

HOW TO MAKE A SUBMISSION

To participate in this consultation, you need to answer the question:

Should the Australian National Classification Scheme include an R 18+ classification category for computer games?

Submissions can be sent by email in Word format without embedded images. Submissions can also be posted or faxed. You are also encouraged to keep any commentary short and succinct.

Unless you clearly request confidentiality, **submissions are public documents** and may be accessed by any member of the public, may be published on a website and quoted in further review papers. If you do not want your submission to be published, or you would like to request anonymity, you must clearly request this in your submission.

Submissions must be received by **28 February 2010**. Submissions received after this date may not be able to be considered.

Submissions should be sent to:

Email: classificationreview@ag.gov.au
Fax: 02 6141 3488
Post: Classification Review
Attorney-General's Department
3 -5 National Circuit
BARTON ACT 2600

TEMPLATE FOR MAKING SUBMISSIONS

PERSONAL INFORMATION¹:

Name: **James Pinnell (Gamer Limit Australia)**

Email address:* **james@gamerlimit.com**

Gender:* **Male**

Street Address:* **PO Box 293, Mount Ommaney**

State/Postcode:* **Queensland, 4074**

Country of Residence:* **Australia**

Age range:* **under 18/18-24/25-34/35-44/ 45-54/55-64/ 65+ 25-34**

*Do you play computer or video games?** **yes no**

How frequently do you play?

Daily Weekly Fortnightly Monthly Other.....

How long do you play in an average session?

0-15minutes 15-30 minutes 30-60mins 1-2 hours 2+ hours

(Note: fields marked * are mandatory fields)

THE QUESTION

Should the Australian National Classification Scheme include an R18+ classification category for computer games?

NO

YES

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ARGUMENTS

To help us understand your reasons for your answer, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following arguments:

- *Adults should not be prevented from playing R 18+ level computer games simply because they are unsuitable for minors*

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree **5) strongly agree**

- *The R 18+ classification category sends a clear, unambiguous message to parents that the game material is unsuitable for minors*

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree **5) strongly agree**

- *Consistent classification categories for films and computer games are easier to understand*

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree **5) strongly agree**

- *A new classification will supplement technological controls on minors' access to age-inappropriate computer games*

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree **5) strongly agree**

- *Comparable classification systems internationally have an adult rating for computer games - international parity is desirable*

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree **5) strongly agree**

- *Consumers access games which would be R 18+ illegally – it would be better if they were legally available with appropriate restrictions*

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree **5) strongly agree**

- *Computer games should be treated differently from films given the specific, negative effects of interactivity on players, particularly their participation in violent and aggressive content.*

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree 5) strongly agree

- *It would be difficult for parents to enforce age restrictions for computer games.*

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree 5) strongly agree

- *Minors would be more likely to be exposed to computer games that are unsuitable for them.*

1) **strongly disagree** 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree 5) strongly agree

- *An R 18+ for computer games would exacerbate problems associated with access to high level material in Indigenous communities and by other non-English speaking people*

1) **strongly disagree** 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree 5) strongly agree

- *There is no demonstrated need to change existing restrictions.*

1) **strongly disagree** 2) disagree 3) do not know 4) agree 5) strongly agree

Comments (Optional - up to 250 words)

The large majority of benefits to introducing consistency and parity to the classification system heavily outweigh inaction. Simply ignoring that there is an issue with current rating decisions is counterproductive, especially since the discussion paper highlights a number of important issues that need to be addressed.

Firstly, the lack of an R rating system currently puts undue pressure on the board to pass games that are not generally suitable for a 15yr old audience, with the only other option available being a ban.

This is unacceptable.

Not only are parents being offered borderline mature content for their children, but adults are left with not only edited content but the lack of any choice available to them. Current gaming systems, whether PC, Xbox 360, PS3 or Wii, all offer parental control systems that can regulate content. If parents are educated on their use and function, it's unlikely that mature content will fall into the wrong hands.

This spirals down to the other issues that were brought up in the paper, regarding possible damage to our local industry, due to an unfavourable or uncompetitive environment in which to develop local games, but also to international investment, when companies are unfairly asked to censor content for a single small market, at their own expense.

Classification consistency will provide, if nothing else, certainty for the public. Parents will know what content is suitable or not. Industry can create and distribute content without fear of monetary losses. Adult gamers will finally have real choice.

