject to review by the Classification Board.

Q7:

No, the person viewing the work will need to decide if the works' content does have a negative effect on them. The artist and exhibition staff can provide information or signage around the works to inform

any visitors of potential impact of content. Brisbane's Gallery of Modern Art does place signage around artworks to inform parents and teachers of any works that may have an effect on visiting children. These signs have been effective.

Q8:

It would make more sense to have industries provide regulations with support from the Classification Boards and the government. The industries that produce content such as television, film, music and games have a well informed understanding of their requirements as compared to the officiating body like the Classification Boards.

As the classification of music, television, advertisement and mobile phone content is not controlled or regulated by the Classification Board, I wonder why the existing frameworks for these items is being questioned unless the proposed national Classification scheme is overseeing industries outside of film and games. If the scheme is being used on content outside of film and games, then the classification system will need to be flexible enough to cover the diversity of these industries.

Q9:

No. This is an unreliable method if there isn't any or very little control over the accessibility of the content. As any content could be seen by anyone, the audience should be informed or have access to information that can outline what the content contains. The audience is fully capable of deciding if there is anything they find personally objectionable.

Q10:

No. Technological advances indicate that all content has the potential to be accessed anywhere, making this a redundant issue.

Q11:

Q12:

Restricting access regardless of an Internet user's own requirements and status is belittling as it suggests that the government will make all the decisions for the entire nation. It would be more effective to allow users to control how they access the internet as it is currently handled. Instead the Australian Government can offer filters for interested parties and these should be made readily available for those who choose.

The Internet was originally constructed as a communication tool; it still serves this purpose today. Due to the nature of Internet access and the volume of online content, it would cost the Australian Government far too much money to censor the Internet. It would also limit the online capabilities and accessibility for the majority of Australians and Australian industries.

Q13:

Inappropriate content is a vague term and is determined by the children's parents or guardians, not the government, society or religion. The inclusion of the word "potential" also suggests that someone will need to view this content to access it accurately. Harmful content implies that the content would

cause children physical or emotional pain, it is also a term which can be clearly defined. The most effective approach is educating children's' guardians, parents and children, better control over children's access to online content is their responsibility. They will need to have access to information and means to help them do this.

This can be done via advertisements on television, information sessions, schools, printed media and online. The government department responsible for this should provide parents with information about how to add parental control to their Internet browsers. As some children are more adept with computers than their parents, this information will need to be easy to read and understand. There are a number of products available online and in selected stores. Some Internet browsers do provide their own versions of user defined filters.

Parents and guardians should be encouraged to discuss identifying harmful online content with their children and why it is filtered on their computer. Children should be encouraged to discuss with their parent or guardian any content they have found and any content which they do not understand. Children should be taught that their Internet access will become their own responsibility as they grow.

Q14:

Please outline what kinds of content this comprises and why is it restricted.

Is there conclusive proof that this is out of control? I have not heard of any but perhaps you should make the public more aware that this is a problem. It is my understanding that the majority of people who purchase these items feel embarrassment and shame in connection with these items. Is there no better control than this?

Q15:

It shouldn't be required, distributors and producers can decide if their content needs to display such information. It will be the responsibility of the aforementioned parties to test if their content will aid consumers in choosing to use their product. The government could encourage these parties to include these elements in or on their product so consumers can use information from the content's producer rather than a 3rd party like the government.

Q16:

The government agencies should advise the industry and users on the regulation of content. They should provide all the information necessary so the other parties may be informed accurately about the system and assistance to regulate content.

Industry bodies should aid in providing consultants who will aid government bodies in regulating content and by providing guidelines that will be used to regulate content with.

Users need to stay informed of the regulation of content and discuss it with others. If they find or have problems with content, they need to be able to discuss it freely with other users, the industry and the

government agencies.

Q17:

Theoretically yes. The current system that regulates content for television, music, advertisement and mobile phone content is similar to the proposed model in the question, however some things would need to be changed to suit particular industries. The time and cost of development and implementation of the proposed concept would be a drawback. You may need to research this before making a decision. I will support it if you do choose to implement co-regulatory systems.

Q18:

Pornography and entertainment for young children, those ranging from 0 -3.

Q19:

There are no circumstances where this should be subsidised, a classification subsidy would deter industry from classifying their works. This would negate the purpose for a classification system.

Q20:

The MA15+ rating is the most misunderstood and abused category in the current classification system. Due to the lack of R18+, many items are mistakenly given the MA15+. This does not help consumers as it is purposely misinforms their decisions to view and purchase items with content that would be better suited to R18+. The misuse of MA15+ does bring into question the successful categorisation of items that fall under M and R ratings.

The RC (Refused Classification) category is also confusing, partially due to the legality of one importing, owning and viewing content that has been awarded this rating but also the lack of justification for applying this rating to content.

Q21:

The proposed inclusion of a R18+ category for computer games and more justification for all categories does temporally solve some of issues with the current system.

Q22:

If all media formats had the same requirements then a standardised classification system would allow for the consistency asked of by this question. If a standardised system is required, then all industries will need to agree on a series of requirements that will function and can be regulated fairly for all industries and content produced. Such a system would require fair regulations, strict guidelines and means of policing the system so no discrepancies occur.

Q23:

All these documents should be rewritten as a single document to reflect better classification criteria that reflects the nature of the industries involved. Guidelines should come from the industries rather than government agencies.

Q24:

None.

Q25:

No, it does not reflect the content that is offline therefore making inadequate to prohibit online and offline content.

Q26:

Consistency between state and territory laws is important, the public, industry and government departments will be required to decide on the strict guidelines that will make standardisation achievable. There is no reason for separate laws, it implies that some communities will be censored by their governing power while others have less restrictions.

Q27:

There should be no legislative scheme, classification should be voluntary. I believe a voluntary system that involves self-regulation from industry bodies with government assistance would be a markedly improved system than the current classification.

Q28:

No, if a voluntary system that was supported by industries and the government was established. I would only agree to this if there was enough justification for why the Commonwealth would be involved and information on what degree its involvement would take.

Q29:

There are several things that should be clarified by the governing agencies and the Australian public. The misinterpretation that any classification system will control what content is accessible by any person, that classification of content is not government censorship and that the classification system exists to enable consumers to make informed decisions about the content they are accessing.

Other comments: