

**STANDING COMMITTEE OF ATTORNEYS-GENERAL
(CENSORSHIP)**

ADELAIDE, 27-28 MARCH 2008

DECISIONS TO BE PUBLICLY RELEASED

1. R18+ classification for computer games (Vic)

Ministers:

- a) noted the research and arguments for and against the introduction of an R18+ classification for computer games in Australia, and
- b) agreed in principle to undertake a process of community consultation in relation to whether an R18+ classification for computer games should be introduced into the National Classification Scheme (NCS) and
 - (i) Requested Officers to develop a Discussion Paper that canvasses options and seeks submissions on whether an R18+ classification for computer games should be introduced into the NCS. The Discussion Paper will include an overview of the relevant research and literature and a proposal to amend the NCS, including amendments required to the Commonwealth *Classification (Films, Publications, Computer Games) Act 1995* (the Commonwealth Act), the Classification Code (the Code), the Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games 2005 (the Guidelines), State and Territory Enforcement Acts (and certain Commonwealth Instruments); and
 - (ii) Agreed that, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Agreement on Censorship, the Discussion Paper be the subject of public consultation including consultation with industry and interest groups, once Ministers have agreed out of session (if necessary) to release the Paper; and
 - (iii) Agreed to consider at a subsequent meeting, the outcome of the public consultation on this issue and to resolve whether an R18+ classification for computer games should be introduced into the NCS, and amendments to give effect thereto, should proceed.

2. RC Material for Research (Cth)

Ministers:

- (a) noted the working group Report;
- (b) agreed that access to refused classification (RC) material for legitimate academic research and educational purposes would be best effected by each State and Territory prescribing the persons, bodies or classes of persons to whom RC material and submittable publications may be published and on what conditions;
- (c) agreed in principle to amend the regulation making powers in their respective classification enforcement Acts to enable conditions on publishing to prescribed

persons and access by those prescribed persons to be imposed in the prescribing regulation;

- (d) agreed in principle to prescribe:
 - (i) professional research and teaching staff and fellows and senior librarians at higher education providers (as approved under the Commonwealth *Higher Education Support Act 2003*),
 - (ii) students identified by the research and teaching staff and fellows, and
 - (iii) senior librarians at National and State libraries;
- (e) agreed in principle that the regulation prescribing them should specify that publishing to them and access and use by them, is subject to requirements that the material must:
 - (i) relate directly to the area of research, study or teaching of the prescribed person; and
 - (ii) be kept securely at all times in a controlled environment;
- (f) requested officers to develop, consistent with these decisions:
 - (i) model amendments to the regulation-making power, and
 - (ii) model regulations prescribing the class of persons and the conditions on which RC material and submittable publications may be published to them;
- (g) requested officers to conduct targeted consultation on the model provisions and regulations; and
- (h) requested officers to report back to Ministers at the next meeting.

3. Research Into Community Standards (Cth)

Ministers:

- (a) noted the findings of the research report prepared by Galaxy on classification decisions and community standards
- (b) agreed that Galaxy's report be provided to the Classification Board and Classification Review Board drawing their attention to the community's views on violence and actual sex in R 18+ films
- (c) agreed that the report be made publicly available, and
- (d) noted that nothing in the research gives rise to a need to review the guidelines.

4. Hate Based Websites (Cth)

Ministers requested that officers:

- (a) prepare a paper canvassing the benefits and disadvantages of extending the definition of RC material to include hate-based material, and a proposal as to how such material could be defined and included in the National Classification Code or Guidelines, and
- (b) report back with a recommendation at the next SCAG (Censorship) meeting.

5. General Business

(a) Young Media Australia – Film Review Service (SA)

Ministers noted the availability of the film review service, *Know Before You Go*, provided by Young Media Australia.