

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: Rev Andrew Satchell (On Behalf of the Church & Nation Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria)

Email address:*

Gender: Male

Street Address:*

State/Postcode: 3162*

Country of Residence: Australia*

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

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?

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

Confidentiality requested?: yes no

(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)

We would be opposed to changing the current classifications for computer games as the current levels make it difficult for under 18 gamers to be able to access games which would be totally unsuitable for them. If this means that adult gamers miss out then we believe that adults should be willing to forgo this for the sake of those under the age of 18. The so-called parental locks and filters on games and systems are not seen by most gamers as protection but in fact seen as “another code to break” and if adult gamers can break them, certainly younger ones will be able to (and do so). While we accept that adult gamers may have the ability to distinguish the reality from fantasy, it is clear from research that younger minds can struggle with this. Parents are responsible for what their children watch/play but parents also rely on the government to be able to help them in these matters with good strong guidelines and the current system we believe is better to leave them as they are for the sake of those in our population you can be influenced by these other games which will end up in their hands. While some people will flout the law it doesn't mean we should change the law for their sake.

Rev Andrew Satchell

Secretary, Church & Nation Committee

On Behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria

