



Australian Government

Annual Report

2020-21

Classification Board and Classification Review Board

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Contact details

This report can be viewed online at www.classification.gov.au

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Introduction

This report includes the reports of the Classification Board and the Classification Review Board. A copy of this report is available online at **www.classification.gov.au** as are Annual Reports from previous years.

Information about the Classification Board and the Classification Review Board is also available on the Australian Classification website at **www.classification.gov.au**

The Classification Branch of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications provides administrative support to both the Classification Board and the Classification Review Board. Further information about the Classification Branch is available in the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications Annual Report 2020–21 at **www.infrastructure.gov.au**

Overview of the National Classification Scheme

The National Classification Scheme (the **Scheme**) is a co-operative scheme established and maintained by agreement between the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments in Australia. The Intergovernmental Agreement on Censorship, that was executed in 1995, underpins the Scheme.

The *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995* (Cth) (the **Classification Act**), provides for a *National Classification Code* (the **Code**) and Classification Guidelines for films, computer games and publications (the **Guidelines**). The Classification Board (the **Board**) makes decisions about films, computer games and certain publications. The Board is independent from government. The Classification Review Board (the **Review Board**) is an independent statutory body responsible for reviewing certain decisions of the Classification Board. The Review Board is independent of both the Board and the government.

The states and territories are responsible for regulating the sale, exhibition and advertising of classifiable content. Each state and territory has its own classification Act that is enforced by state or territory police or law enforcement bodies. There are some offence provisions in the Commonwealth Classification Act which are part of the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory* legislation package (formerly known as the Northern Territory Emergency Response), as well as offences regarding

the unlawful use of markings in relation to goods other than films, computer games or publications.

Commonwealth

***Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995* (Cth)**

The Classification Act establishes the Classification Board and the Classification Review Board (collectively, the **Boards**). The Boards are independent from government and from each other. The Classification Act requires that, in appointing members of the Boards, regard is to be had to the desirability of ensuring that membership of the Boards is broadly representative of the Australian community.

The Classification Act also sets out:

- ▶ powers and functions of the Boards
- ▶ statutory criteria for review of classification decisions
- ▶ powers of the Minister responsible for the administration of the Classification Act to approve classification tools to generate decisions and consumer advice
- ▶ the assessor schemes that enable industry to self-classify content and submit their classification recommendations to the Board
- ▶ statutory requirements for applications for classification

- ▶ rules regarding exemption from classification of unclassified films, computer games and certain publications
- ▶ requirements for advertising of films, computer games and publications
- ▶ provisions for the approval of advertisements for certain products
- ▶ provisions for reclassification, and handling prohibited material in prohibited material areas.

The Classification Act is available online at www.legislation.gov.au

There is a range of determinations, instruments and principles made under the Classification Act available online at www.classification.gov.au or www.legislation.gov.au

When making decisions, Boards apply the Classification Act, the Code, and the three statutory Guidelines.

National Classification Code

The Boards must make classification decisions in accordance with the Code which broadly describes the classification categories. The Code is agreed to by Commonwealth, state and territory ministers with responsibility for classification. The Code is available in the Appendix under “National Classification Code” on page 80.

Classification Guidelines

The Guidelines are used by the Boards to assist them in applying the criteria in the Code, by describing the classification types and setting out the scope and limits of material suitable for each classification type. The Guidelines are approved by all ministers with responsibility for classification.

States and territories

As partners in the Scheme, each state and territory has classification legislation that complements the Commonwealth Classification Act. The legislation sets out how films, publications and computer games shall be sold, hired, exhibited, advertised and demonstrated in that jurisdiction. It prescribes penalties for classification offences and provides for enforcement of classification decisions. Some states and territories retain powers to classify or reclassify material. The Northern Territory has legislated concurrent classification powers, while the Northern Territory and Tasmania have reserved the power to re-classify publications, films and computer games already classified by the Classification Board: the *Classification of Publications, Films and Computer Games Act 1995 (NT) s 16* and the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Enforcement Act 1995 (Tas) s 41A*.

Other functions

In addition to making classification decisions about films, computer games and certain publications, the Classification Board and its Director perform a number of other functions under the Scheme.

Exemptions to show unclassified content

Under the Conditional Cultural Exemption Rules, event organisers self-assess their eligibility for exemption to exhibit unclassified films, computer games and certain publications. If they comply with the standard conditions, event organisers can register their event online.

Some organisations that conduct activities of an educational, cultural or artistic nature and have a sound reputation may be eligible

to become an Approved Cultural Institution (ACI). An ACI is not required to register its events but instead undertakes training provided by the Classification Board. Trained persons then assess unclassified material for events held under the auspices of the ACI and must ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

In exceptional circumstances, where the prescribed conditions cannot be met, an organisation may still apply to the Director of the Classification Board for a waiver or variation to the exemption rules.

Assessor schemes

Several schemes have been established that enable authorised industry assessors to submit content for classification. Under the schemes, the Classification Board is still responsible for the decision, which is informed by the assessor's report.

Applications for classification may be lodged under the following voluntary assessor schemes:

Authorised Assessor Scheme for Computer Games (AACG)

The Director of the Classification Board may authorise trained persons to recommend the classification for a computer game.

An authorised assessor may submit an application recommending the classification and consumer advice for a computer game, if the computer game is likely to be classified G (General), PG (Parental Guidance) or M (Mature). The Classification Board may accept the recommendation or may vary or reject the recommendation and determine the classification rating and consumer advice.

Additional Content Assessor (ACA) Scheme

The Director of the Classification Board may authorise trained persons to assess additional content which accompanies a previously classified or exempt film released for sale or hire. Additional content includes material such as 'making of' documentaries, out-takes, alternative endings and commentaries or interviews with the director or actors, and does not include television programs, series or computer games.

An authorised assessor may submit an application recommending the classification and consumer advice for the additional content for any classification category from G (General) up to and including R 18+ (Restricted). The Classification Board may accept the recommendation or may vary or reject the recommendation and determine the classification rating and consumer advice.

Authorised Television Series Assessor (ATSA) Scheme

The Director of the Classification Board may authorise trained persons to assess films that consist of one or more episodes of a television series, as well as any series-related content. At least one episode of the television series must have been broadcast in Australia. The scheme does not apply to films that would be classified X 18+ (Restricted) or RC (Refused Classification). An authorised assessor may submit an application recommending the classification and consumer advice for the series and related additional content for any classification category from G (General) up to and including R 18+ (Restricted). The Classification Board may accept the recommendation or may vary or reject the recommendation and determine the classification rating and consumer advice.

Advertising of Unclassified Films and Computer Games Scheme

The Advertising of Unclassified Films and Computer Games Scheme (**the Advertising Scheme**) allows for the advertising of unclassified films and computer games under certain conditions. The conditions are prescribed in the *Classification (Advertising of Unclassified Films and Computer Games Scheme) Determination 2009* (the **2009 Determination**).

The primary condition is that advertising for unclassified films and computer games must display the message “Check the Classification” (or “CTC” in its shortened form).



Check the Classification

For certain forms of advertising, once a film or computer game is classified, the “Check the Classification” or “CTC” message must be replaced with the classification marking.

Prior to classification, however, trailers/ advertisements for unclassified films and games may be advertised with films or games that have already been classified, provided that an assessment of the likely classification of the film or game has been made, *either* by the Classification Board, *or* by a trained advertising assessor employed by industry. Once this assessment has been made, the ‘commensurate audience’ rule applies. This means that the trailers/advertisements for unclassified films and games may only be advertised with content of the same or higher classification. For example, if there is an advertisement for an unclassified game and

it is determined by the Classification Board or an assessor, that the game will have a likely classification of M, then the advertisement may only be shown alongside games that already have an M, MA 15+ (Mature Accompanied) or R 18+ classification.

The Advertising Scheme includes a number of safeguards and sanctions. These include the Director of the Classification Board having the power to revoke or suspend an assessor’s authorisation, and to prohibit a distributor from advertising their unclassified products for up to three years, in certain circumstances (Part 4 Sanctions of the 2009 Determination).

Permission to import or export objectionable goods

The *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956* (the **Prohibited Imports Regulations**) prescribe classes of goods that must not be imported into Australia. The *Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1958* (the **Prohibited Exports Regulations**) prescribe classes of goods that must not be exported from Australia.

The Australian Border Force can detain or seize any material that may contravene regulation 4A of the Prohibited Imports Regulations or regulation 3 of the Prohibited Exports Regulations. The criteria in regulation 4A and regulation 3 accord with the RC (Refused Classification) criteria in both the Code and the Classification Act. The Australian Border Force may apply for classification of items intercepted at the border. Organisations such as the Australian Border Force, the various Australian police forces, and public and private art galleries apply to import and export material from time-to-time.

The Director and Deputy Director of the Classification Board are authorised under sub-regulation 4A(2A) of the Prohibited Imports Regulations and sub-regulation 3(3) of the Prohibited Exports Regulations to grant requests for permission to import goods to which the Prohibited Imports Regulations apply, or to export goods to which the Prohibited Exports Regulations apply.

Online content

Under Schedule 7 of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (the **BSA**), the Classification Board classifies internet content on application from the Office of the eSafety Commissioner. If the Office of the eSafety Commissioner receives a valid complaint about Australian hosted online content, or discovers potential prohibited content on its own initiative, it may, and in some cases must, submit the content to the Board for classification. The eSafety Commissioner then takes appropriate action in respect of online content.

Corporate overview

Legislative governance structures

The Classification Board

The Board is an independent statutory body established under the Classification Act which comprises a Director, a Deputy Director and other members.

The Board classifies films, computer games and certain submittable publications (all of which are defined in the Classification Act).

The Director

The Director of the Board has a range of statutory functions under the Classification Act which include:

- ▶ managing the administrative affairs of the Board
- ▶ convening and presiding at Board meetings
- ▶ determining the constitution of the Board for classifying particular products
- ▶ determining how decisions are recorded
- ▶ arranging the business of the Board
- ▶ calling in publications, films and computer games for classification
- ▶ determining procedures for the Board
- ▶ providing the Minister with the Board's Annual Report.

In addition to the Director's powers in relation to the Board, the Classification Act and a number of Determinations made pursuant to the Act confer a number of additional functions and powers on the Director which include:

- ▶ approving forms for the purpose of the Classification Act
- ▶ providing certificates and notices of decisions, including evidentiary certificates
- ▶ authorising industry assessors.

Further, pursuant to sub-clause 18(2) of Schedule 7 of the BSA, the Director must approve the training for Trained Content Assessors (**TCAs**) whose role is to provide advice to a Commercial Content Service on the classification of content that has not been classified by the Board. The training for TCAs needs to provide instruction about content that might be considered to be restricted, that is: for films and computer games, likely to be classified MA 15+, R 18+, X 18+ and Refused Classification (**RC**) and for publications, likely to be classified Category 1 – restricted, Category 2 – restricted and RC.

The Director and Deputy Director of the Board are authorised to grant permission to import or export prohibited or potentially prohibited goods in accordance with the Prohibited Imports Regulations and Prohibited Exports Regulations.

The Classification Review Board

The Classification Review Board is an independent statutory body established to review decisions of the Classification Board, upon application.

See the Classification Review Board Annual Report 2020–21 on page 70 for more information on the Review Board.

The Convenor

The Convenor of the Review Board has a range of statutory functions under the Classification Act which include:

- ▶ managing the administrative affairs of the Review Board
- ▶ determining the constitution of panels of the Review Board to review decisions
- ▶ determining how decisions are recorded
- ▶ arranging the business of the Review Board
- ▶ providing the Minister with the Review Board's Annual Report.

In addition to the Convenor's powers in relation to the Review Board, the Classification Act confers a number of additional functions and powers which include:

- ▶ approving forms for the purpose of the Classification Act
- ▶ providing certificates and notices of decisions, including evidentiary certificates.

Administrative arrangements

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (the department) is responsible for the financial management of the operations of the Boards.

The Classification Branch in the department undertakes the following functions:

- ▶ processing applications for the consideration of the Boards
- ▶ providing policy and operational advice on classification issues to the Commonwealth minister with classification responsibilities
- ▶ providing secretariat services to the Review Board
- ▶ providing classification education and training for Australian Border Force personnel, as the Classification Board has assumed the training of industry.

Meetings

The Classification Board has fortnightly meetings to discuss classification decisions and other procedural issues.

The Review Board is a part-time board and convenes only to deal with applications for review.

Effective liaison with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

The Boards maintain effective liaison with the department through both formal and informal meetings and contacts.

Stakeholder liaison

The Classification Board maintains effective liaison arrangements with officials with responsibility for classification, peak industry body and university representatives, international classification colleagues, community members and interest groups, and other classification stakeholders. The Board provides information about decisions to interested parties as well as advice to industry assessors to promote professional development on classification issues.

The Review Board provides information to interested parties.

Financial management, accountability and reporting

Classification is carried out largely on a cost recovery basis with fees for classification set out in the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Regulations 2005* (the **2005 Regulations**). Fees for the review of a decision are based on partial cost-recovery to enable access to reviews of a classification decision, while discouraging vexatious or frivolous applicants. The classification application revenue from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 is **\$2,740,085**, which is a decrease of \$662,595 (about 19.5%) compared with the previous year, which totalled \$3,402,680.

The funding for the classification service is included in the appropriation for the department. The department's Annual Report is available at www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/annual_report/

Risk management

Management of risk is undertaken in accordance with the department's risk management framework and fraud control plan and procedures.

Website

The Australian Classification website address is www.classification.gov.au. Information is tailored to user groups such as the public, industry and law enforcement agencies. The website contains a public access database, the National Classification Database (**NCD**) of classification decisions made by the Boards as well as the Netflix film classification tool and the International Age Rating Coalition (**IARC**) computer games classification

tool. Information on the NCD incorporates classification ratings and consumer advice in the search results, including a classification matrix (except for IARC decisions) which shows the level of impact of material for each of the six classifiable elements in a film or computer game. The NCD also includes classification decisions for submittable publications.

In the reporting year, there have been 1,411,141 visits to the website.

Establishment and maintenance of appropriate ethical standards

Ethical standards

The Classification Act makes provision for the disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by members of the Boards.

The Classification Act provides that full-time members of the Classification Board must not engage in outside employment without the consent of the Minister. This requirement does not apply to service in the Australian Defence Force. During the reporting year, there were no requests to consider any external employment for permanent members of the Board. It is noted, however, that temporary Board members undertake other paid employment elsewhere, and these Board members disclose such work to the Director who ensures that there is no perceived or actual conflict of interest when temporary Board members are engaged to classify material.

The Board is bound by the same terms and conditions in the code of conduct applicable to Australian public servants.

External accountability

The Boards work within an accountability framework which includes parliamentary scrutiny, the *Crimes Act 1914*, the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Ombudsman Act 1976*.

Membership

Appointments to the Boards are made by the Governor-General, following a recommendation by the Minister. Before making a recommendation, the Classification Act requires that the Minister consult with state and territory ministers with responsibility for classification about the proposed recommendations. Appointments are made for fixed terms of up to five years and members are eligible to serve a statutory maximum term of seven years.

Under section 50 of the Classification Act, the Minister may appoint temporary members of the Classification Board if it is necessary to do so for the efficient dispatch of the Classification Board's business. The Minister has authorised the Director to perform this function.

Sections 66 and 84 provide that the Minister may appoint a person to act as a member during a vacancy on the respective Boards.

Conditions

The Remuneration Tribunal determines the entitlements of the members of the Boards in relation to remuneration, annual leave and official travel. These determinations are available on the Remuneration Tribunal website at www.remtribunal.gov.au

Freedom of Information

In accordance with section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the **FOI Act**), this section of the report contains information about FOI procedures and access to documents.

One application was received for access to Classification Board or Review Board documents under the FOI Act during the reporting period, which was finalised.

Applicants seeking access to documents under the FOI Act should contact:

The FOI Officer
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Communications
GPO Box 2154
CANBERRA ACT 2601
foi@infrastructure.gov.au

Categories of documents

The following categories of documents are maintained by the department on behalf of the Boards:

- ▶ applications under the Classification Act
- ▶ documents relating to decisions of the Boards.

Reasons for decisions of the Review Board are available on the Australian Classification website at www.classification.gov.au

The following categories of documents are publicly available at www.classification.gov.au

- ▶ the Classification Act, the Code, the Guidelines and the 2005 Regulations
- ▶ the Determinations, Principles and other instruments made under the Classification Act
- ▶ Annual Reports
- ▶ application forms for classification and review.

Privacy

The *Australian Privacy Principles* in the *Privacy Act 1988* set out the requirements for agencies in handling personal information. The relevant privacy policy is at www.classification.gov.au

It outlines how responsibilities in relation to records containing personal information held by the department in administratively supporting the work of the Boards are met. For more information please contact the department's Privacy Officer:

Privacy Officer
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Communications
GPO Box 594
Canberra ACT 2601
Tel: +61 2 6274 6495
Email: privacy@infrastructure.gov.au

Reports by the Auditor-General

There were no reports on the operation of the Boards by the Auditor-General in the reporting period.

Changes to the National Classification Scheme

There were no changes to the National Classification Scheme in the reporting period.

Commonwealth Ombudsman

No matters involving the Boards were dealt with by the Commonwealth Ombudsman in the reporting period.

**Classification Board
Annual Report
2020-21**





Australian Government
Classification Board

The Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with subsection 67(1) of the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995*, I am pleased to submit a report on the management of the administrative affairs of the Classification Board for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ellenor Nixon'.

Ellenor Nixon
Acting Director

15 September 2021

Director's overview



In some ways, 2020–21 felt like a continuation of the previous reporting year, with Australia and the rest of the world still struggling to come to grips with the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. While many Australians returned to their workplaces, many others did not, and the increasing consumption of films, computer games and publications – delivered via apps and subscription services to lounge rooms and mobile phones across the country – continued apace.

And while technological advances and shifts in social priorities were changing the way Australian consumers interact with media (as well as with each other), the Classification Board was there with them, continuing to provide trusted classification decisions and consumer advice for an ever-growing range of content.

In this reporting year, the Board made 2,502 decisions. This included 2,466 commercial classification decisions and 25 decisions for

enforcement agencies, including Australian Border Force Counter Terrorism and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner. The Board also continued the monitoring of decisions made by the Netflix Classification Tool (as decisions of the Tool are taken to be decisions of the Board and are added to the National Classification Database), auditing a number of Netflix decisions on films, including *Cuties*. Every decision was made within the specified statutory timeframe of 20 days (or five days for priority applications).

As Acting Director, I continued to review the changes to the Board's procedures and processes, to optimise the quality and efficiency of the Board's decision-making in an environment of continued flux and uncertainty – not just for the Board, but for all Australians. These changes, initially implemented by the previous Acting Director, Ms Sally Ryan, to meet the operational challenges the COVID-19 pandemic posed to an essentially collaborative workplace, have allowed the Board to not only function but thrive. I am enormously proud that the Board has continued to meet all of its statutory obligations and deadlines, as well as its obligations to the numerous applicants and stakeholders who rely on the decisions the Board provides.



From left to right, Sally Ryan, former Acting Director, Classification Board; Jennifer Marvello, Temporary Board Member; Iain Humphrey, Temporary Board Member.

Board decisions set important benchmarks for Australian consumers, as well as for classifiers operating under other self-regulating schemes. It is therefore vital that the decisions reflect contemporary community standards. Board members operate under a heavy workload, classifying 300 minutes of content every day, and it can sometimes be difficult to find the time and space for discussion and reflection. To that end, I have prioritised both regular Board meetings and ongoing professional development days, which allow the Board to review and assess local and international classification processes and developments, as well as specific areas of community concern.

The classification landscape is always dynamic, and I'm confident this ongoing process of evaluation and engagement will ensure that the Board is well placed to meet current and future challenges and change.

The review of Australian classification regulation that was announced by the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, in December 2019 and led by Mr Neville Stevens AO was also affected by COVID-19, but was completed after an extended consultation period that ended in May 2020. The review's findings and recommendations are currently with the Australian Government, and the Board eagerly awaits their publication as well as the Government's response.

The Board's submission to the review embraced the opportunity for change and reform, favouring the harmonisation of both classification categories and guidelines for all classifiable content, regardless of delivery platform, so that films, computer games and publications (or hybrids of all three) would be classified to the same standards whether they are broadcast on television screens, watched in theatres, played or read in homes, or streamed to or read on tablets

or mobile phones. Such wide-ranging reform may yet prove too difficult to achieve, but we remain confident that the Board and other classification stakeholders will adapt to any changes that may come, and continue to act in the best interests of Australian consumers.



Rachel Merton, Board Member.

Providing industry assessors and classifiers with thorough and appropriate training and remote learning opportunities has continued to be a priority for both the Board and the Classification Branch. This year, we updated the eLearning modules for Film Classification Training for G to R 18+ as well as the modules for Consumer Advice for Films. The equivalent eLearning modules for the classification of computer games were also completed. The

initial feedback has been extremely positive, and these valuable training resources should soon be available to industry.

Representatives of the Board made two appearances before Senate Estimates in this reporting year.

On 22 October 2020, Acting Director Sally Ryan and I appeared before committee members at Senate Estimates. Questions regarding the classification processes for the Netflix film *Cuties* were raised. An update on the classification of Japanese manga publications and anime films was also provided. Other questions from committee members relating to classification decisions were answered.

On 27 May 2021, along with Acting Deputy Director Ellenor Nixon and Board member Andrew Humphreys, I again gave evidence to committee members at Senate Estimates. Procedural and administrative issues were addressed, including a discussion of the lease arrangements on the Board's current premises and possible outcomes of the review of Australian classification regulation led by Neville Stevens. The classification of the computer game *Grand Theft Auto V* was also raised.

In addition, Acting Director Sally Ryan and Board member Andrew Humphreys provided evidence to a private briefing of the Joint Committee on Law Enforcement on Tuesday 8 December 2020. Along with the Convenor of the Classification Review Board, Sue Knowles, and representatives of the Branch and Department, Sally and Andrew gave evidence in relation to film classification practices and investigation processes.



Alison Bickerstaff, Acting Director, and David Lock.

The Board farewelled Jarrah Rushton during this reporting year. Jarrah was a respected and valuable Board member who served with distinction over six years and we wish him well. Owen Mistler, who provided valuable technical support to the Board with patience and good humour, will also be missed.

Likewise, I would like to acknowledge and thank David Lock for all his knowledge (of everything!) and support he has provided to the Board in his decades of work with the Classification Branch. He too will be missed.

Margaret Anderson, who served as both Deputy Director and Director during her seven-year term, and Sally Ryan, who served as Deputy Director and Acting Director, also departed the Board. I thank both Margaret and Sally on behalf of the Board for their leadership and resilience. I would also like to thank them personally for their commitment and dedication to their roles, as well as for their mentorship and advice. Lastly, I would like to thank Board Member Ellenor Nixon, who has been acting in the position of Deputy Director since May. Ellenor has done a wonderful job.



The Classification Board. Left to right – Ms Rachel Merton, Mr Thomas Mann, Ms Ellenor Nixon (Acting Deputy Director), Ms Alison Bickerstaff (Acting Director), Mr Iain Humphrey, Ms Jenny Burke, Ms Jennifer Marvella, Mr Damien Carr, Mr Felix Hubble, Mr Paul Tenison, Ms Jenny Fowler, Mr Andrew Humphreys, Ms Lora Pechovska

As well as being my first overview, this is also my last, as I have almost served the statutory maximum of my seven-year term. I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to lead the Board. I have enjoyed every minute of my time here, from my role as a classifier and decision-maker (and resident horror film aficionado), to the role of Acting Director, overseeing the day-to-day functions and future direction of the Board.

Finally, I would like to thank the Classification Branch and my fellow Board members for their hard work, comradeship and professionalism throughout the year and my time at the Board.

Alison Bickerstaff

Acting Director
Classification Board



Classification Board profiles

Current Board members



Alison Bickerstaff

Acting Director

APPOINTED 20 May 2021

Acting Deputy Director

APPOINTED 8 June 2018

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES 20 March 2019

Board Member

APPOINTED 21 August 2014

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES 20 August 2021

Duties of Deputy Director

1 July 2017–7 June 2018

Ms Alison Bickerstaff, 41, has been acting Director of the Classification Board since May 2021. Prior to this, she was the Acting Deputy Director of the Classification Board for almost a year. Ms Bickerstaff was a small business owner prior to her appointment to the Classification Board in 2014, operating several busy hairdressing salons.

Ms Bickerstaff is a hairstylist by trade, and has experience as both an employee and proprietor. She has been responsible for training and mentoring apprentices and developing their competency. The training skills have been further developed in her

current Board positions, as she has delivered first-instance and refresher training in classification to industry.

Ms Bickerstaff has three children and has been involved in her local community through her children's school and sporting commitments. She has managed her son's junior rugby league team and has been a club committee board member. She is also involved in a local group that gathers regularly to help control the spread of noxious weeds and help with bush and creek re-generation in her local area.

Ms Bickerstaff is passionate about the environment and wildlife conservation. Her interests include sustainable living, rugby league, horse riding, gardening, film and the arts, and spending time with her family. She enjoys listening to a variety of music genres and is also involved in her local community's social media site, which covers issues such as neighbourhood watch, hazard/weather watch and cultural issues, as well as boosting community morale.



Ellenor Nixon

Acting Deputy Director

APPOINTED 17 May 2021

Board Member

APPOINTED 1 June 2016

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES 3 April 2022

Ms Ellenor Nixon, 30, holds a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in Archaeology and Forensic Science. She relocated from Merriwa, NSW, to take up her position with the Board.

During her undergraduate study, Ms Nixon studied at the University of Wyoming in the USA on a twelve-month exchange program. She participated in archaeological field research and studied animal management.

Prior to her Board appointment, Ms Nixon was the assistant manager in her family's mixed farming and grazing business in the Upper Hunter region of NSW. She has been actively involved in the community through her work with the local rural fire brigade, Landcare events, agricultural shows and charities, as well as competing in local sporting competitions. She has a keen interest in environmental issues, natural resource management and stewardship of the land. She enjoys adventure horse riding as well as video and table-top gaming. She completed her Graduate Certificate in Agriculture in 2020 and has been chosen to be a participant in the GenAngus Future Leaders Program, offered by Angus Australia.



Thomas Mann

Board member

APPOINTED 1 June 2016

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES 3 April 2022

Mr Thomas Mann, 39, is a writer and teacher. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in English Literature, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Editing and Communications. Mr Mann relocated from Melbourne to take up his position with the Board.

He has a background in writing for a variety of publications and was an editor for an online music website prior to his appointment. Through his work and personal interests, Mr Mann had an extensive involvement with the online community.

His local community involvement included support to the migrant community in Footscray as a volunteer English tutor and work with Melbourne's student community as a volunteer with the youth-focused radio station SYN FM. Mr Mann has three children.



Rachel Merton

APPOINTED 4 April 2019

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES 3 April 2022

Ms Rachel Merton, 45, lives in Mosman and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Education from Macquarie University. She has extensive experience in both the private and public sector, including over 13 years as a senior executive with KPMG Australia. Prior to that, she worked in the Federal Government public policy areas of Family and Community Services as well as the Commonwealth Treasury.

Ms Merton is the mother of two young girls and pursues interests in equestrian activities as well as wool and beef farming through her family's pastoral and agricultural interests in the central west of NSW. She and her family are extensively involved in their local community through their local preschool and church, and in sport with netball and the North Sydney District Rugby League Football Club.

Board members who left the Classification Board in 2020–21

Sally Ryan

Acting Director

APPOINTED 24 July 2020

Deputy Director

APPOINTED 21 March 2019

RE-APPOINTED 20 March 2021

RESIGNED 20 May 2021

Margaret Anderson

Director

APPOINTED 12 June 2018

APPOINTMENT EXPIRED 24 July 2020

Acting Director

APPOINTED 1 July 2017

Deputy Director

APPOINTED 25 July 2013

REAPPOINTED 25 July 2016

Jarrah Rushton

Board member

APPOINTED 21 August 2014

APPOINTMENT EXPIRED 20 August 2020

Temporary Board members

Under the Classification Act, the Minister has authorised the Director to appoint a person to be a temporary member of the Classification Board. A register of people suitable for temporary appointments is maintained and drawn on from time-to-time to provide short-term assistance in handling the workload of the Classification Board. Terms of appointment may be as short as one day and may extend to three months.



Jenny Burke

Ms Jenny Burke, 39, resides in the inner western suburbs of Sydney and has a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Marketing and Organisational Behaviour.

Over the past 15 years, Ms Burke has worked as a freelance market research contractor and a research consultant for numerous social research firms and the Australia Council for the Arts. Ms Burke is a mother to two young boys and is actively involved in the local community. She particularly enjoys volunteering in a leadership role at a local playgroup.

Ms Burke worked 43 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.



Andrew Humphreys

Mr Andrew Humphreys, 51, lives in Sydney with his family. He is a writer and novelist with a background in publishing, having written for, edited and published a range of consumer magazines.

Mr Humphreys has degrees in Arts and Law, and has also taught undergraduate and postgraduate media courses.

Mr Humphreys worked 104 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.



Jenny Fowler

Ms Jenny Fowler, 56, resides in the southern suburbs of Sydney. She has a Bachelor of Education, Primary.

Ms Fowler currently works as a Youth Justice Conference Convenor, conducting conferences for juvenile offenders as an alternative to court. She has also worked as a primary school teacher and as an extra in film and television. Ms Fowler has a 26-year-old son and a 23-year-old daughter. Her interests include travel, sport and keeping fit.

Ms Fowler worked 81 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.



Felix Hubble

Mr Felix Hubble, 29, is a Melbourne-based classifier who commutes to Surry Hills to perform his duties. He has a Bachelor of Arts (Film Studies) (Digital Cultures) (Hons) and works externally as a network classifier for SBS. When not classifying, Mr Hubble dedicates time to his company Static Vision, hosting film festivals and regular screenings of international arthouse and cult cinema. Mr Hubble is also an avid gamer and enjoys spending quality time with his partner.

Mr Hubble worked 51 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.



Damien Carr

Mr Damien Carr, 33, is an actor based in the Inner West of Sydney who trained at Actors Centre Australia. Mr Carr also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Drama and English from Flinders University and a Diploma of Screen and Media from Sydney Film School.

Mr Carr worked 56 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.



Lora Pechovska

Ms Lora Pechovska, 33, lives in the north-western suburbs of Sydney. She has a Bachelor of Education (Secondary: Humanities) (Hons), a Bachelor of Arts (English Hons) and a Diploma in Digital and Interactive Games (Art).

Her community involvement includes working in educational environments such as teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), tutoring refugees and teaching English overseas. She currently works as a private English tutor and as a retail assistant and visual merchandiser for a fashion retailer.

Ms Pechovska worked 74 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.



Jennifer Marvello

Ms Jennifer Marvello, 51, now retired from full-time employment, lives in the south-western suburbs of Sydney. She holds a Certificate IV Training & Assessment and Certificate IV Government Administration and has trained Customs Officers in drug detection technologies, interpretation of x-ray images, and identification of prohibited imports and exports, particularly films and publications which had been, or were likely to be, Refused Classification.

Ms Marvello enjoyed many years in human resources, particularly rehabilitation and case management. She has previously worked intensively with students in a one-on-one remedial reading program in infants and primary schools.

Subsequently, Ms Marvello transferred to the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department where she developed and delivered training to industry assessors making classification decisions. She spent six years as Office Manager in a specialist dermatology practice, where she still works on an ad hoc basis. She has been involved in her community as a long-term fundraising chair at Kingsgrove Public School and the Kingsgrove Cricket Club.

Ms Marvello worked 68 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.



Iain Humphrey

Mr Iain Humphrey, 49, holds a Bachelor of Arts (French) from the University of Hull, UK. After graduation, he worked for a major brand consultancy as an operational specialist, before migrating to Australia in 2007.

In Australia, Mr Humphrey worked for Red Bee Media for 12 years, one of the leading providers of access services for blind and hearing-impaired audiences. He led production teams and oversaw the delivery of captioning and audio description services to major clients worldwide, including public and commercial broadcasters (both in Australia and overseas) and a number of government departments, including the Commonwealth Hansard Office and the New Zealand Parliament. Mr Humphrey also spent four years in Sydney working as a nanny providing care to children aged from birth to seven years.

Mr Humphrey has strong computer skills, with extensive experience of captioning and audio description software, and has been a hobby console gamer since his undergraduate days. An avid cinema-goer who visits a cinema three to four times a week, he has been exposed to the classification process in Australia and overseas, in both a professional and personal capacity. He has worked extensively in support of the hearing-impaired and blind communities and has voluntarily participated in a Sydney-based program for people affected by HIV/AIDS.

Mr Humphrey worked 131 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.

**Paul Tenison**

Mr Paul Tenison, 67, resides in the northern districts of Sydney. Mr Tenison was previously a temporary Board member and has recently re-joined the Board following his retirement from full-time public sector employment with the Classification Branch. His previous work with the Branch included training of industry assessors, and financial and policy management of the classification scheme.

Mr Tenison is married with two adult children and has three grand children. He is active socially in his immediate community and through his grandchildren's schooling and sporting activities. Thanks to family, Mr Tenison has travelled extensively through South America, New Zealand, Christmas Island and on the City Rail Network. His interests include motorbike riding, astronomy, current affairs and political science; he is an avid trivia player and is a prized asset in local competitions, as well as being an accomplished 'barbequer' at social gatherings.

Mr Tenison worked 41 days as a temporary Board member during 2020–21.

Other temporary Board members

Mr Adam Hennessy and Mr Raphael Richards did not work any days as temporary Board members during 2020–21.

Statistics

There are statutory time limits for the making of classification decisions – 20 days for standard applications and five days for priority applications.

Key achievements

The Classification Board made 2,491 classification decisions in 2020–21, a decrease from 3,026 in the previous year. There were three classification decisions on internet content referred by the Office of the eSafety Commissioner and 22 classification decisions on content referred by the enforcement agencies.

No decisions exceeded the statutory time limit of 20 days for standard applications and five days for a priority application.

A breakdown of the Board’s workload is shown in Table 1.

Table 01: Board workload

Type of classification decision	Number of decisions
Film (public exhibition (theatrical))	364
Film (sale/hire) – DVD/Blu-ray/online	1,563
Film (sale/hire) – ACA	73
Film (sale/hire)	181
Computer games	280
Publications	5
Serial publication declarations	0
Internet content	3
Enforcement	22
Sub-total	2,491
Other decisions	
Advertising assessment of likely classification – film	7
Advertising assessment of likely classification – computer games	2
Section 87 Certificates – Classification Act	2
Conditional cultural exemptions (section 6H – Classification Act)	33
Call ins	0
Revocation of classification	1
Decline to deal further	0
Unclassified	0
Total	2,536

Comparison with last year's workload

A comparison of the Board's workload this year compared with 2019–20 is shown in Table 2.

Table 02: Board workload – comparison

Measure	2020–21	2019–20	Percentage change
Overall classification decisions	2,491	3,026	18 percent decrease
Public exhibition (theatrical) films	364	493	26 percent decrease*
Computer games	280	316	11 percent decrease
Film – (sale/hire) DVD/Blu-ray/online	1,576	1,763	11 percent decrease
Film – (sale/hire) ACA scheme	73	148	51 percent decrease
Film – (sale/hire) ATSA scheme	181	283	36 percent decrease
Publications/serial publication declarations combined	17	23	26 percent decrease
Board audits of serial declarations	0	1	100 percent decrease

* It is important to note that the ongoing response of the Australian, state and territory governments to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in the closure of cinemas across Australia for several months, caused an atypical decrease in the number of Public Exhibition films (**PE films**) classified over the reporting period. It is noted that in 2017–18 there was a 12% increase in the number of PE films classified that year compared with 2016–17; and the number of PE films classified in 2016–17 represented a 6% increase on the number of PE films classified in 2015–16. Prior to the pandemic forcing restricted social conditions, the number of PE films being classified was on track to again be a likely increase on the number classified during 2018–19 (which was an increase on the number classified in 2017–18).

Pursuant to section 22CF, decisions made by an approved classification tool are taken, for the purposes of the Classification Act, to be decisions of the Board.

Table 03: Tool decisions deemed to be decisions of the Board – comparison

Measure	2020–21	2019–20	Percentage change
IARC tool	250,983	226,713	11 percent increase
Netflix tool	1,300	1,525	15 percent decrease

Quality decision making

The Classification Board employs a number of practices and procedures to ensure quality of decision making:

- ▶ regular internal meetings are held and emails dispatched to ensure issues on current standards are communicated, debated and discussed
- ▶ all draft classification decisions are reviewed by the Deputy Director to ensure consistency in standards and approaches to decision making
- ▶ the new eLearning modules for films and computer games include contemporary examples of Board decisions and have replaced outmoded training material
- ▶ two professional development days are held each year, attended by all members
- ▶ standardised internal procedures for managing applications.

Publications

The Board made five decisions on commercial applications for classification of publications. All five decisions are single issue publication classifications and nil serial declarations.

Table 04: Commercial (single issue) publications decisions by classification

Classification rating	Number of decisions
Unrestricted	0
Category 1 restricted	2
Category 2 restricted	0
Refused Classification (RC)	3
Total	5

As indicated in Figure 1, 40 percent of single issue publications classified were Category 1 restricted and 60 percent were Refused Classification (RC).

Figure 01: Publication classification decisions

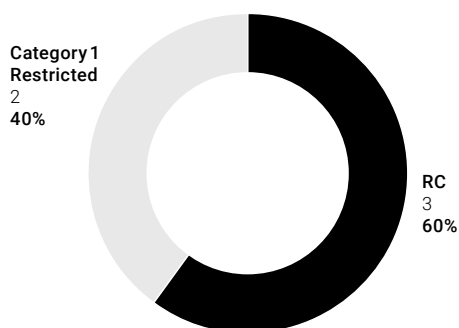


Table 05: Commercial publications applications Refused Classification (RC) by reason

Note: The reason for refusing a publication classification is a reference to the relevant item in the Code – refer to Appendix A.

Reason	Number of decisions
Publications RC 1(a)	0
Publications RC 1(b)	2
Publications RC 1(c)	0
Publications RC 1(a) & 1(b)	1
Total	3

Serial classification declarations for publications

The Classification Act provides that the Board may declare that the classification granted for an original issue applies to future issues of a publication for a specified period or number of issues. The Board must have regard to the *Classification (Serial Publications) Principles 2005* in deciding whether to grant a serial classification declaration.

Pursuant to section 13(5) of the Classification Act, the Board must revoke a serial declaration so far as it affects that issue and any future issues, if it is of the opinion that an issue of the publication covered by the declaration either: contains material that, if the issue were being classified separately, would cause it to be classified with a higher classification than the original issue; or contains an advertisement that has been refused approval.

No serial classification declaration was granted or revoked in the 2020–21 year.

Films classified for public exhibition

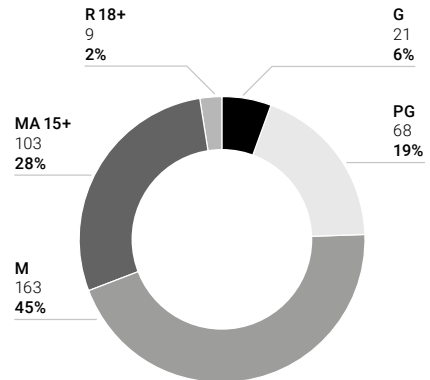
The Board made 364 decisions on applications for the classification of commercial films for public exhibition. The reason for this year’s marked reduction in the number of Public Exhibition (PE) films classified is noted under Table 2.

Table 06: Decisions on commercial films classified for public exhibition

Classification rating	Number of decisions
G	21
PG	68
M	163
MA 15+	103
R 18+	9
X 18+	0
RC	0
Total	364

As indicated in Figure 2, 69 percent of public exhibition film classifications during the year were in the advisory categories of G, PG and M, with the highest number of individual decisions in the M category.

Figure 02: Decisions on films classified for public exhibition



Films classified for sale/hire

The Board made 1,817 decisions on applications for classification of commercial films for sale/hire, including applications made under the ACA and ATSA schemes.

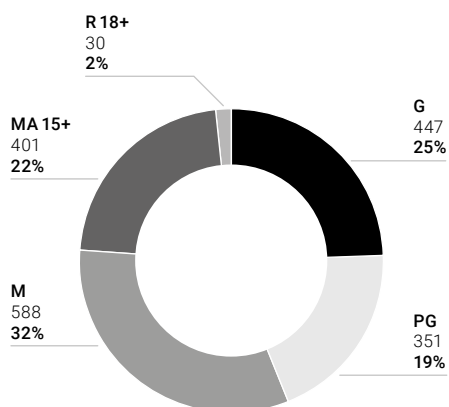
Table 07: Decisions on commercial films classified for sale/hire

Classification rating	Number of decisions
G	447
PG	351
M	588
MA 15+	401
R 18+	30
X 18+	0
RC	0
Total	1,817

As indicated in Figure 3, approximately 76 percent of classifications of films for sale/hire during the year were in the advisory categories of G, PG and M, with the highest number of decisions in the M category. This is a change from the past year, where the highest number of classifications was in the G classification category, and is aligned with the PE film decisions.

No films for commercial sale/hire in the reporting period were Refused Classification (RC).

Figure 03: Decisions on commercial films classified for sale/hire (including ACA and ATSA)



Film – sale/hire includes DVD/Blu-ray/online content submitted directly to the Board for classification, as well as films submitted as part of the Authorised Assessor schemes (ACA and ATSA) where the Board is still responsible for the classification of the film, but its decision may be informed by an assessor’s report and recommendation of classification rating and consumer advice.

Computer games

The Board made 280 decisions on applications for computer games. The figures include applications made under the Authorised Assessor Scheme for Computer Games (AACG). Under this scheme, authorised assessors can make a recommendation about classification and consumer advice for a game at the G, PG or M classification levels. The Board is still responsible for the classification of the game, but its decision may be informed by an assessor’s report and recommendation of classification rating and consumer advice.

Table 08: Commercial computer games decisions by classification

Classification rating	Number of decisions
G	77
PG	70
M	73
MA 15+	46
R 18+	12
RC	2
Total	280

79 percent of computer game classifications during the year were in the advisory categories of G, PG and M, with the highest number of decisions falling in the G category.

The Board determined two Refused Classification (RC) decisions for computer games in the reporting period.

Figure 04: Computer game classification decisions (including AACG)

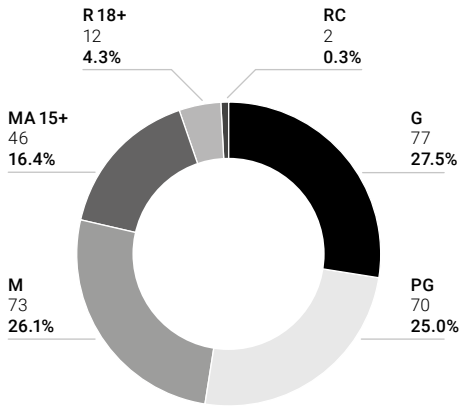


Table 09: Commercial computer game applications Refused Classification (RC) by reason

Note: The reason for refusing a computer game classification is a reference to the relevant item in the Code – refer to Appendix A.

Reason	Number of decisions
Games RC 1(a)	1
Games RC 1(b)	0
Games RC 1(c)	0
Games RC 1(a) & 1 (b)	1
Total	2

Advertising approvals

The Board did not receive any applications for approval of advertisements under section 29 of the Classification Act.

Advertising assessments

The scheme for advertising of unclassified films and computer games allows advertising subject to conditions set out in the *Classification (Advertising of Unclassified Films and Computer Games Scheme) Determination 2009*.

During the reporting period, the Board made seven assessments of the likely classification of films and two assessments of the likely classification of computer games.

Table 10: Advertising assessments for films

Likely classification	Number of decisions
G	2
PG	3
M	0
MA 15+	2
R 18+	0
Total	7

Table 11: Advertising assessments for computer games

Likely classification	Number of decisions
G	0
PG	0
M	1
MA 15+	1
R 18+	0
Total	2

Revocations

One decision was made to revoke the classification of a film, computer game, publication or serial declaration under sections 21A, 21AA, 21AB or subsection 13(5) respectively of the Classification Act during

this reporting period. Revocations under approved classification tools are discussed in the section Approved Classification Tools.

Call ins

Under the Classification Act, the Director may call in, that is, issue a notice to the publisher to submit an unclassified film (section 23A), computer game (section 24), or a submittable publication (section 23) for classification. Similar call in provisions apply in relation to certain advertisements.

There were no call-in notices issued during the reporting period.

Approved classification tools

The Classification Act provides for classification tools to be approved by the Minister to make classification decisions.

Decisions made by classification tools are deemed, pursuant to section 22CF of the Classification Act, to be decisions of the Board. Section 22CH of the Classification Act provides for the Board to revoke a classification decision produced by an approved classification tool if the Board is of the opinion that it would have given the material a different classification or assigned different consumer advice. The Board may revoke a classification decision on its own initiative or on application.

During the reporting period, two classification tools were used to generate classification decisions pursuant to subsection 22CA(1) of the Classification Act:

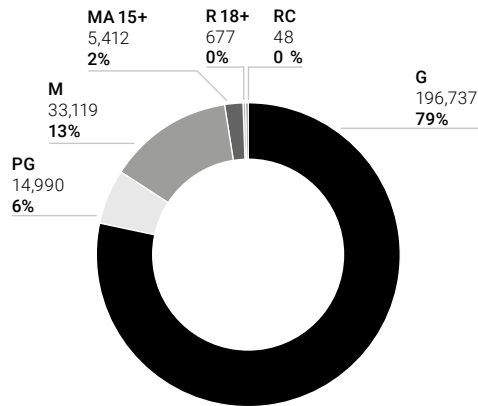
- ▶ the International Age Rating Coalition (IARC) classification tool (the **IARC tool**) which produces Australian classifications for online games; and
- ▶ the Netflix classification tool (the **Netflix tool**) which produces Australian classifications for content delivered by the American technology and media-services provider and production company, which offers a subscription video on demand service in Australia.

The IARC tool

During the reporting period, the IARC tool made 250,983 decisions which were published on the NCD. To ensure that the IARC tool makes decisions which align with decisions of the Board and Australian community standards, decisions of the IARC tool are monitored by way of the international program of participating IARC members, called Global Overrides. Australia participates in this program, which checks games which might be high profile or which might be the subject of a complaint. During the reporting period, 2,482 IARC classifications were checked. If it was determined a classification should be changed as a result of a check, the NCD was changed to reflect the new decision. Most of these checks caused the computer game to be given a higher classification.

In the Board's opinion, monitoring of IARC classification decisions is a significant responsibility and requires ongoing dedicated resourcing.

Figure 05: IARC tool classification decisions



RC decisions totalled 48, which was less than 0.1% of total

Table 12: IARC tool decisions by classification

Classification rating	Number of decisions
G	196,737
PG	14,990
M	33,119
MA 15+	5,412
R 18+	677
RC	48
Total	250,983

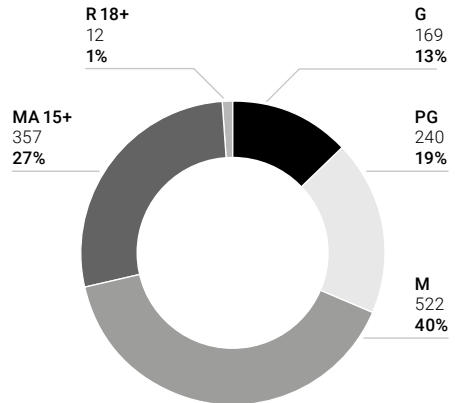
The Netflix tool

From 1 July to 30 June 2021, the Netflix tool produced 1,300 decisions, at first instance, which were recorded on the NCD. No information is disclosed publicly on the number of Netflix tool decisions that were revoked by the Board in the reporting year, nor the number of duplicate classification decisions generated by the tool and removed from the NCD.

Table 13: Netflix tool decisions by classification

Classification rating	Number of decisions (at first instance)
G	169
PG	240
M	522
MA 15+	357
R 18+	12
RC	0
Total	1,300

Figure 06: Netflix tool classification decisions



Other functions

Exemptions to show unclassified content

Under the Conditional Cultural Exemption Rules, organisers for events such as film festivals and computer games expos, and for cultural institutions such as art galleries and museums, self-assess their eligibility for exemption to exhibit unclassified films, computer games and certain publications. If they comply with the standard conditions, event organisers register their event online in the classification portal.

During 2020–21, 233 festival events were registered.

During the reporting period, the Director received 33 applications for a waiver or variation to the exemption rules. Of these, the Director approved all of the applications, with variations in certain circumstances.

Despite the closure of cinemas across Australia for several months in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of film festivals still proceeded; however, they were provided online and showed a limited number of films when compared with previous years.

Subsection 6C(e) of the Act requires that the relevant material not be exhibited, demonstrated or screened more than the number of times specified in the Instrument, which is four screenings. The four screenings rule was clearly not designed for an online environment. While there may be an argument that each individual viewing of each film from a different device could itself be a separate showing of the film, the Director instead took the view that there were other means to

assess the restricted number of screenings, for example, through capped tickets and geo-blocking, rather than by reference to different viewers or devices.

Enforcement agencies

The Board classifies films, publications and computer games submitted by law enforcement agencies. These classification decisions are often used in enforcement proceedings undertaken by the agency involved.

There were 22 classification decisions for enforcement applications made in the reporting period – 10 for films and 12 for publications, 10 of which required a certificate to be issued pursuant to section 87 of the Classification Act. In addition, there were two single section 87 certificates issued during this period. Hence, the total number of documents issued was 34.

There were no enforcement applications for computer games in 2020–21.

Table 14: Enforcement application decisions by agency

Enforcement agency	Publications	Films	Section 87	
			certificates ¹	Total documents issued
Australian Federal Police	0	0	0	0
ACT Office of Fair Trading	0	0	0	0
NSW Police	0	10	11	21
NT Police	1	0	0	1
Qld Police & Qld Office of Fair Trading	0	0	1	0
Victoria Police	0	0	0	0
SA Police	0	0	0	0
Tasmania Police	0	0	0	0
WA Police	0	0	0	0
Department of Home Affairs (Australian Border Force)	11	0	0	11
Total	12	10	12	34

¹ A section 87 certificate is an evidentiary certificate that describes the action taken, or not taken, by the Classification Board in relation to a publication, film or computer game.

Internet content

Under Schedule 7 of the BSA the Board classifies internet content on application from the Office of the eSafety Commissioner. Internet content is shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Internet content decisions by classification

Classification	Classification decisions
G	0
PG	0
M	1
MA 15+	0
R 18+	2
RC	0
Total	3

Decisions

Films

Decisions for films were made using the *Guidelines for the Classification of Films* (2012) (the **Films Guidelines**).

The Films Guidelines explain the different classification categories and the scope and limits of material suitable for each category. Several principles underlie the use of the Films Guidelines, including the importance of context and assessing the impact of the six classifiable elements (themes, violence, sex, [coarse] language, drug use and nudity).

The Board's general practice when providing consumer advice is to indicate the strongest classifiable element or elements which caused it to receive the designated classification level. The consumer advice is usually preceded by a descriptor to indicate impact or intensity, with this descriptor generally corresponding with the hierarchy of impact stated in the Films Guidelines. The default consumer advice for G-rated films is 'general' where there is no content which, in the Board's opinion, warrants specific mention as consumer advice.

The following discussions and statistics about films relate solely to those decisions made by the Classification Board and exclude those made by the Netflix tool.



Out of the total of 2,181 commercial films classified in 2020–21, 468 films were classified G.

The G classification is for a *General* audience and the films range across wide genres. Not all G-rated films are of interest or are suitable for a child or teenager because, for example, of storylines or thematic content.

Films classified in the reporting period include: *Paw Patrol: Dino Rescue: Roar to the Rescue*; *Zog and the Flying Doctors*; *The Wiggles – Lullabies with Love*; *The Year Earth Changed*; *Lena & Snowball*; and *Jurassic Bark*.

Love Song is a Canadian romantic drama in which a would-be country music star returns to her hometown after an unsuccessful audition. A chance meeting causes her to connect with a Nashville songwriter, Grady, before Duke, a country music star, arrives to headline the local music festival. The young woman develops a friendship with Duke, unaware of his connection to Grady. She then facilitates a reconciliation between Duke and Grady after a dispute over credit for a song many years before. The film was given consumer advice of 'general'.

Play the Flute is a US drama in which a young pastor endeavours to inspire a youth group that lacks motivation and faith. The film contains themes including references to drug addiction and death that have a very low sense of threat. In one scene, a group of youths sit in a small chapel talking and laughing with each other. A man's voice can be heard calling them to attention. As they quieten down and look to the front of the chapel, the man says in a sombre tone, "A Christian friend of mine died today." In another scene, a man stands at the front of the room in which he leads a Christian youth group. Brandon says to the group, "I got involved in a lot of sinful vices [when I was your age] and they gave me no joy. I saw two of my friends die within a month. One from a drug overdose and the other from a car crash. What makes me sad is knowing that they hadn't found God before their deaths." The film was given consumer advice of 'very mild themes'.

Dreamworks Spirit Untamed is an animated children's drama which features Lucky Prescott, a young girl whose life is changed forever when she moves from her home in the

city to a small frontier town and befriends a wild mustang named Spirit. The film contains themes relating to animal cruelty and violence that are inextricably linked within the narrative of the film. In one sequence, Lucky chases after a group of outlaws who have illegally captured a wild herd of horses, of which Spirit is a part. The men use rope lassos and round up the horses before loading them onto a train. Lucky jumps towards Henri, the leader of the bandits. However, he sees Lucky coming and kicks her in the face, sending her backwards to the ground. Lucky is uninjured and proceeds to ride Spirit, who avoided capture, back to town to seek help. The outlaws throw ropes around Spirit in an attempt to capture him again. Spirit rears and bucks and breaks free. He proceeds to kick the bandits into a large metal bell, where they collapse in a daze. A short sequence follows in which Lucky and her family and friends attempt to rescue the other wild horses. Implicit kicks and blows are briefly exchanged and a crowbar and rock are implicitly used as weapons by Lucky's allies against the bandits. There are no injuries sustained or blood detail depicted and the horses all escape, unharmed.

In the opinion of the Board, the thematic content and violence was mitigated by the immediate resolution of the dramatic sequences, with all characters unharmed, as well as by the context of the film as a light-hearted children's animation. The film was given consumer advice of 'very mild themes and violence'.

Kite Festival of Love is a US romantic drama in which a woman, Hannah, develops feelings for a widowed man, Gavin, when he returns to their seaside community with his daughter, Parker. The film contains themes including verbal references to family loss that have a very low sense of threat or menace and are justified by context. In one scene, Parker asks Hannah about her mother. Hannah

says, “Sadly, my mom left us when I was a little girl.” Parker asks, “Where did she go?” Hannah replies, “Heaven.” Parker says, “Just like my mom.” She then gives Hannah a hug to console her. The film was given consumer advice of ‘general’.

Tom and Jerry is an animated comedy adapted from the Hanna-Barbera cartoon series. It follows the rivalry between Tom and Jerry, a cat and a mouse, after they meet in a fancy hotel in New York City. The film contains themes, including crude humour, that have a very low sense of threat or menace and are justified by context. The film also contains animated violence that has a low sense of threat or menace that is justified by context. These elements are inextricably linked within the film’s narrative of the slapstick misadventures of Tom and Jerry, who continually try to outsmart each other and engage in behaviour including tail-pulling, being thrown into walls, trodden on and trapped between moving vehicles. There are no real injuries depicted (aside from a tooth falling out) and the tone is comedic. The film also contains infrequent use of very mild coarse language, including one character saying, “I can’t screw it up.” The film was given consumer advice of ‘very mild themes, animated violence and coarse language’.

PG

Parental guidance recommended



Out of the total of 2,181 commercial films classified in 2020–21, 419 films were classified PG.

The PG classification stands for *Parental Guidance*. Films classified PG range across wide genres. Some films may contain material which some children or young people may find confusing or upsetting. It is intended that the viewing of PG-rated films by persons under 15 years of age is with the guidance of a parent or guardian.

Films classified in the reporting period include: *Ben 10 Vs. The Universe – The Movie*; *The Tomorrow People – The Complete Series*; *Bill & Ted Face the Music*; *Doctor Who: Fury from the Deep*; *Playing with Sharks*; *Raya and the*

Last Dragon; Cruella; Sreekaram; Soul; Penguin Bloom; Minari; The Croods: A New Age; The War with Grandpa; and Wolfwalkers.

The United Way is a British documentary film which follows the highs and lows of the Manchester United football team over a period of 40 years. The film contains mild coarse language in the form of the word "crap". During game footage, a hand written banner is waved from the stadium which reads, "3 years of excuses and it's still crap." The film's consumer advice is 'mild coarse language'.

Little Foot 2 is an animated children's film in which a monster named Frankie and his accomplice, Mischief the Virus, infect Santa Claus with a behaviour-changing virus in order to overthrow him and make Halloween the biggest holiday on Earth. The film contains depictions of numerous horror characters. In one scene, Dracula, bent on revenge, explains that he will "call upon the army of darkness. Summon the creatures of the night. Raise the dead and reanimate their brittle bones, transforming them into a relentless marching force for evil." As he speaks, a foggy, moonlit graveyard is viewed and a silhouetted hand bursts up from the ground. In another scene, Frankie, a green Frankenstein's monster depicted with a metallic bolt through his head, asks Dave, a green zombie who is depicted with an open skull exposing a stylised pink brain, why he is looking for Dracula. When Dave refuses to answer, Frankie tells him, "Perhaps I'll beat it out of you." No sense of threat is physically depicted and Frankie's tone is not threatening. The film also contains mild coarse language in the form of the word "balls". The film's consumer advice is 'mild themes and coarse language'.

First Cow is a US period drama set in the pioneer era. A man named Cookie leaves a band of fur trappers and travels to a fort in the woods of Oregon. He befriends a Chinese man named King-Lu and the pair embark on

a joint business venture which involves the clandestine use of a rich man's cow. The film contains mild themes, including a sequence depicting the discovery of a gravesite and two full skeletons, and infrequent mild violence that is justified by context. The violence includes a scene in a dark tavern, where a man named William is mocked by another patron. William punches the man hard in the face, causing him to stagger backwards, before both men leave through the tavern door. The fight continues outside, with audible grunts and partially-obscured glimpses of the two men wrestling with each other through the doorway. The film also contains mild coarse language in the form of the words "shit" and "bitch". The consumer advice is 'mild themes, violence and coarse language'.

Transcending Waves is a documentary film which follows the travels of two surfers who explore the Falkland Islands. The film contains themes, including references to war and dangerous storm conditions, that have a low sense of threat and menace, and are justified by context. In one sequence, the surfers explore a plane wreck from the 1982 Falklands War between Argentina and Great Britain and discover shoes, bags and other passenger belongings. Bullet shells and cartridges are shown in water near the wreckage. In a later scene, one of the surfers describes two people spending the night in an abandoned wooden container during a windstorm, which almost cost them their lives. A woman explains, "We got struck by an enormous storm. Amazingly, somehow that container just rolled, rolled... 100 metres... with Eddy and Charlie inside. It tipped them out but somehow they survived." The broken container is then shown on the grass. The film's consumer advice is 'mild themes'.

Rhapsody of Love is an Australian romantic comedy film about the relationships between four couples who are all connected by a

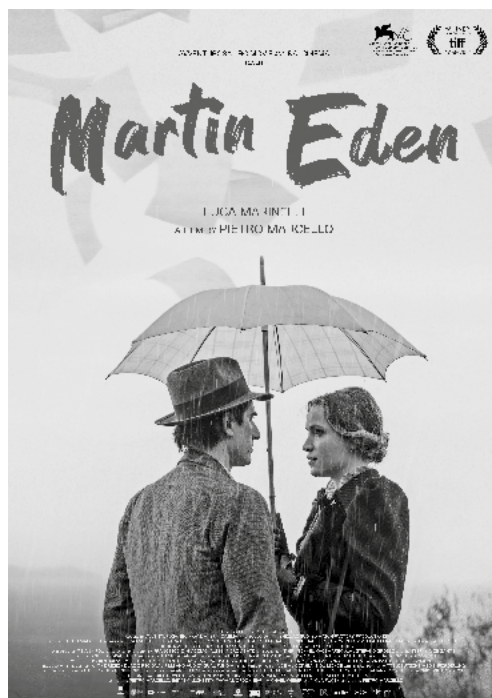
wedding. The film contains themes, including anxiety and crude humour, that have a low sense of threat or menace and are justified by context. In an early scene, a man flirts with Victoria at a wedding reception. He introduces himself to her, saying, “Hugh, as in humungous.” She giggles nervously and replies, “Oh, is it really?” He replies, “Yes.” Later, Victoria receives a text message on her mobile phone in which the sender’s name is “Hugh-Mungous”. In another scene, Hugh serves finger food at an event, announcing he is serving Justin “some balls” and offering Jess “some sausage”. She comments, “They’re really small,” to which Hugh replies, “Those are...” In another scene, Ben suffers a panic attack. He leans against a wall, sweating and breathing rapidly, and asks Justin to get his wife. Justin returns with Jess, who helps calm Ben down with breathing exercises. Ben says, “I’ve seen the crowd and I just can’t face them.” Ben manages to regain control of his emotions and takes to the stage, where he discloses to the crowd that he is the promoter of the event, who has been operating under another name due to his fear of failure. He says, “I suffer from anxiety and tonight I’ve done my best to not let it win.” The film also includes mild coarse language in the form of the word “crap”. The film’s consumer advice is ‘mild themes and coarse language’.

In the Heights is a US musical set in the Latino community of Washington Heights, NYC. The film contains mild and infrequent coarse language in the form of the words “shit” and “ass”. It also contains mild sexual references and innuendo, all verbally delivered in song lyrics, which are discreetly implied and justified by context. During one song, the owner of a nail salon sings to Vanessa that, “Usnavi had sex with Yolanda”. She then sings about Benny, a taxi dispatch operator, singing “They say he’s got quite a big... taxi”. Another woman then sings, “I don’t know what you mean” and the owner replies with,

“He’s packing a stretch limousine!” The film’s consumer advice is ‘mild coarse language and sexual references’.



Recommended
for mature
audiences



Out of the total of 2,181 commercial films classified in 2020–21, 751 films were classified M.

A film classified M is not recommended for persons under the age of 15 years. There are no legal restrictions on access.

Films classified in the reporting period include: *Alice*; *Being Frank*; *Ellie & Abbie (& Ellie’s Dead Aunt)*; *Fast & Furious 9*; *French Exit*; *Happiest Season*; *Hive*; *Idiot Prayer – Nick Cave Alone at Alexandra Palace*; *Kajillionaire*; *Keeping Up with the Kardashians Season 18–19*; *Lucky Grandma*; *Mank*; *Midnight Family*; *Miss Juneteenth*; *Monster Hunter*; *My Salinger Year*;

Nine Days; Nomadland; Occupation Rainfall; Quo Vadis, Aida?; Shirley; Sound of Metal; Tenet; The Father; The Truffle Hunters; The Woman Who Ran; Undine; and WWE: Royal Rumble 2021.

The Cave is a Danish documentary film following a team of doctors operating a subterranean hospital known in besieged Ghouta during the Syrian civil war. The film contains dialogue in Arabic accompanied by English subtitles. The film contains thematic content including war themes, depictions of injuries and medical procedures, and depictions of violence that impart a moderate sense of threat or menace and are, at times, inextricably linked. In one sequence, following an attack on Ghouta which is not depicted, unconscious men and children are brought into the hospital on stretchers, in wheelbarrows or carried in people's arms. A doctor treats a young girl who is covered in dust, explaining that the girl is about to suffocate. Another doctor is depicted performing CPR on a patient, who is obscured from view by the positioning of other medical staff. One of the doctors asks if chemical weapons were used in the attack, to which another man responds, "Can't you smell the chlorine, Doctor?" In response, Dr Amani tells the staff to make sure the doctors have masks and tells them that they're dealing with something unknown. They are depicted putting on masks as more limp-bodied civilians are brought into the hospital. Tense music plays as the doctors treat children affected by chlorine gas. The children are depicted coughing, crying, having ventilator masks placed over their faces, being stripped of chlorine-covered clothing, and having needles inserted into their arms. The music mellows as the treated children are depicted covered in blankets, sleeping with ventilators over their faces. The treatment of themes and violence throughout the film is mitigated by its documentary context, to the extent

that the overall impact of these classifiable elements does not exceed moderate. The thematic content and depictions of violence were therefore accommodated within the upper limit of the M classification. Further, as the film's examples of violence occur within the context of post-action visuals, advice for this element was subsumed under advice for the element of themes. The film was given consumer advice of 'mature themes, injury detail and medical procedures'.

WW84 – said to be *Wonder Woman 1984* – is an American action film set in 1984, in which Diana, also known as Wonder Woman, teams up with Steve to face new foes, Max Lord and the Cheetah. The film contains action violence throughout which imparts an impact which is no higher than moderate. Towards the film's mid-point, a chase sequence finds Diana and Steve pursued by Max and his associates, who have a number of heavily-armoured vehicles including army tanks at their disposal. As they are being shot at, Steve loses control of their vehicle briefly before managing to regain control. Diana jumps from the car, dressed as Wonder Woman, and uses her special powers, including her golden lasso and extra strength, to push a truck sideways along the road, using it as a barricade to fend off incoming machine gun fire. A bullet grazes her shoulder, causing a bloody wound. Max's pursuit continues, with Wonder Woman holding herself under a vehicle, before she manages to flip it over. She flies through the air and lands on the bonnet of Max's vehicle, with her bloodied shoulder viewed once more in a scene on a rooftop, after the chase has concluded. The film's consumer advice is 'action violence'.

Martin Eden is an Italian drama in which the titular character struggles to rise above his destitute, proletarian circumstances through an intense and passionate pursuit of self-education, hoping to achieve a place among the literary elite. The film is in Italian with

English subtitles. An early sequence in the film contains sexual activity that is discreetly implied and justified by context, and imparts a moderate impact. In the sequence, Martin leaves a party with a woman, heading with her to a ship, ultimately lying on a pile of ropes on its dimly-lit deck. The camera frames their upper bodies as Martin is briefly depicting moving rhythmically on top of the woman, who moans as they implicitly engage in sexual intercourse, before the sequence concludes. The film also contains coarse language that imparts an overall impact that is no higher than moderate. The film's consumer advice is 'coarse language and a sex scene'.

Suburban Wildlife is an Australian drama in which four friends in their early twenties – Nina, Louise, Alice and Kane – spend a final week together before Louise leaves to take a job in London. The film contains coarse language, including use of the word "f**k" and derivatives, and depictions of drug use that impart a moderate impact. In one sequence, Alice, Louise and Kane wait for Nina by a wooden fence outside a party. When Nina arrives, Alice opens a small plastic bag that contains white pills, implicitly MDMA, and hands them out to the others, who then take the pills. Louise tells the others it's the first pill she's taken and begins to worry about taking a "bad pill", asking, "Am I going to die?" Kane says, "Calm the f**k down, Louise!" He then walks off. A stylised, surrealistic montage sequence depicting the effects of the drugs begins shortly after. The camera follows Alice as she enters the party, Kane as he watches a man scoop leaves out of a backyard swimming pool, and Nina as she dances at the party, with close-ups showing her glazed, ecstatic expression. The sequence then cuts to show Nina the following morning as she wakes up and implicitly vomits. The film's consumer advice is 'coarse language and drug use'.

David Byrne's American Utopia is a recording of the former Talking Heads frontman's live Broadway show, inspired by the album 'American Utopia'. The film contains infrequent use of strong coarse language that is justified by context in the form of the word "f**k" and derivatives. Within this film, coarse language occurs both within the context of songs – such as the song 'Toe Jam', in which Byrne sings the lyrics, "Everyday is f**king perfect, it's a paradise" – and the context of Byrne's conversations with the audience. The consumer film's advice is 'coarse language'.

Brazen Hussies is an Australian documentary about how people involved in the Australian Women's Liberation movement joined forces to defy the status quo, demand equality and create profound social change. Within the film, archival footage from an experimental short (directed by Australian artists Robin Laurie and Margot Nash) depicts two women as they stage a protest by writing on their bodies, "We aim to please" before discussing their thought process. The women are fully nude, with their breasts and pubic hair visible throughout the sequence. At another point in the film, a segment on the creation of women's refuge Amazon Acres in rural Victoria, there is a montage of footage in which nude women are seen undertaking work and leisure activities, including the building of a structure and an afternoon spent sitting on rocks by a river. Bare breasts and pubic regions are clearly visible throughout the montage. In addition to nudity, the film contains thematic references to sexual assault and domestic violence, sexual references and coarse language that impart a moderate impact and are, at times, inextricably linked. The film's consumer advice is 'mature themes, coarse language and nudity'.

A Quiet Place Part II is a horror-thriller film which follows the Abbott family as they struggle for survival, facing new terrors in the

outside world after the events of the previous film, *A Quiet Place*. The film contains horror themes and violence that have a moderate sense of threat and menace that are justified by context and linked within the narrative of the film. In one sequence, Regan, who is deaf, is moving through an abandoned train carriage. After retrieving a first aid kit, she squeals when the body of the train driver slumps back into view. She abruptly sits on the floor in the aisle of the carriage, before a creature is seen through the open door to the next carriage. It slowly moves towards her as she fumbles with the amplifier she uses to magnify the sound of her hearing aid and aims it at the creature as it roars. The static holds the creature at bay and Regan uses her knee as a support for the shotgun. She aims the shotgun at the creature's head and fires. A small spray of blood indicates the creature is injured. Regan points the shotgun upwards and attempts to move the slide to reload, but struggles using one hand while the other is pressing the microphone button to keep the static going. The creature pushes itself closer, despite being affected by the static, and is viewed in close-up as it roars. Regan curls up in a ball before a gunshot is heard and a small blood spray is seen. The creature collapses to the floor, revealing Emmett in the aisle behind it. The film's consumer advice is 'horror themes and violence'.



Not suitable for people under 15. Under 15s must be accompanied by a parent or adult guardian



Out of the total of 2,181 commercial films classified in 2020–21, 504 films were classified MA 15+.

Films classified in the reporting period include: *Ammonite*; *Better Call Saul: Season 5*; *Breaking News in Yuba County*; *Caught in Time*; *Corpus Christi*; *Creation Stories*; *Cut Throat City*; *Ema*; *Fatale*; *Fatman*; *Freaky*; *Gunpowder Milkshake*; *High Ground*; *Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard*; *I Blame Society*; *It's a Sin*; *Judas and the Black Messiah*; *Lowdown Dirty Criminals*; *Money Plane*; *Peninsula*; *Prisoners of the Ghostland*; *Psycho Goreman*; *Run Hide Fight*; *Shadowplay*; *Sputnik*; *The Empty Man*; *The Flood*; *There Is No Evil*; *Those Who Wish Me Dead*; *Synchronic*; *Willy's Wonderland*; *Wrath of Man*; *Yellowstone: Season 3*; and *Zack Snyder's Justice League*.

Coming Home in the Dark is a dramatic thriller set in New Zealand, in which a family is terrorised by two armed assailants, Mandrake and Tubs, while on holiday. The film contains thematic content – in the form of references to child abuse and a pervasive sense of threat and menace throughout – and violence that is strong in viewing impact. Throughout the film, it is implied that Mandrake and Tubs were abused while attending a home for boys. Near the film's midpoint, it is established that one of their captives, Hoaggie, briefly worked at this home early in his career. When pushed, Hoaggie admits to having seen multiple beatings and "locker treatments", as well as having knowledge of children being put in cells for days and some staff at the home engaging in child sexual abuse. Mandrake pushes Hoaggie further, accusing him of being a "kid-f**ker", and asking, "Did you f**k kids?" Hoaggie then admits to witnessing an incident in which a home-made tattoo was forcibly scrubbed from a child's arm with a wire brush, describing the child's traumatic experience in some detail. The film implies Mandrake was the child, as he corrects Hoaggie with tears in his eyes, noting it was a nylon brush, which Mandrake says took three times as long as a wire brush would have to shred the tattoo off the child's skin. The film also contains coarse language that is strong in impact. The consumer advice is 'strong themes, violence and coarse language'.

The United States Vs Billie Holiday is an American drama which follows the life of Billie Holiday and her entanglement with an FBI agent. The film contains a sequence of drug use that is strong in impact, which opens with a shot of a clear liquid boiling on a spoon, held over a candle. Billie's husband, Joe, is sprawled in the bed with his eyes shut, implicitly already under the influence of heroin. In a mid-shot, Billie is viewed drawing the fluid from the spoon up with a syringe, before holding it up to eye-level and flicking it to

remove air bubbles. She uses her teeth to tie a make-shift tourniquet (made from a stocking) around her upper arm. In a close-up shot, she holds her arm out, revealing bruised needle marks on the inside of her elbow. She explicitly injects the liquid into her arm, depressing the plunger before withdrawing the needle. A small drop of blood is visible at the site of injection. She relaxes back into her chair as the drug implicitly takes effect. The film also contains strong thematic content, including references to the prostitution of a child and a depiction of the aftermath of a lynching, and a sequence of implied sexual activity that is strong in impact. The consumer advice is 'strong themes, drug use and sex scenes'.

Wildland is a Danish crime drama in which a 17 year-old girl named Ida becomes entangled in her family's criminal business when she is sent to live with her aunt and cousins following her mother's death. The film contains strong thematic content in the form of a depiction of suicide, which occurs at the end of the film. In a protracted shot, Bodil, the mother of three criminal brothers, is depicted calmly preparing a sandwich in her kitchen. The voice of her son David is heard from off-screen, calmly asking, "Mum?" Bodil turns around, as the camera slowly pans towards David. David, holding a gun pointed upwards towards his head, enters the frame and a loud gunshot is heard. In soft-focus, David's head jerks back and blood splatters on the wall behind him as he falls to the ground. Bodil looks on in shock before she begins to cry. In a mid-shot, David is viewed lying on the ground lifelessly, with a gun in his hand. A dark pool of blood is barely visible underneath his head and some blood splatter is visible on the wall behind him. Although the depiction of suicide employs soft-focus framing, low-lighting and occurs in the background of the shot, its viewing impact exceeds moderate. The film's consumer advice is 'strong themes'.

Spree is an American satirical thriller which documents rideshare driver Kurt Kunkle's desperate attempts to increase his social media profile by livestreaming the killing of his passengers. The film's violent and thematic content is inextricably linked throughout the narrative, in the form of multiple depictions of the livestreamed executions of Kurt's passengers. For example, one sequence sees Kurt pull his vehicle into a deserted junkyard at night, with three passengers inside. Two passengers stand on his backseat with their upper bodies through the car's sunroof, which Kurt subsequently closes against their abdomens in order to hold them tightly in place. Through the windshield, two vicious dogs are viewed racing to the front of the car, leaping up over the bonnet and onto the roof. From inside the car, the lower halves of the passengers are depicted writhing and convulsing. Their screams mingle with the snarls and growls of the dogs. A third passenger, sitting next to Kurt, screams and turns in shock as Kurt suddenly grabs a drill from his glove compartment and aims it at her head. Kurt lunges forward before the sequence cuts away to a blood-drenched windscreen. Blood and flecks of flesh cover the windshield and windows as Kurt is depicted inside the car, wiping gore from the inside of the glass. In addition to the film's strong violent and thematic content, *Spree* also contains strong coarse language in the form of the word "f**k" that is frequent and occasionally aggressive, exceeding what can be accommodated within the M classification, which requires that "aggressive or strong coarse language should be infrequent and justified by context." The film's consumer advice is 'strong themes, violence and coarse language'.

Welcome to Chechnya is a documentary about the persecution of the LGBTQ community in Chechnya, which focuses on an activist group that attempts to rescue individuals who are

in mortal danger because of their sexuality, many of whom have already faced torture and brutality at the hands of the Chechen authorities. The film contains a thematic depiction of an actual sexual assault that does not exceed a strong impact, in the form of footage from a 'video intercepted by LGBTQ activists'. In the video, the upper half of a man's body, his face pressed into a pillow by another man above him, is depicted while a third man's voice says, "Don't scream, bitch". The victim's head is forcibly turned toward the camera, as he moans and sobs. The voice then says, "Go ahead, f**k him, f**k him!", followed by "Take it in the ass!" as the victim's attacker implicitly begins to anally rape him. The screen cuts to black but the sound of the victim's moans and yelps continues to be heard as the sequence concludes. The presentation of thematic and violent content within this film is justified by the film's documentary context, describing the violent treatment of LGBTQ individuals in Chechnya and the overall impact of the elements of themes and violence within the context of this film does not exceed strong. The consumer advice is 'strong themes and sexual violence'.

The Trial of The Chicago 7 is an American dramatic film, based on real events, which follows the courtroom events during the trial of the Chicago 7, who were charged with inciting riots while protesting against the Vietnam War at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Within the MA 15+ classification, aggressive or very strong coarse language should be infrequent. The film contains a single use of very strong coarse language in the form of the word "c**t", in a sequence where a man yells at a woman, "Put the goddamn flag down, you c**t!" Additionally, there is occasionally aggressive and episodically frequent use of the word "f**k" and derivatives throughout the film. The consumer advice is 'strong coarse language'.

Adam is an American film dramatising the life of Adam Niskar, a successful businessman who had to learn how to live again after becoming a quadriplegic. The film contains implied sexual activity and nudity that are inextricably linked and strong in impact. At one point in the film, Adam puts on a Russian pornographic video called "Hello Stranger!" that his carer has left for him to watch. In it, a woman enters a room wearing a fur coat as a quadriplegic man watches on. In a full-length shot, the woman, facing the camera, takes off her coat to reveal that she is naked underneath, with her breasts and genital region depicted. She pushes down the back of the man's wheelchair so that he is lying down and then, in a cropped shot of their upper bodies, writhes on top of him as she gives him a lap dance. Adam watches, transfixed, as his brother enters the room and sits beside him. The sequence cuts between shots of the pornographic video and the brothers as they talk. The woman in the video picks up the man in the wheelchair and lays him on a bed before she climbs on top of him and they implicitly have sex. Her hips and buttocks are viewed grinding back and forth as she groans in pleasure. The film's consumer advice is 'strong sex scenes and nudity'.

Awoken is an Australian horror film in which a group of doctors attempts to cure a man of a fatal sleep disorder only to discover he is possessed by a demon. The film contains strong themes and violence that are justified by context and inextricably linked within the film's horror narrative. In one section of the film, the demon is apparently controlling Alice. She speaks in a demonic voice, and has bloodied eyes, having apparently cut off her own eyelids. She rips an electrical cable from a junction box, and holds it to her face. In a scene lasting several seconds, sparks fly and an electrical humming is heard until she falls dead. In a later scene, Blake is possessed by the demon, and attempts to cut his eyelids

off with a nail. The demon also directs Robert who, in a trance-like state, calmly mounts a pile of boxes, smiles, and falls onto a pointed stick which penetrates his body. The film also contains a single use of very strong coarse language in the form of the word "c**t". The film's consumer advice is 'strong horror themes, violence and occasional coarse language'.



Out of the total of 2,181 commercial films classified in 2020–21, 39 films were classified R 18+. There are virtually no restrictions on the treatment of themes within this classification.

Films classified in the reporting period include: *Army of the Dead*; *Becky*; *End of the Century*; *Game of Death*; *Ghost Killers Vs. Bloody Mary*; *Lindemann: Live in Moscow*; *Mope*; *Possessor*; *Sequin in a Blue Room*; *Spiral: From the Book*

of *Saw*; *The Boys: Season 2*; *The Smiley Face Killers*; *The Tax Collector*; and *The Tongue of the Sun*.

Morgana is an Australian documentary film which examines the experiences of a 50-year-old housewife who reinvents herself as a sex-positive feminist pornographer. The film closely examines sex and sexuality and features discussion and depictions of sexual fantasies, including references to fetish behaviours, and depicts imagery of sexual role-play that includes restraints, clamps and knives, although no injury or the infliction of pain is shown and all activity is explicitly consensual at all times. The film also features clips from pornographic productions, which include depictions of significant genital detail, including a sequence from the film *Labia of Love*. In the sequence, Morgana's fully exposed labia are seen in close-up, as whipped cream is squirted above her genital region and a cherry is placed on top. The next shot depicts her labia, still in close-up, as multicoloured paints run down between her legs, dripping over her labia and her partially obscured anus. Next, a set of pearls is drawn slowly upwards through her labia. The final shot shows her labia with two lit candles, a 5 and a 3 (indicating her age), resting in the crease between her thighs and pubic region. The elements of themes, sex and nudity are inextricably linked throughout the film and impart a high overall impact. The film's consumer advice is 'high impact sexual themes, sex scenes and nudity'.

Mortal Kombat is a fantasy action film in which MMA fighter Cole Young seeks out Earth's greatest champions in order to stand against enemies from Outworld in a battle for control of the universe. The film showcases a series of frequent, frenetic fight sequences that impart a viewing impact that exceeds strong. These sequences include depictions of large blood sprays, graphic injury detail,

dismemberment and disembowelment. In one section of the film, Nitara – a female vampire-like beast with wings – swoops into an arena to attack Liu Kang. Kung Lao uses a supernatural force to pry his razor-rimmed hat from a rock and pulls it to the ground where it becomes embedded in the sand, spinning like a circular saw. Kung Lao grabs Nitara and pulls her over the spinning blade, causing blood to splash over his face. As Nitara's body is sliced vertically by the spinning blade, the two halves of her bisected body – featuring explicit muscle, bone and organ detail – are clearly viewed. The film's consumer advice is 'high impact violence'.

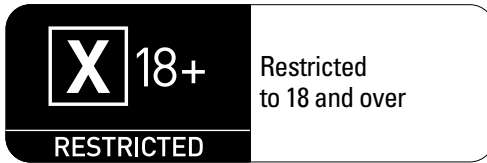
Gangs of London: Season 1 is an English gangland crime series comprised of nine episodes. Following the murder of Finn Wallace, the head of one of the most powerful crime dynasties in London, his son Sean takes over the family interests. He attempts to uncover who murdered his father, wreaking a path of vengeance and escalating violence amongst the criminal underworld. The film contains frequent aggressive strong coarse language and several examples of very strong coarse language in the form of "f**k" and its derivatives alongside multiple uses of very strong coarse language in the form of the word "c**t". Owing to the frequency of the coarse language, it exceeds what can be accommodated at the lower MA 15+ classification, which requires that the use of aggressive strong coarse language, and the use of very strong coarse language, be infrequent. In the first episode alone, there are more than 100 uses of the word "f**k" and derivatives, and this pattern continues throughout the series. The film also contains thematic content and depictions of violence that are high in viewing impact, with emphasised blood and injury detail throughout the series. The consumer advice is 'high impact themes, bloody violence, injury detail and coarse language'.

PVT Chat is an American dramatic film about an internet gambler, Jack, who becomes fixated on Scarlet, a cam-girl dominatrix whom he engages with online, and becomes increasingly obsessed with meeting face-to-face after spotting her in the street. The film contains scenes which depict sexual activity that is realistically simulated, as well as scenes in which actual sexual activity takes place. The film also contains sexualised nudity. Both of these elements are high in impact throughout the film, which contains numerous scenes where Jack is interacting sexually with Scarlet online, as well as an extended sequence at the end of the film where they engage in sexual activity in a motel room. In the film's final sequence, an overhead shot depicts Jack lying on his back with Scarlet kneeling over him, the back of her head bobbing up and down as she implicitly fellates him. As they continue to kiss and caress each other, Jack's fully-exposed penis remains soft and Scarlet, who is wearing jeans, but is nude from the waist up, asks, "You got whisky dick or something?" Realising that Jack is struggling to perform outside the bounds of their usual online interactions, Scarlet attempts to recreate the separation that usually exists between them and says that she is drawing an invisible line diagonally across the bed. Scarlet leans forward and says to Jack, "Are you going to be a good little slave and get your cock hard for me?" She tells him to stroke his penis, as he reaches down and begins to visibly manipulate his genitals. She tells him, "Your cock is real nice in person" as he masturbates, his penis quickly becoming erect as he continues to pull and stroke it. Twice, Scarlet taps cigarette ash onto his tongue, recalling the eroticised smoking that has been a feature of their online sessions. He leans forward with his tongue out to catch the ash as his body is seen in full, his hand stroking his erection. Scarlet lies back, now in white bikini underwear, and begins to implicitly masturbate. Her hand moves up and down inside her underwear as she lays on her

back and gasps and writhes. Jack continues to masturbate beside her, before he laughs and leans toward her affectionately and the scene cuts to black, signalling the end of the film. The consumer advice is 'high impact sexualised nudity and actual sexual activity'.

You Don't Nomi is a documentary film exploring the critical reception and cult status of Paul Verhoeven's film *Showgirls*. The film includes footage from multiple films, commentary from various film critics and authors, as well as footage from interviews with the cast and crew of *Showgirls*. The film contains violence, including sexual violence and sexualised violence, that is high in viewing impact. The film also contains nudity that is high in viewing impact. The violence and nudity are, at times, inextricably linked. In one section of the film, film critics talk about depictions of sexual violence in Verhoeven's films. A collection of scenes from various films accompanies the discussion. The most impactful depiction of sexual violence is a clip from the film *Spetters* in which several men restrain a man whose buttocks are viewed as two of the men hold his legs apart. A man holding his own penis approaches the restrained man. The man's penis appears to be erect in his hand as he places one hand on the restrained man's buttocks and appears to position himself in preparation to rape him. Grunting sounds can be heard as the restrained man struggles against the men restraining him. In a distant rear shot the men are viewed huddled over as a whimper of pain is heard as the man is implicitly penetrated. Later, a scene from *Basic Instinct* shows an act of sexualised violence. A nude woman is depicted straddling a nude man whose hands are tied to a metal bed-frame. Grunts and cries of pain are heard as the woman repeatedly stabs the man in the chest with a sharp object, causing blood to spray. The film also contains high impact sex scenes, excerpted from

the films *Showgirls* and *Basic Instinct*. The consumer advice is 'high impact sex scenes, sexual violence, violence and nudity'.



The X 18+ classification applies to films only. It is a special and legally restricted category which contains only sexually explicit material: that is, material which contains real depictions of actual sexual intercourse and other sexual activity between consenting adults. X 18+ films are restricted to adults 18 years and over. These films can only be legally sold or hired in the Australian Capital Territory and parts of the Northern Territory.

Films classified X 18+ can contain real depictions of actual sexual activity between consenting adults, but the classification does not allow violence, sexual violence, sexualised violence or coercion. Nor does it allow consensual depictions which purposefully demean anyone involved in that activity for the enjoyment of viewers.

No commercial films were classified X 18+ during 2020–21.

Refused Classification (RC)

Films that are classified RC cannot be legally sold, hired, advertised or exhibited in Australia. Films will be classified RC if they depict, express or otherwise deal with matters of sex, drug misuse or addiction, crime, cruelty or revolting or abhorrent phenomena in such a way that they offend against the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults, to the extent that they should not be classified. Films that describe or depict in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult, a person

who is, or appears to be, a child under 18 years (whether the person is engaged in sexual activity or not), will also be classified RC; as will films that promote, incite or instruct in matters of crime and violence. Films depicting gratuitous, exploitative or offensive depictions of violence with a very high degree of impact, including sexual violence, will also be RC.

No commercial films were classified RC in the reporting period.

Computer games

Decisions for computer games were made using the *Guidelines for the Classification of Computer Games* (the **Games Guidelines**).

The Games Guidelines explain the different classification categories and the scope and limits of material suitable for each category. Several principles underlie the use of the Games Guidelines including the importance of context and assessing the impact of the six classifiable elements (themes, violence, sex, [coarse] language, drug use and nudity).

The Board's general practice when providing consumer advice is to indicate the strongest classifiable element or elements contained in the game which caused it to receive the designated classification level. The consumer advice is usually preceded by a descriptor to indicate impact or intensity. This descriptor generally corresponds with the hierarchy of impact stated in the Games Guidelines.

The following discussions and statistics about computer games relate solely to those decisions made by the Board and exclude those made by the IARC tool.



General



The G classification is for a *General* audience. While many games at the G classification are targeted at children, it does not necessarily mean that a child will enjoy all games classified G. Games at the G classification may also contain online interactivity and in-game purchases.

Out of the total of 280 commercial games classified in 2020–21, 77 games were classified G.

Games classified in the reporting period include: *Bus Simulator 21*; *Desktop Game Machine*; *Dirt 5*; *Handball 21*; *Liftoff: Drone Racing Deluxe Edition*; *MXGP2020 – The Official Motocross Videogame*; *Microsoft Flight Simulator*; *On the Road*; *Overcooked! All You*

Can Eat; *Pang Adventures*; *Rims Racing*; *The Catch: Carp & Coarse – Collector's Edition*; and *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*

Train Simulator 2021 is a train simulation game. The game includes online interactivity in the form of shareable content and in-game purchases, including purchasing new routes, locomotives and liveries. In the game, the player drives multiple trains, navigating them around railway tracks, picking up passengers and delivering freight to complete a number of scenarios. Players are rewarded for following signals, speed limits and arriving on time. Failure to adhere to safety requirements causes the game to end. Players can also build their own routes and tracks or play in Free Roam mode, selecting their locomotive and destination of choice with no objectives. When trains collide with obstacles, such as trees or buildings, they clip through them as if they are transparent, with no further depictions of impact. When trains collide with other trains or derail, they are occasionally depicted statically toppling, with no further depictions of impact. The game contains no classifiable elements and therefore warrants a G level of classification. The consumer advice is 'general, online interactivity and in-game purchases'.

The Sisters – Party of the Year is an open-world adventure game in which the player, as Wendy or Maureen, explores the city of Millau and participates in various mini-game activities including fishing, racing, lawn-mowing and cooking. The game does not include any online interactivity. The game contains violence that has a low sense of threat and menace and is justified by context. During some mini-games, such as a contest in which the player attempts to be the last character standing on a crumbling island, the player can push other characters, causing them to fall into mud or water. There is no injury and the rival character is simply

eliminated from the contest. In the Board's opinion, given the lack of injury and the game's light-hearted tone, the impact of the violence is very mild and does not require specific consumer advice. The game's consumer advice is 'general'.

Monster Harvest is a sim-style farming adventure game in which the player develops and maintains a farm, growing crops and selling them in order to raise Planimals, mutated plant companions. The player then uses Planimals in contests to help prevent the Slime Co. from creating ecological harm. The game contains no online interactivity. The elements of themes and violence are, at times, inextricably linked within the game and impart a very low sense of threat and menace. Gameplay consists of an isometric view of the main character, Alfred, as he moves slowly through a number of brightly-coloured, pixelated environments with jaunty music playing continuously. The action is interspersed with conversations with several other characters, these being relayed through static grey textboxes in the centre of the screen. Planimals are depicted as simplistically-rendered fantasy-style creatures, including a large eyeball and a bat-like creature called a Screambat.

Contests consist of two Planimals nudging against one another, generating bubble-like bursts of sound and occasional light-flashes. When a Planimal is defeated, its energy-bar reduces until it flashes and then disappears – no visible wounds or injury are inflicted on any character. Players can also attack Slimes, (depicted as round lozenges of glowing colour) by swiping at them with a sword, which simply causes them to disappear with a soft bubbling sound effect. The game's consumer advice is 'very mild themes and violence'.

PG

Parental guidance recommended



Computer games in this classification contain content that a child may find confusing or upsetting and may require the guidance of a parent or guardian, who needs to make decisions about appropriate entertainment material for their child.

Out of the total of 280 commercial games classified in 2020–21, 70 games were classified PG.

Games classified in the reporting period include: *Age of Empires III: Definitive Edition*; *Battletoads*; *Cobra Kai: The Karate Kid Saga Continues*; *Crash Bandicoot 4: It's About Time*; *Epic Chef*; *Kitaria Fables*; *Monster Crown*; *Sakuna: Of Rice and Ruin*; *Subnautica: Below Zero*; and *The Addams Family: Mansion Mayhem*.

It Takes Two is a two-player co-operative game in which parents on the verge of divorce are accidentally transformed into toys by their daughter. The game contains online interactivity in the form of a co-operative multiplayer mode. The game contains thematic content – including fantasy elements and an exploration of family dysfunction and violence – that are inextricably linked and impart a mild impact. Two players each control a single character and must work together to solve puzzles and defeat enemies. The game utilises a third-person perspective, as characters are directed through a 3D platform environment. The two characters are toy versions of a girl's parents, May and Cody. Players must collect various objects, use switches and activate electrical circuits to continue through the game. At times, the players engage in highly stylised combat with non-human creatures, including wasps. May and Cody frequently argue during the game, particularly over chores and responsibilities. Their characters are indestructible and, if hit by a hazard, immediately respawn without affecting the other player's character. During one part of the game, they capture their daughter's toy elephant. The elephant asks them not to hurt it, but they say that they need their daughter's tears to return to their human forms. The elephant escapes in a cardboard rocket, which May stops by throwing an object at it. They pull the elephant out of a claw machine and its leg is accidentally pulled off. As they pull the elephant toward a ledge, its ear becomes pinned and is also pulled off. The elephant does not react to the injuries and, when it is pushed over the ledge, the camera views the scenario from the point of view of Rose, the couple's daughter. She picks up the toy and cries but it does not return her parents to their human form. The game's highly stylised environment, non-human enemies and focus on puzzle-solving mitigate the overall impact. The game also contains coarse

language that is mild in impact. The consumer advice is 'mild themes, violence and coarse language, online interactivity'.

Super Monkey Ball Banana Mania is a platform adventure game in which the player controls AiAi the monkey and his friends, who must retrieve stolen bananas as they progress through the game's levels and various mini-games. The game contains online interactivity in the form of online rankings. The game contains infrequent mild violence that is justified by context. In the mini-game Monkey Shot, the player uses a space gun with onscreen crosshairs to shoot down UFOs in first-person mode. When a UFO is hit, a realistic fiery explosion appears onscreen with accompanying noises. In the mini-game Monkey Dog Fight, monkeys fly around the screen attached to balloon-like devices and shoot missiles at each other to collect their stolen Bananas. Again, life-like fiery explosions and sound effects signal the demise of an opponent. If the player is defeated, they briefly tumble before an explosion appears on screen. The game's consumer advice is 'mild violence, online interactivity'.

Spiritfarer is a 2D side-scrolling adventure and management game. The player controls Stella, a girl who replaces Charon as the ferryman across the River Styx. The game contains online interactivity in the form of a sign-up option for a newsletter. The game contains themes, including death, that have a low sense of threat and menace, and are justified by context. The game also contains mild references to violence and the infrequent use of mild coarse language.

The environment is rendered in stylised 2D representations as Stella and her cat transport spirits, which appear as anthropomorphised animals. The spirits make requests of Stella, who can choose to fulfil their last wishes. The aim of the game is to invite spirits onto the boat, befriending and tending to them, while

transporting them to the afterlife. Some of the spirits talk to Stella about events in their lives. These conversations are not interactive and are presented through text. The scenes contain minimal animation, generally limited to the mouth of the animal that is talking. The background music is soothing and gentle, and Stella does not react to what she is being told.

In one interaction, a lion talks about celebrating with his comrades after winning a battle. He says that one of his fellow soldiers ran towards camp, excited about the prospect of food. A series of text boxes read, "And as he runs towards us, maybe 40 meters [sic] from where we were, we hear a very loud explosion and a big puff of smoke... A land mine... They were not that frequent but happened nonetheless... Most of us ran towards him but I was the first one there... I'll spare you the details, but it was obvious he wouldn't make it... As I hold him in my arms, covered in blood, he weakly opens his mouth and tells me: 'Damn, Giovanni, I can't believe I won't eat this... No one gets my share ok?'... And those were his last words." Giovanni goes on to say that this interaction made him stop taking life for granted and appreciate the small things.

In another interaction, a bull and a small bird tell Stella about being enforcers, implicitly for a mob boss. The bird tells Stella, "Some piece of shit comes out of nowhere and hits me with a baseball bat... Didn't even see the shit stain... My body goes limp and hits the ground... Mickey is red. Like a tomato... He grabs the guy, who's still hitting me with the bat, by the way... He throws that asshole in the side of a car... The windows shatter. The guy has glass all over him. He's screaming repeatedly, 'It's in my eyes!'... There's blood running from his eyes... And Mickey is just laughing... What a laugh!" This exchange is solely expressed through a series of text boxes.

The game's consumer advice is 'mild themes and coarse language, online interactivity'. In this instance, consumer advice for violence is subsumed within the advice for the element of themes.

WarioWare: Get It Together! is a game which is comprised of multiple mini-games featuring Wario and other characters. In the story mode, Wario and his crew are sucked into a buggy video game, and must eliminate the bugs and return to Diamond City. The game contains online interactivity in the form of online leader boards. The game contains themes in the form of crude humour that has a low sense of threat or menace and is justified by context. The game also contains mild violence and the infrequent use of mild coarse language in the form of the word "pis" – the Dutch spelling of the word "piss" – that is justified by context. In the mini-game titled *Manneken Pis* (which roughly translates from Dutch to "little pissing boy"), the player uses a lever to rotate the prolific bronze fountain statue of the same name as droplets of water exude from its obscured genital region. The aim of the game is to rotate the fountain to put out a fire on a nearby pile of toilets.

In the Board's opinion, the overall impact of the elements of themes, violence and language is mitigated by the game's comedic tone and highly stylised, simplistic graphics. The game's consumer advice is 'mild crude humour and violence, online interactivity'. In this instance, consumer advice for coarse language is subsumed within the advice for crude humour.

NBA 2K21 is a basketball game in which the player can play as players and teams from within the US National Basketball Association. The game has online interactivity in the form of multiplayer game modes. It also contains in-game purchases whereby players can spend real-world money to purchase virtual currency and in-game items. The

game contains themes in the form of visual references to gambling that are not interactive and have a low sense of threat and menace, and are justified by context.

In one section of the game, the player can pay, using virtual currency, to enter into a two-on-two game known as Ante Up. If the player wins, slot machine icons appear onscreen and automatically roll. If three items match, the player receives the relevant bonus. If three jackpot symbols match, then the words, "JACKPOT WINS!!" appear onscreen with gold coins (representing in-game currency) bursting outwards. The player then receives bonus virtual currency which can be spent in the game on store purchases such as apparel. This win cannot be cashed out for real-world currency, nor can it be monetised on a third-party platform. There is no further reference to gambling, interactive or otherwise, within the game. The consumer advice is 'mild gambling references, online interactivity and in-game purchases'.

Ratchet and Clank: Rift Apart is an action platform adventure game. The game does not contain online interactivity. The game contains themes, including science fiction themes, that have a low sense of threat and/or menace and are justified by context. The game also contains infrequent mild violence that is justified by context. The themes and violence are, at times, inextricably linked. Typical gameplay is viewed from a third-person perspective and requires players to control various stylised cartoon-style characters with humanoid, animalistic and robot characteristics in order to navigate through brightly-coloured fantastical science fiction style levels. The playable characters engage in combat with a range of alien and robotic enemies.

During combat, players choose from a range of weapons which include melee weapons such as large tools, guns that shoot plasma capsules which burst on impact, laser guns, and grenade-like weapons. Attacks are accompanied by brightly-coloured effects such as plasma splashes, impact flashes and environmental effects such as flames. Once defeated, humanoid alien and robotic enemies fall to the ground, where they burst into orange particles or white sparks. Some organic enemies, which resemble plants or animals such as fish and clams, burst into green liquid when defeated, occasionally leaving behind a purple goo-like substance on the ground.

In the Board's opinion, although combat sequences often include somewhat frenetic violence, the impact is mitigated by the use of cartoon-style graphics and animation, and the lack of blood, blood-like effects or injury. The consumer advice is 'mild science fiction themes and violence'.



Recommended
for mature
audiences



Computer games classified M are not recommended for persons under 15 years of age. Accordingly, they require a mature perspective. There are no legal restrictions on access, and ultimately it is the responsibility of a parent or guardian to make decisions about appropriate entertainment material for their child and to provide adequate supervision.

Out of the total of 280 commercial games classified in 2020–21, 73 games were classified M.

Games classified in the reporting period include: *Biomutant*; *Blade & Soul*; *Blood Bowl III*; *Capcom Arcade Stadium*; *Chicken Police – Paint It Red!*; *Dynasty Warriors 9 Empires*; *Godfall*; *Hades*; *Monster Hunter Rise*; *Oddworld Soulstorm*; *Rogue Lords*; *Samurai Warriors 5*;

Song of Horror; *Suicide Guy VR*; *The Falconeer*; *The Great Ace Attorney Chronicles*; and *Tribes of Midgard*.

Five Nights at Freddy's: Core Collection is comprised of the first five games of the *Five Nights at Freddy's* survival horror game series, in which the player is required to use a variety of tools to prevent attacks from animatronic characters. The game does not include online interactivity. In typical gameplay, players use a variety of tools – including security cameras, disguises, flashlights, doors and audio recordings – to locate, distract and repel sentient animatronic mascot characters who attack the player character on sight. When the animatronic characters find the player, unless the player uses the appropriate tool to distract them or chase them away, a jolting sound is heard, as an animatronic character suddenly lunges at the screen in a jump scare. The animatronic characters are typically portrayed with glowing eyes and wide open mouths lined with sharp teeth as they lunge towards the screen. Following the jump scare the screen cuts to static, with no further depiction of the animatronic characters attacking the player. Although most of the games in the series contain comic relief in the form of humorous taped messages left for the player by a fellow employee, the impact of the jump scares exceeds mild. The game's consumer advice is 'horror themes'.

Worms Rumble is a multiplayer battle game in which players control anthropomorphic worms in side-scrolling battles set in a variety of arenas including shopping malls and train stations. The game features online interactivity in the form of multiplayer modes and in-game purchases of weapon skins, outfits, accessories and emotes. Throughout the game, the worms use a wide variety of weaponry including shotguns, bazookas, baseball bats and comedic weapons such as sheep launchers, attacking each other in

bouts of turn-based combat. When hit, worms make a high-pitched squeak and disappear. Following the attacks, worms sometimes make high-pitched comedic quips, such as, "How dastardly!" There is no depiction of blood, gore or other injury detail. However, in order for a game to be classified PG, violence should be infrequent and justified by context. Given the frequency and frenetic nature of the violence, the game warrants an M classification. The consumer advice is 'comedic violence, online interactivity and in-game purchases'.

Neptunia ReVerse is a Japanese fantasy role-playing game with a turn-based combat mechanic in which the player takes the role of a supernatural goddess, Neptune, who falls to Earth after being beaten in battle. Suffering amnesia, she embarks on a quest to regain her memories by exploring the fantasy realm of Gamindustri with the help of another young woman, Compa. The game contains no online interactivity. The game uses a third-person perspective and a stylised graphics engine to depict characters and fantasy environments. Full-screen, anime-style still images (some with limited animation) are also used to advance the narrative.

Female characters, including Neptune, are consistently depicted wearing sexualised costumes which emphasise their breasts, cleavage and buttocks. Breast movement or "jiggle" is also routinely animated in otherwise still-image depictions. In addition, some scenes employ low camera placement, including "up-skirt" camera angles typical of the genre, to further sexualise the characters and their poses. One female character, Green Heart, is depicted with exaggerated breasts and cleavage, with the bikini top of her outfit covering only the tops (including the nipples) of her breasts. Another female character refers to Green Heart as "Thunder Tits". The game also includes a gallery feature, with one

album of images titled "Naked Bondadges?!" The album contains full-screen still images of female characters in sexualised poses, the only animation in each image being the movement of the characters' breasts. One such image depicts a female character sitting on the ground, her legs splayed and winking at the camera as her breasts move up and down. Another depicts the same female character's face pressed between the exaggerated breasts of Green Heart, with the breasts moving in a circular motion. Despite the game's stylised visuals and light-hearted, often satiric tone, sexualised imagery over the course of the game imparts a moderate impact. Additionally, verbal sexual references throughout the game sit at the upper limit of the lower classification, warranting additional advice. The consumer advice is 'sexualised imagery and sexual references'.

Life Is Strange: True Colors is a narrative adventure game in which the player takes the role of a rebellious young woman, Alex Chen, as she leaves foster care and reunites with her older brother, Gabe. The game contains online interactivity in the form of Twitch connectivity, statistics about other players, and links to external stores and websites. In one section of the game, the player enters a legal cannabis dispensary which caters to both medical patients and recreational users. Various pieces of cannabis paraphernalia and memorabilia appear around the store including a variety of bongs and pipes, as well as shirts emblazoned with cannabis leaf graphics. As the section progresses, the player is able to enter a back room which features jars containing various strains of cannabis, as well as cannabis gummies and other edible cannabis products. As a jar of gummies is analysed by the player, a voiceover refers to the medicinal effects of THC. Throughout the store environment, leaflets refer to different strains, the effects of THC and the different types of cannabis strains.

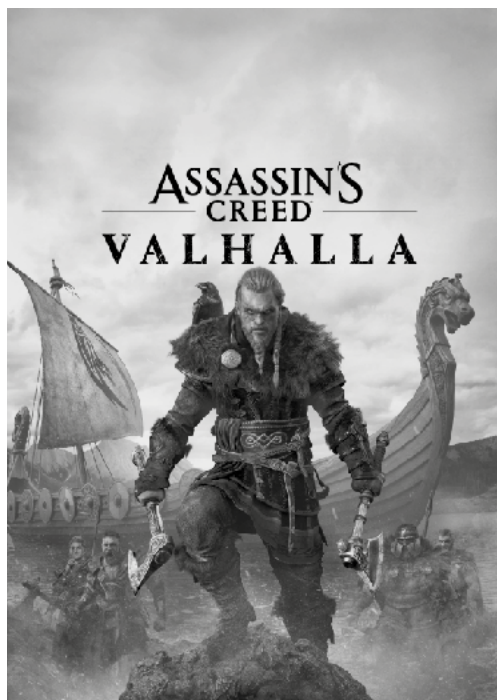
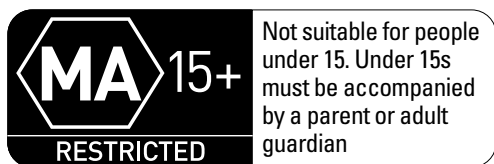
The drug references within the game are unrelated to incentives and rewards, and there is no interactive illicit or proscribed drug use at any stage. Drug references are also justified within the context of the game's narrative as medicinal and recreational cannabis use is legal in Colorado, where the game is set. The game also contains themes, violence, sexual references and coarse language that is moderate in overall impact. The consumer advice is 'mature themes, violence, drug references and coarse language, online interactivity'.

Fuser is a music game in which the player becomes a DJ at a music festival. The player selects beats, vocals and melodies from various songs to create custom mixes in order to win the crowd over. The game contains online interactivity in the form of multiplayer modes. The game also contains in-game purchases in the form of buying randomised content. During the song, "All the Stars", by Kendrick Lamar, a lyric is heard that says, "Motherf**ker, I don't even like you." The word "f**ker" is partially muted, however the word, "mother", and as well as the "cker" sound can be discerned. The tracks in the game are shortened versions of the songs, which are designed to play on a loop if necessary. Given the discernible audio and the potentially repetitive use in the game, the use of coarse language exceeds a mild impact. The consumer advice is 'coarse language, online interactivity and in-game purchases'.

Saviors [sic] of Sapphire Wings and Stranger of Sword City Revisited is a compilation of two Japanese fantasy dungeon crawling/role-playing games in which the player recruits party members to battle with the forces of Darkness. The game contains no online interactivity. However, it does contain sexual references, primarily in the form of sexualised imagery, and infrequent nudity which are inextricably linked. During a later

combat encounter in *Stranger of Sword City Revisited*, three spider-like monsters are depicted suspended from web-like strings inside a large cavern. The three creatures have nude female torsos, arms and faces, with exaggerated breasts and nipples (which are drawn in outline and accentuated by shadowing). After a dialogue exchange, a turn-based combat sequence is initiated with the monsters. Despite the game's visual stylisation, this depiction of sexualised imagery and nudity imparts an impact which exceeds mild. The game also contains fantasy themes, violence and drug references that are moderate in impact. The consumer advice is 'fantasy violence, sexualised imagery and drug references'. In this instance, consumer advice for nudity is subsumed within the advice for sexualised imagery.

Poker Club is a poker simulation game in which players take part in games of Texas Hold'em poker against artificial intelligence or other players. The game has online interactivity in the form of various multiplayer modes. At game launch, players create and customise their own avatar for their profile within the game, which is used to take part in Texas Hold'em poker tournaments in various locations and with a range of buy-in values. Players use in-game currency as a buy-in to enter a variety of poker games and tournaments, where in-game currency is used to place bets, which are represented using poker chips. Gameplay takes place around a poker table and largely involves a first-person perspective through which players check their cards, place bets and choose actions. Real-world currency cannot be gambled within the game, which is solely a simulation of Texas Hold'em poker. As the game solely concerns gambling, it is recommended for mature audiences. The consumer advice is 'simulated gambling'.



Computer games classified MA 15+ are not suitable for persons under 15 years of age. It is a legally restricted category, which means that people under 15 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or adult guardian to buy or hire an MA 15+ computer game. MA 15+ computer games contain themes, violence, sex, language, drug use or nudity which have a strong impact.

Out of the total of 280 commercial games classified in 2020–21, 46 games were classified MA 15+.

Games classified in the reporting period include: *Aragami 2*; *Call of Duty: Black Ops Cold War*; *Carrion*; *Demon's Souls*; *Diablo II: Resurrected*; *Dungeons & Dragons: Dark Alliance*; *Empire of Sin*; *Ghostrunner*;

HuntDown; *Rustler*; *Second Extinction*; *Serious Sam 4*; *Shin Megami Tensei III Nocturne HD Remaster*; *The Dark Pictures Anthology – Little Hope*; *The Outer Worlds: Peril on Gorgon*; *Total War Saga: Troy – Blood & Glory*; and *XIII*.

Mortal Shell is a dungeon-crawling, hack-and-slash role-playing game in which the player occupies the shells of fallen warriors as they fight vampires and other creatures. The game has no online interactivity. When defeated within the game, one enemy rips off its own head and, as its body disappears in a black cloud, flings it at the player's character in a final act of spite. Additionally, as the player progresses through the game, they unlock skill-tree elements by extracting glands from strange prone monsters. In one extraction, the player plunges their fist into a fleshy beast and extracts an organ. The removal of the organ is accompanied by a large blood spray. These depictions are strong in impact. The game also contains violence that is accompanied by depictions of exaggerated blood and injury detail and is strong in impact. The consumer advice is 'strong themes and violence'.

Hitman III is a third-person stealth game in which players play as an assassin known as Agent 47 and complete objectives revolving around assassinating targets. The game includes online interactivity in the form of player-generated content which can be accessed by other players. The game also contains in-game purchases in the form of downloadable content, additional maps and game upgrades.

The elements of themes and violence are inextricably linked throughout the game, due to the player's role as an assassin. Typical gameplay requires players to control Agent 47 as they navigate through environments and assassinate targets. The player is able to use a variety of weapons, including pistols, sniper rifles, knives, axes and poison to kill or incapacitate enemies. Attacks using some

weapons, including guns and knives, result in blood sprays, blood stains on enemy clothing, and blood splatter, which remains in the environment. Deceased enemies remain in the environment and the player can inflict post-mortem damage on the bodies, which results in further blood sprays and some depiction of wound detail. In one mission, for example, the player is given the objective to take a photograph of a target “dead or incapacitated”. To fulfil the objective, the player is able to slit the character’s throat from behind, causing blood to spray from the man’s neck wound before he collapses to the ground. As the man lies on the ground, lifeless, a pool of blood spreads beneath his body while the player takes a photograph of him. During some missions, the player is able to dispose of bodies by loading them into a wood-chipper, causing blood to spray from the machine.

The game is also compatible with some Virtual Reality devices. When played using a Virtual Reality device, the player experiences gameplay through a first-person perspective. As a result, blood and ragdoll effects are viewed in greater detail than the distant, third-person perspective used in the standard version of the game. However, as violence is not depicted realistically and blood effects are not accompanied by injury detail, the impact of violence depicted in the Virtual Reality version of the game does not exceed strong.

The game’s consumer advice is ‘strong violence, online interactivity and in-game purchases’. In this instance, advice for violence appropriately describes the most impactful content and subsumes advice for the element of themes.

Assassin’s Creed: Valhalla is an instalment in the Assassin’s Creed franchise, set in the world of the Vikings, in which the player assumes the role of Eivor, directing raids in England and other countries while interacting with gods and goddesses of Norse mythology.

The game contains online interactivity in the form of vengeance quests and shareable media. The game also includes in-game purchases such as using real world currency to buy credits and objects. Credits can be exchanged for “Time Saver” packs, which contain materials, currency, experience boosts and maps. Within the MA 15+ classification, aggressive or strong coarse language should be infrequent, and not exploitative or offensive. The game contains use of strong coarse language in the form of the word “c**t” in a cut scene where Eivor says, “Odin and Freya weigh the worth of our lives, not some c**t in a wimple.” The game also contains thematic content and depictions of violence that are strong in impact. The consumer advice is ‘strong themes, violence and coarse language, online interactivity and in-game purchases’.

Persona 5 Strikers is a Japanese anime-style role-playing game which follows an unnamed high school student and his friends who travel into a fantasy world called the Metaverse where their avatars, known as ‘personas’, fight demons and fantasy creatures. The game contains no online interactivity. Sexualised imagery and nudity within the game are inextricably linked, and impart a strong impact. Both elements are, however, unrelated to incentives and rewards. In an area of the game called the “Velvet Room”, the player can select Mara and examine in 360-degree detail the demon’s character model. Mara is depicted as a giant green penis-shaped monster riding a golden chariot. The creature, which is also referred to as the “Throbbing King of Desire”, has a mouth beneath the head of the penis, arms and long tentacles. Despite the game’s overall visual stylisation, extensive detail is able to be seen in relation to the head and shaft of the penis and testicles at the back of the chariot. There is no limit to the amount of time the player can examine these images.

The consumer advice is 'strong sexualised imagery', which subsumes advice for the element of nudity.

Watch Dogs Legion is a sandbox action adventure game set in a near-future London. The player takes the role of a member of a resistance group, DedSec, fighting to overthrow an authoritarian government. The game includes online interactivity in the form of online co-operative multiplayer modes. The game also includes in-game purchases in the form of the purchase of store credits to buy cosmetic items and experience points ("VIP Status").

The game contains strong themes and strong violence that are linked within the game's narrative and are justified by context. It uses a third-person perspective and a 3D game engine to render characters and environments in semi-realistic detail. Gameplay contains a mix of hacking, stealth and combat elements in order for the player to complete mission-based objectives and recruit new members to the DedSec cause. Thematic material arises over the course of these missions, which brings the player character into contact with various criminal enterprises, including human scientific experimentation and organ trafficking.

For example, one mission involves the player watching a video diary of a female scientist implicitly performing physical and behavioural experiments on a woman over an extended period of time. The woman is shown in the background, lying on a surgical table and sobbing while the scientist speaks to the camera about the procedures she has performed. Another mission places the player inside a makeshift surgery where body parts and organs are harvested before being offered for sale. Blood pools cover the ground. Corpses lie on surgical tables, with the player approaching a man who is using a circular power saw to implicitly cut into the body of a

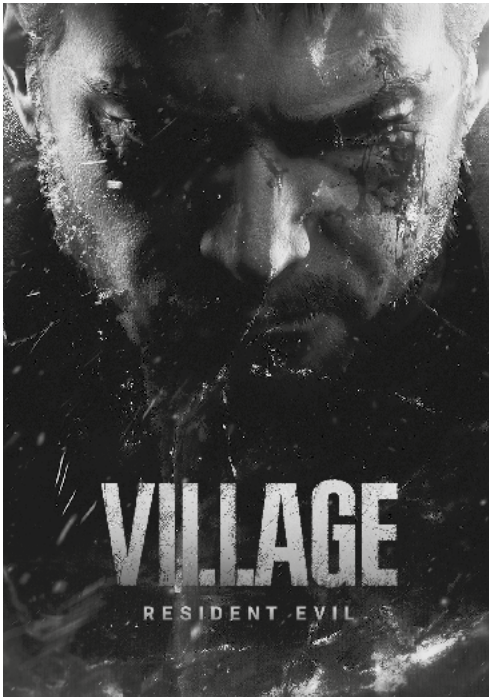
corpse. As the player approaches the tables, severed feet and hands, covered in blood, are visible in close-up depictions. The player can also approach a vat filled with red liquid, with a skull and other skeletal remains floating at the top.

Violence consists of third-person combat using fists, melee weapons (such as clubs) and ranged weapons including pistols and machine guns. The player can also drive vehicles into enemies, use drones to attack targets, and detonate explosive barrels and other devices. Civilian non-playing characters (NPCs) can be attacked and killed, but doing so causes the player to be immediately attacked by military contractors and negatively impacts the reputation of DedSec within the game. Melee and bullet attacks are accompanied by stylised blood sprays (including headshots) but no other injury effects are shown. Bodies are affected by ragdoll physics but post-mortem damage is limited to further stylised blood sprays.

The game also contains the use of strong coarse language in the form of the word "c**t". The consumer advice is 'strong themes, violence and coarse language, online interactivity and in-game purchases'.

No More Heroes III is a third-person action game with a hack-and-slash combat style in which the player attempts to make it to the top of the Galactic Superhero Rankings. The game has no online interactivity. The game contains bloody violence that is strong in impact and justified by context. Throughout the game, the player engages in combat with bladed weapons, often resulting in large, exaggerated sprays of comic-book like blood. Blood is red coloured, in the case of attacks on human characters, or – at times – magenta coloured or textured in nature, in the case of attacks on non-human characters. These exaggerated depictions of blood detail are mitigated by the comedic nature and context of their

presentation within the game's narrative, as well as by the game's highly stylised, comic-book-like aesthetic. As such, the impact is no higher than strong. The consumer advice is 'strong bloody violence'.



The R 18+ classification category is wide in scope giving effect to the Code principle that adults should, with limited exceptions, be able to read, hear, see and play what they want. The R 18+ classification is legally restricted to adults. People under 18 are not permitted to rent or buy R 18+ computer games. The impact of material classified R 18+ should not exceed high. Some material classified R 18+ may be offensive to some sections of the adult community.

Out of the total of 280 commercial games classified in 2020–21, 12 games were classified R 18+.

Games classified in the reporting period include: *Chivalry 2*; *Doom Eternal – The Ancient Gods, Part One*; *Insurgency: Sandstorm*; *Necromunda: Hired Gun*; *Ninja Gaiden: Master Collection*; and *Stubbs the Zombie in Rebel Without a Pulse (Console Edition)*.

The Medium is a psychological horror game, played in first- and third-person perspectives, in which Marianne, a medium, is haunted by a vision of a child's murder, with the player controlling Marianne and Thomas as they investigate the mystery. The game contains no online interactivity. The game contains references to implied sexual violence that are justified by context, not visually depicted, interactive or related to incentives or rewards, and therefore warrants being legally restricted to adults.

In a cut scene, Thomas is depicted searching a room, looking through bookshelves and doors, and muttering, "F**king damn it! Where is it?" He throws objects onto the floor before appearing to despair, leaning on the counter and saying, "I thought I could protect her. Idiot!" He turns and faces the room, saying, "What would you think of me? I've failed you. I've failed US. It's all falling apart." He looks to the side and snaps, "What? I need to be sure," as though conversing with an unseen figure. He crosses the room and looks into a mirror, where his reflection moves independently of his own movements. The reflection says, "Look who finally decided to let me out of my cage." Thomas is unimpressed, demanding the implied spirit help him look for the object that he is searching for. The spirit directs Thomas to a painting, which he takes off the wall, revealing a hole. A book with a red cover is found inside. Thomas pulls the book out and opens it, staring at the pages, which are not visible to the player. Thomas says, "It's

her...No, no, no...Page after page! It's like he's obsessed!" He appears horrified and upset. He continues, "What has he...? What have I done?" The spirit says, "We couldn't have known." Thomas replies, "I let him into my home... He was like a father to me... How could he do this to her? F**king bastard! How could he?!" The spirit tells him, "Keep it together. Think. What do we do now?" Thomas says that he will wait for the other man to come back and threatens to kill him.

Another cut scene in the game appears to follow the scene above, where the player views the room from the point-of-view of the man who Thomas is angry at. He enters the room where Thomas is sitting in a chair, waiting. Thomas asks, "Did you do it... friend?" The man acts surprised and asks if everything is alright. Thomas is holding the red book and approaches the man threateningly. He yells, "My daughter. My thirteen-year-old daughter. I entrusted her to you. Did. You. Do. It?" As the man attempts to deny his actions, Thomas waves the book and says, "I found the sketchbook. Forced myself to look through it. Cover to cover. Every single f**king page!" He drops the book and continues advancing, saying, "Tell me you didn't hurt her, Richard." Richard backs away towards the door, stammering, "It wasn't me...There's this thing inside of me." Thomas punches Richard in the face, viewed from Richard's perspective and he falls to the floor. Richard pleads, "You have to believe me. I wanted to die! Thomas... I'm so sorry..." Thomas shoves Richard, who crawls backwards across the floor. Thomas yells, "She's my daughter." Richard says, "I never wanted any of this." Thomas stomps on Richard and says, "But you did! Knowing she was here! Knowing what she means to me!" Richard pants and gasps in pain and fear, before promising to go away and never see Thomas again. Thomas crouches over Richard before his eyes become intense and angry, staring into the camera. His hands

are viewed on either side of the frame, as if holding Richard's face, as Richard yells in pain and begs Thomas to stop.

In another cut scene, where the player is directing Thomas in the third-person, a woman's voice is heard. She yells, "Get away from me, you bastard! No! No! Let go of me! No! Please! Don't! No! No!" It is the implication of the scenes between Thomas and Richard that Richard abused Thomas's thirteen-year-old daughter, however, the game does not contain any depictions of this abuse.

The Games Guidelines define sexual violence as "sexual assault or aggression, in which the victim does not consent" and state that "sexual violence, implied or otherwise, is not permitted" within the G, PG, M or MA 15+ classifications. The game is therefore classified R 18+. The consumer advice is 'references to sexual violence'.

Doom 3 VR is a re-release of the 2004 first-person shooter game *Doom 3* (and its expansion packs) in a Virtual Reality format. The game includes online interactivity in the form of online and social media player interaction. Typical gameplay consists of combat, involving frequent bloody attacks with various real-world and science fiction weapons, against demons, alien-like creatures and zombies. Weapons include pistols, shotguns, grenade launchers, laser projectile launchers, and a chainsaw. The attacks are accompanied by blood and gore effects in the form of large explosions of blood spray and dismemberment, including decapitations. When the player defeats an enemy, the enemy explodes in a brief burst of blood and gore before its skeleton crumbles to the ground and disappears. Although defeated enemies usually disappear quickly from the environment, at times enemy corpses remain on the ground. The player is able to inflict post-mortem damage on corpses by shooting or sawing them, which causes the corpse to

burst into chunks of flesh with large blood sprays. Due to the first person perspective, when the player uses the chainsaw or engages in close-range combat, the blood splatter and gore effects are emphasised and close in range, with blood frequently splattering onto the screen. Despite the game's low resolution graphics, as the violence is frequent and the game can only be played in Virtual Reality with a first-person perspective, the impact of the violence exceeds strong. The consumer advice is 'high impact violence, online interactivity'.

Outriders is a co-operative role-playing game with a third-person perspective. The game is set in a dark and desperate sci-fi universe, where the player creates an Outrider character to embark on a journey across a hostile planet. The game has online interactivity in the form of multiplayer modes, and a membership option which collects data from players. Typical gameplay involves the player battling a range of human and humanoid enemies, as well as alien animal creatures, which are required to be killed in order to progress through the game. Weapons include handguns, assault rifles, pump-action and automatic shotguns, and marksman and sniper rifles. Players also use skills which allow them to cause enemies to explode in clouds of blood or to be set on fire. Use of these weapons and skills results in bloody explosions, blood splatter, dismemberment and decapitation, accompanied by generous blood effects. The player can shoot dead bodies from a close range, if they choose, resulting in post-mortem dismemberment and decapitation, with accompanying blood and viscera spray. Given the level of blood and injury detail throughout, the overall impact of the element of violence is high. The consumer advice is 'high impact violence, online interactivity'.

Resident Evil Village is a first-person horror survival game set in a wintry village and castle, which follows Ethan as he unlocks puzzles, solves mysteries and battles monsters in order to locate his kidnapped daughter. The game includes the option to make in-game purchases. The game contains violence that is high in impact. It is not, however, in context, frequently gratuitous, exploitative or likely to be offensive to a reasonable adult.

The game engine employs detailed, realistic renderings of characters and environments, and is presented from a first-person perspective. Gameplay consists of navigating a wintry village and castle as the protagonist Ethan, unlocking puzzles, solving mysteries, and battling monsters. Throughout the game, Ethan encounters supernatural beings that he seeks to avoid or is forced to battle, using weapons including guns and knives. These attacks feature copious blood sprays and the use of powerful weapons can sometimes result in the head of an enemy character exploding in a burst of blood. Some enemy characters burst apart, leaving behind objects such as a crystal mechanical heart that can be used to craft additional ammunition.

Early in the game, a lycanthrope bites a chunk of Ethan's left hand off, causing blood to splatter onto the snow. During later scenes, the wounded hand can be viewed with dried blood over the wound. In another scene, Ethan is captured by a coven of witches and suspended from the ceiling by hooks, which are driven through his palms. As Ethan attempts to escape from the witches, his right hand is sliced off at the wrist when he flips a switch. Ethan clutches at his wrist as blood spurts from the wound and a witch says, "Think I'd let you go so easily. You'll be sliced to ribbons." The player is then able to pick up the hand and interact with it as an in-game

item or object, rotating it to view the blood and bone detail as the severed hand floats in the centre of the screen.

Given the game's first-person perspective and the copious amounts of blood detail throughout, the impact of the violence exceeds strong. The consumer advice is 'high impact horror violence, in-game purchases'.

Refused Classification (RC)

In 2020–21, out of the total of 280 computer games classified, two computer games were classified RC: *Disco Elysium –The Final Cut*; and *Mary Skelter Finale*.

Computer games that are classified RC cannot be legally sold, hired, advertised or demonstrated in Australia. Computer games will be classified RC if they contain content that has a very high impact.

Mary Skelter Finale is a Japanese dungeon-crawling role-playing game (RPG) in which the player must battle against a group of female killers called Massacre Pink.

A depiction of implied sexual violence occurs in the game when Gretel imposes non-consensual sexual attention on a fantasy version of the character Jack, named Nightmare Jack. Two characters in a corridor have heard the sound of Jack screaming and have stated that this sound is coming from Gretel's room. A still image then depicts a close-up of Gretel, wearing a blue lacy bra, as she looks down at Jack's body. Her right hand is pressed against green tendrils which appear to partially cover his abdomen and she smiles and looks down at him. Jack's right leg is bent and raised to her left, creating the impression that she is kneeling and looking down between his legs. Jaunty music plays continuously and the image remains onscreen while dialogue between Gretel and another female character, Otsuu, scrolls across the bottom of the

screen. Otsuu asks, "What are you doing?" and, "Why are you attacking Jack like that?" Gretel replies with, "You're making it sound worse than it is. I'm just trying to hold him down by force". Otsuu says that this actually sounds worse and Gretel explains that she needed him to stay calm for her experiment. Otsuu asks her what this experiment is and Gretel replies, "He is a male, so I was experimenting to see how he would react to a female". She then goes on to clarify that her intentions are sexual by saying, "Which is why I dressed in this way so that I could arouse his sexual desire". Otsuu then refers to Jack's lack of consent, saying, "But look at Jack. It's obvious he doesn't like what you're doing! Isn't that right Jack?" Jack responds with, "Ggh...shht...pp" and Otsuu adds, "See? He's asking you to stop!" In the Board's opinion, this sequence consists of a still image and an ongoing dialogue which together constitute a visual depiction of sexual violence, with clear reference made to Jack not consenting to Gretel's unwanted sexual advances.

In addition to this sequence, the game also features sexualised depictions of female characters who appear to be under the age of 18. A gallery of still images depicts a series of female characters in underwear and nightwear. Each character is seen individually, first wearing items of clothing or underwear which place emphasis on their body or breasts. A second image then immediately follows in which the clothing has been rendered transparent, with black shading over the nipples and genital area. In the second image of each female, their cheeks have been shaded pink to give the impression that they are blushing from the removal of their clothing. In several instances, a character is depicted who is much shorter than the other women and who has a distinctly pre-pubescent body, with barely developed breasts and slimmer hips. Their hair is in pigtailed and their eyes and facial features are more overtly childlike

than some of the other female characters. One such character who appears to be younger than 18 years old, has long blond pigtails and is kicking a leg into the air with her arms outstretched.

The Games Guidelines state that implied sexual violence that is visually depicted is not permitted. The Guidelines further state that computer games will be refused classification if they include or contain 'exploitative or offensive descriptions or depictions involving a person who is, or appears to be, a child under 18 years'. In the Board's view, the game contains a visual depiction of implied sexual violence, in addition to multiple examples of imagery that constitute sexualised depictions of childlike female characters. Therefore, the game is Refused Classification.

Disco Elysium – The Final Cut is a single-player isometric fantasy role-playing game set in a fictional world called Elysium, in which the player assumes the role of an amnesiac detective charged with solving a murder mystery. Action is presented primarily through text describing the environment, objects, characters and events, viewed in a panel on the right side of the screen, which is accompanied by narration. Dialogue is also presented as text viewed in a panel on the right side of the screen, accompanied by audio. The player progresses the story by making selections from a list of options presented through text, the success of which often relies on passing skill-checks. The player is able to buy and use consumable items, including drugs, which are available for use in the player's inventory and give the player a boost to character statistics in order to allow them to pass particular skill-checks.

Players are able to access a number of items in their inventory including a substance called "Speed "Saint-Batiste 'Preptide!'" depicted as a pill bottle with white triangular pills next to it, as well as an item called "Speed Bottle"

depicted as a brown bottle with a straw inserted into it. The item description reads, "How convenient! Someone has equipped this tiny bottle of amphetamines with a straw. It's the lorryman's speed on-the-go."

In one sequence the player is able to select an option to use a stimulant by selecting "Okay, my body is ready. Let's do this. (Try some speed.)" In a distant rear perspective an orange pill bottle is raised to the player-character's face as they lean forward. The text description explains, "You raise the Preptide bottle, press one nostril closed, and inhale *furiously* with the other. The rush is almost immediate. It tastes bitter and caustic, and stings a bit inside your nose." The text is accompanied by narration. A yellow effect frames the screen and the sign "Motorics Raised" appears on screen as a yellow tint flashes over the screen and a sniffing sound is heard as the player character is depicted bending backwards with the pill bottle positioned against their face. A sign reading "Damaged Morale -1" appears on screen following the depiction. The sign is followed by a sign reading "Secret Task Complete: Find Speed and Sniff It +30 Experience". The text also appears in the panel on the right side of the screen.

"Speed" is a common street name for stimulant drugs, particularly those from the amphetamine drug family (including methamphetamine). They are proscribed drugs, as specified in Schedule 4 of the Prohibited Imports Regulations. In the Board's opinion, due to the implied textual and graphic reference (in the form of the pill bottle and bottle with an inserted straw) to the use of a group of proscribed drugs, the insufficient delineation between the "Speed "Saint-Batiste 'Preptide!'" and "Speed Bottle" consumable items available in the game and real-world proscribed drugs, and the game's treatment of implied drug use as both a reward and an

incentive within gameplay, the game warrants being Refused Classification for “illicit or proscribed drug use related to incentives or rewards”.

Publications

Only ‘submittable publications’ must be classified before they can legally be advertised or distributed in Australia.

Section 5 of the Classification Act defines a submittable publication as:

- ▶ *an unclassified publication that, having regard to section 9A [Refused Classification for media that advocates terrorist acts] or to the Code and the classification guidelines to the extent that they relate to publications, contains depictions or descriptions that:*

- a) *are likely to cause the publication to be classified RC; or*
- b) *are likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult to the extent that the publication should not be sold or displayed as an unrestricted publication; or*
- c) *are unsuitable for a minor to see or read.*

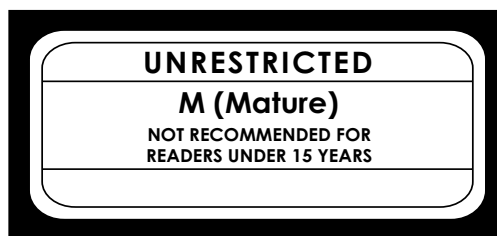
It is the responsibility of distributors to ensure that they meet classification requirements for publications. The enforcement legislation in some states and territories provides that it is an offence to sell or deliver a submittable publication that has not been classified.

Classifications

There are four classifications for publications – Unrestricted, Category 1 restricted, Category 2 restricted and RC.

The *Guidelines for the Classification of Publications* are used by the Board when classifying publications. They explain the different classification categories and the scope and limits of material suitable for each category.

Unrestricted



The Unrestricted classification covers a wide range of material. Unrestricted publications may contain classifiable elements such as sex and nudity with some detail, but the impact should not be so strong as to require legal restriction to adults.

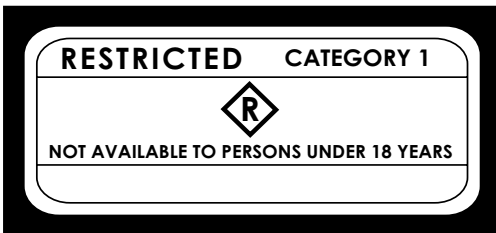
A special consideration of the Board in classifying publications is the suitability of covers for public display. There are specific criteria for the assessment of covers which specify that the impact of any descriptions or depictions and references on covers should be low. This accords with one of the principles of the Code, namely that everyone should be protected from exposure to unsolicited material that they may find offensive. Publications with covers that are not suitable for public display cannot be classified Unrestricted.

Generally, there are no restrictions on the sale or display of Unrestricted publications. However, the Board can apply consumer advice not recommending the publication for readers under 15 years of age.

During the reporting period, a total of 17 classification decisions were made in relation to applications for the classification of publications, including enforcement applications.

Out of the total of 17 classification decisions for publications, 10 single issue publications were classified Unrestricted. Titles of Unrestricted publications classified by the Board during 2020–21 included: *Why Race Matters: Race Differences and What They Mean*; *The Camp of the Saints*; *Mein Kampf: The New Ford Translation*; and *Bronze Age Mindset*.

Category 1 restricted



During the reporting period, out of the total of 17 publications classified, three single issue publications were classified Category 1 restricted.

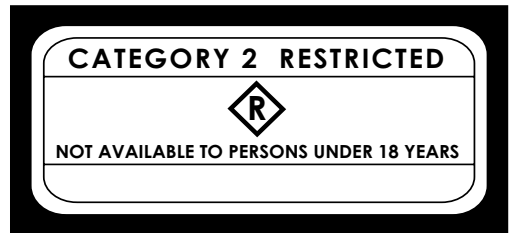
Category 1 restricted publications may include realistic depictions of nudity, realistic depictions of sexual excitement, and detailed

descriptions and simulated or obscured depictions of sexual activity between consenting adults.

Category 1 restricted publications can only be sold to persons 18 years of age and over and must be displayed in a sealed wrapper. The Board can impose a further condition that the sealed wrapper is made of opaque material. Category 1 restricted publications cannot be sold in Queensland.

The titles of Category 1 restricted publications classified by the Board during 2020–21 were: *Don't Be Cruel: Akira Takanashi's Story*; *Score Vol. 29 No. 3*; and *The Turner Diaries*.

Category 2 restricted



During the reporting period, out of the total of 17 publications classified, no publications or serial publications were classified Category 2 restricted.

Category 2 restricted publications may include realistic depictions of actual sexual activity involving consenting adults.

Category 2 restricted publications can only be sold to persons 18 years of age and over, and can only be displayed in restricted premises. Category 2 restricted publications cannot be sold in Queensland.

Refused Classification (RC)

Publications classified RC cannot be sold or displayed in Australia. During the reporting period, of the total 17 publications classified, four publications were classified RC.

The titles of publications Refused Classification by the Board during 2020–21 were: *No Game No Life Volume 1*; *No Game No Life Volume 2*; *No Game No Life Volume 9*; and *Edibles: Small Bites for the Modern Cannabis Kitchen*.

Serial classifications for publications

On application, the Classification Board can issue a serial classification declaration. This means that a classification (and conditions, if applicable) given to a single issue of a periodical will apply to a specified number of future issues of the same periodical. Publishers must ensure that the future issues do not have content at a higher level than the serial declaration allows.

During the reporting period, no periodical was granted a serial classification declaration.

Other decisions

Internet content

During the reporting period, the Board classified three applications containing internet content, referred by the eSafety Commissioner.

Correspondence

The Board seeks to reflect current community standards in its decision making, and feedback from the community is informative and helpful.

During the 2020–21 reporting period, the Board received in excess of 280 pieces of correspondence including: complaints about film and computer game decisions (either that the classification was too high or too low); verbal compliments and expressions of thanks (in relation to the classification the Board gave the high-profile computer game, *Cyberpunk 2077*); and several inquiries about older classification decisions about films classified 30+ years ago. The Board values the commentary received from members of the Australian public in the classification process – feedback is important and valued.

The number of pieces of correspondence received by the Board for decisions made by approved tools was 31. A breakdown of the complaints only by category is as follows:

Board media type/ classification tool	Number received
Publications	6
Films	44
Computer games	201
Netflix tool	31

Films

The Board received 44 complaints about the classification of films, five of which related to the theatrical release film, *My Spy*.

Publications

The Board received six complaints about publications, three of which related to the non-submittable publication *Beyond Magenta Transgender Teens Speak Out*.

Computer games

The Board received 201 complaints about computer games, of which 199 were about *Disco Elysium – The Final Cut*, with one each about *The Last of Us 2* and *Hotline Miami 2: Wrong Number*.

Disco Elysium – The Final Cut was Refused Classification by the Board in March 2021. The Board’s decision report noted that, in the Board’s opinion, the player character’s use of amphetamines, which results in an in-game trophy, boosts character statistics and increases the chances of progression at particular points of the game, constituted “illicit or proscribed drug use related to incentives and rewards”. The Games Guidelines state that computer games “will... be Refused Classification if they contain illicit or proscribed drug use related to incentives or rewards.” The game was therefore Refused Classification.

In May 2021, the Classification Review Board classified *Disco Elysium – The Final Cut* R 18+, with consumer advice of high impact themes, coarse language and drug references.

Netflix Tool

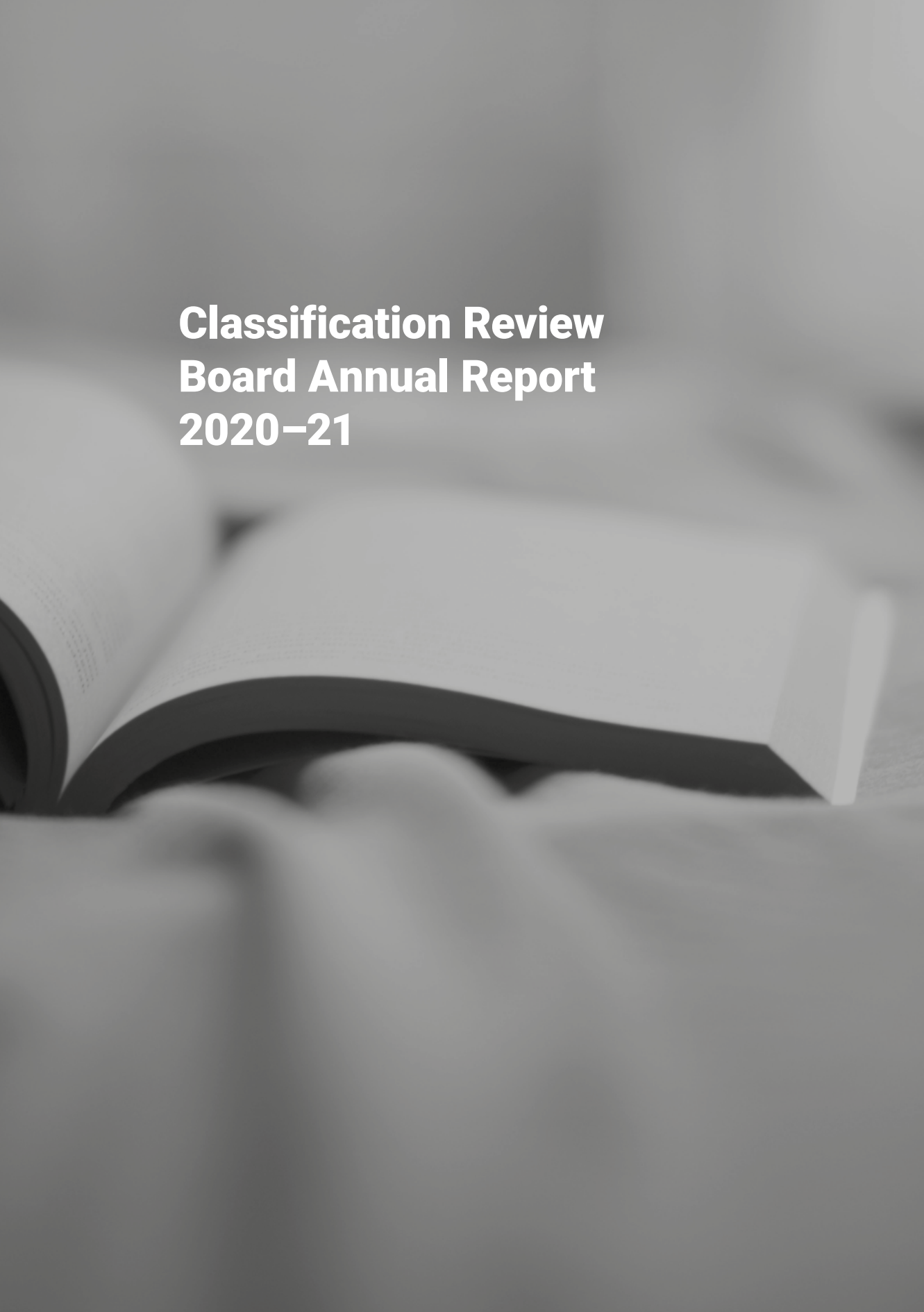
The Board received 31 complaints about the classification of films, 26 of which related to the film, *Cuties*, with a small number of other films receiving complaints.

On 8 September 2020, the approved Netflix classification tool classified the film *Cuties* MA 15+, with consumer advice of Strong Themes, Coarse Language. Following numerous public complaints and enquiries, the Board undertook an audit of the Netflix tool's classification on 16 September 2020. The Board's decision confirmed the film's MA 15+ classification, with consumer advice for strong themes. The Board's decision report acknowledged that the film deals with themes in a manner which is, at times, confronting, including sexualisation in modern culture and, specifically, its impacts on early adolescents. However, the Board also noted that, under the Act, context is crucial, and that it must consider: the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults; the literary, artistic or educational merit of a film; the general character of the film; and the persons or class of persons to whom it is published. The Board further noted that the MA 15+ classification category is a legally restricted category, and that material classified as such is considered unsuitable for persons under 15 years of age.

Following an application by the Australian Christian Lobby, the Classification Review Board also considered the film. On 23 October 2020, the Classification Review Board classified *Cuties* MA 15+, with consumer advice of 'strong themes'.

Enquiries and other assistance

The department responded to a range of other enquiries including, how to get content classified, how to obtain exemptions from classification, and requests for information on the determined markings for films and computer games. There were a number of requests about the importation of publications, films and computer games.



**Classification Review
Board Annual Report
2020–21**



Australian Government
Classification Review Board

The Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

In accordance with subsection 85(1) of the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995*, I am pleased to submit a report on the management of the administrative affairs of the Classification Review Board for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Knowles', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Susan Knowles
Convenor

10 September 2021

Introduction

The Classification Review Board is an independent statutory body that reviews, on application, decisions of the Classification Board. The Review Board makes its decisions in accordance with the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995* (the **Classification Act**), the National Classification Code (the **Code**) and the Classification Guidelines.

This report includes an overview of the work of the Review Board in 2020–21.

The Review Board received secretariat support from the Classification Branch.

Convenor's overview



The Classification Review Board provides an important and independent mechanism for industry and the community where there is concern or disagreement about the classification of films, computer games and publications.

During the 2020–21 reporting period, the Review Board received five applications for review. These applications were for the films *Cuties*, *Spiral: From the Book of Saw*, *Ascendant* and *The Suicide Squad*, and for the computer game *Disco Elysium – The Final Cut*.

This reporting period also marks the first time the Review Board has met remotely by videoconference to consider applications for review, and the first time it has reviewed a Classification Board decision which was itself a review of a Netflix Tool decision.

The Australian Christian Lobby applied for review of *Cuties*, and was granted standing to apply as a person aggrieved by the decision made by the Classification Board when it reviewed the Netflix Tool's classification of *Cuties*. The review was held on 23 October 2020, and the Review Board unanimously decided on the classification of MA 15+ (Mature Accompanied) with a consumer advice of 'strong themes'.

The review of the classification of *Ascendant* was held on 6 April, when the Review Board unanimously classified the film M (Mature) with a consumer advice of 'mature fantasy themes, violence and blood detail'.

The review of the classification of *Spiral: From the Book of Saw* was held on 7 May, when the Review Board unanimously classified the film R 18+ (Restricted) with a consumer advice of 'high impact violence, blood and gore'.

On 13 May 2021, the Review Board convened to review *Disco Elysium – The Final Cut*. The unanimous decision of the Review Board was a classification of R18+ (Restricted) with a consumer advice of 'high impact themes, coarse language, and drug references'. The Review Board decided after much deliberation that the interactive drug use was justified within the context of a game played from the perspective of a functioning addict, and that the net negative consequences for drug use within the game did not constitute an incentive or reward, and could be accommodated at the R 18+ classification.

Universal Pictures International Pty Ltd requested a review of *The Suicide Squad*. The Board met and unanimously decided on 15 June 2021 to classify the film MA 15+ (Mature Accompanied) with a consumer advice of 'strong fantasy violence, blood and gore, and frequent coarse language'.

The support and advice of the Classification Branch staff is always superb and invaluable to members of the Review Board. We thank them all.

Sue Knowles

Convenor

Classification Review Board profiles

Current Board members



Susan Knowles

Convenor

APPOINTED: 1 July 2015

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES: 30 June 2022

Ms Susan (Sue) Knowles, 70, resides in Perth, Western Australia. Ms Knowles retired as a Senator for Western Australia in the Australian Federal Parliament after 21 years of public service. During her career in the Parliament, she held a variety of positions including Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Deputy Opposition Whip in the Senate. She served on many Senate committees and inquiries, including as Chair of the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, dealing with health care, aged care, Aboriginal health, welfare and other related matters. She was also a member of the Senate inquiries into British Child Migrants in Institutional Care and Australian Children in Institutional Care.

Ms Knowles is currently a member of the Advertising Standards Community Panel and chair of the Council of Owners for Seashells Resorts in Broome and Mandurah. She is actively involved in the local community by way of volunteer work with the St John of God Hospital, and is a member and patron of several local sporting clubs.



Peter Price

Deputy Convenor

APPOINTED: 7 December 2014

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES: 6 December 2021

Mr Peter Price AM, 56, resides in Sydney, NSW. He is an advertising and communications professional with over 25 years' experience in multinational agencies in Johannesburg, London and Sydney. He is currently the Managing Director of First Light, an advertising agency he founded in 1994, as well as part-time CEO of Crime Stoppers in NSW and Director of Corporate Communications for Crime Stoppers Australia.

Mr Price's experiences as a victim of multiple crimes in South Africa helped steer him in the direction of violence prevention and law enforcement advocacy. Mr Price has been closely involved with the development of Crime Stoppers. Mr Price has been a Director of Crime Stoppers since 1999 and has served as Chair for five years and as Deputy Chair for six years. He also served as Vice President of Crime Stoppers International from 2012 to 2017.

In 2009, Mr Price was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to community safety through executive roles with Crime Stoppers. In 2017, he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia

for his service to community safety as an advocate for law enforcement and crime prevention programs.

Mr Price was also a Board Director of the Internet Industry Association from 2011 to 2014. He holds a diploma in marketing management and is a graduate and fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Rechelle Leahy

APPOINTED: 6 December 2018

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES: 5 December 2022

Ms Rechelle Leahy, 45, resides in Armidale, NSW, She is an Independent Director and Vice President of the National Rural Women's Coalition, a board member with the Northern Tablelands Local Land Service, and holds a Statutory Appointment as a Youth Justice Conference Convener in restorative justice for the Department of Justice NSW (Northern Inland Region). She was also appointed by the Australian Government as an Employment Facilitator with the Department of Education, Skills and Employment for the Northern Inland region of NSW as part of the Regional Employment Trial.

Rechelle is a principal sector specialist in governance, contract management, procurement and social policy issues. Her passion lies with gender equality, equity and improving policy through advocacy, specifically related to the specialised issues of rural, regional and remote (RRR) women and girls in Australia. Her passion for this work is the driving force behind her consultancy business RegionalCollab.

She has actively built a profile advocating for rural women and girls nationally and internationally. In 2018 and 2019, Rechelle represented civil society in New York, at the United Nations – Commission for the Status of Women, as a representative of the National Rural Women's Coalition. In 2018 and 2019, Rechelle was nominated for a Pro Bono Australia IMPACT25 Award, recognising her work creating a positive impact for women and girls in rural, regional and remote Australia and she is a 2019 Australian Financial Review 100 Women of Influence Alumni in the Local and Regional category.

Ms Leahy's qualifications include an Advanced Diploma in Migration Law and a Certificate in Mediation Practice. She was also awarded the Commonwealth Bank Regional Scholarship to attend the Women on Boards Program.



Susan Bush

APPOINTED: 6 December 2018

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES: 5 December 2022

Ms Susan Bush, 46, resides in Albany Creek, Queensland and is an investigator/transcriber/actor/writer with a background in the television/broadcast industry in both Australia and the UK. She has experience as a broadcast operator and a presentation co-ordinator, and is now engaged in writing, acting and the provision of freelance transcribing services. Ms Bush holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Media Studies from Griffith University and a Master of Arts from the University of Queensland. She was awarded Certificate of Highest Achievement (Best Actress) at the 2014 Australian Screen Industry Network Awards.

Ms Bush has also spent her time volunteering in the local film-making community, including judging the SAE ATOM awards since 2015. She is a parent of three children.



Margaret Clancy

APPOINTED: 6 December 2018

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES: 5 December 2022

Ms Margaret Clancy, 71, resides in Castlemaine, Victoria and has extensive experience in film classification, having served as a Classification Board member for a total of seven years at the Office of Film and Literature Classification. She has been a television classifier at the Seven Network and the Classification Manager at National Indigenous Television (NITV). She has been involved with indigenous communities through her work at NITV, including training of indigenous staff. Through her career, a diversity of roles has included teaching (ESL, voice and drama), journalism, script writing and acting. She holds an Associate Diploma in Speech and Drama from the London College of Music and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.



Adam Davy

APPOINTED: 6 December 2018

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES: 5 December 2022

Mr Adam Davy, 41, of Kelvin Grove, Queensland, is the Head of the English Department at Kelvin Grove State College, a

metropolitan state school. He also performs an expert advisory role with the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA). In these roles, he services the Arts and Education communities through the development and facilitation of creative writing, poetry and education programs.

Mr Davy has been awarded a double degree (Arts and Education) from Griffith University and a Bachelor of Psychology (Hons) from the University of New England. He is the father of two children and a regular gamer.



Christopher Allen

APPOINTED: 6 December 2018

APPOINTMENT EXPIRES: 5 December 2022

Mr Christopher Allen, 56, resides in Berry, NSW and is currently the Director, Sector Performance and Intervention, at the NSW Department of Local Government. His recent public sector executive roles include Chief Operating Officer, Venues NSW in the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet and, in 2014–15, Acting Assistant Secretary and Director of Operations at the Classification Branch (both non-ongoing positions). From 2008 to 2012 he was Sheriff of NSW in the NSW Department of Attorney General & Justice, delivering support to the NSW Justice system.

Mr Allen's early career featured service as a commissioned officer in the Australian Defence Force (Army). His qualifications include a Graduate Diploma in Strategic Leadership, Advanced Diploma in Public Safety, Associate Diploma in Personnel

Administration, Diploma of Security & Risk Management and Diploma of Public Safety (Policing).

Mr Allen has published several novels and is the father of two young children.

Board members who left the Classification Review Board in 2020–21

No members left during the reporting period.

Legislative base

The Classification Review Board is established under the Classification Act. The Classification Act provides that the Review Board is to consist of a Convenor, a Deputy Convenor and at least three, but no more than eight, other members.

The Governor-General appoints members of the Review Board. Under the Classification Act, the Minister must, before recommending an appointment, consult with state and territory ministers with responsibility for classification. The Classification Act also requires that regard is had to the desirability of ensuring that membership of the Review Board is broadly representative of the Australian community.

Decisions of the Review Board

In the reporting period, the Review Board conducted five reviews. The reviews were completed within the statutory timeframe.

Reports for the Review Board's decisions are published on the Australian Classification website at www.classification.gov.au.

Title	Media	Review applicant	Date of review decision	Original classification	Review classification
<i>Cuties</i>	Film	The Australian Christian Lobby	23 October 2020	MA 15+	MA 15+
<i>Ascendant</i>	Film	Maslow Entertainment Pty Ltd	6 April 2021	MA 15+	M
<i>Spiral: From the Book of Saw</i>	Film	Studiocanal Australia Pty Ltd	7 May 2021	R 18+	R 18+
<i>Disco Elysium – The Final Cut</i>	Game	Zaum Studio OU	13 May 2021	RC	R 18+
<i>The Suicide Squad</i>	Film	Universal Pictures International Pty Ltd	15 June 2021	R 18+	MA 15+

Attendance at Review Board meetings

The Review Board convened for five days in 2018–19 to deal with five separate applications.

Table 16: Attendance at Review Board meetings

Review Board member	Meetings 2020–21	Meeting days
		attended 2020–21
Susan Knowles, Convenor, WA	5	5
Peter Price AM, Deputy Convenor, NSW	4	4
Rechelle Leahy, NSW	1	1
Susan Bush, QLD	2	2
Adam Davy, QLD	2	2
Margaret Clancy, VIC	1	1

Judicial decisions

Aspects of a Review Board decision can be reviewed, on application, by the Federal Court under the *Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977* (Cth).

In the reporting period, no application for review of the Review Board's decisions was lodged with the Federal Court.

Complaints

The Review Board received two complaints about its decisions in the reporting period.

One complaint was about *Cuties*, with the complainant expressing concern that *Cuties* should have been classified higher than MA 15+.

The other complaint was about *Spiral: From the Book of Saw*, with the complainant expressing concern that the classification of R 18+ was not in line with the classification of other films in the Saw franchise.

Appendices



Appendix A: National Classification Code

National Classification Code

- 1 Classification decisions are to give effect, as far as possible, to the following principles:
- a) adults should be able to read, hear, see and play what they want;
 - b) minors should be protected from material likely to harm or disturb them;
 - c) everyone should be protected from exposure to unsolicited material that they find offensive;
 - d) the need to take account of community concerns about:
 - i) depictions that condone or incite violence, particularly sexual violence; and
 - ii) the portrayal of persons in a demeaning manner.

Publications

2. Publications are to be classified in accordance with the following table:

Item	Description of publication	Classification
1	Publications that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) describe, depict, express or otherwise deal with matters of sex, drug misuse or addiction, crime, cruelty, violence or revolting or abhorrent phenomena in such a way that they offend against the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults to the extent that they should not be classified; or b) describe or depict in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult, a person who is, or appears to be, a child under 18 (whether the person is engaged in sexual activity or not); or c) promote, incite or instruct in matters of crime or violence 	RC

Item	Description of publication	Classification
2	Publications (except RC publications) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) explicitly depict sexual or sexually related activity between consenting adults in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult; or b) depict, describe or express revolting or abhorrent phenomena in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult and are unsuitable for a minor to see or read 	Category 2 restricted
3	Publications (except RC publications and Category 2 restricted publications) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) explicitly depict nudity, or describe or impliedly depict sexual or sexually related activity between consenting adults, in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult; or b) describe or express in detail violence or sexual activity between consenting adults in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult; or c) are unsuitable for a minor to see or read 	Category 1 restricted
4	All other publications	Unrestricted

Films

3. Films are to be classified in accordance with the following table:

Item	Description of film	Classification
1	Films that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) depict, express or otherwise deal with matters of sex, drug misuse or addiction, crime, cruelty, violence or revolting or abhorrent phenomena in such a way that they offend against the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults to the extent that they should not be classified; or b) describe or depict in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult, a person who is, or appears to be, a child under 18 (whether the person is engaged in sexual activity or not); or c) promote, incite or instruct in matters of crime or violence 	RC
2	Films (except RC films) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) contain real depictions of actual sexual activity between consenting adults in which there is no violence, sexual violence, sexualised violence, coercion, sexually assaultive language, or fetishes or depictions which purposefully demean anyone involved in that activity for the enjoyment of viewers, in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult; and b) are unsuitable for a minor to see 	X 18+
3	Films (except RC films and X 18+ films) that are unsuitable for a minor to see	R 18+

Item	Description of film	Classification
4	Films (except RC films, X 18+ films and R 18+ films) that depict, express or otherwise deal with sex, violence or coarse language in such a manner as to be unsuitable for viewing by persons under 15	MA 15+
5	Films (except RC films, X 18+ films, R 18+ films and MA 15+ films) that cannot be recommended for viewing by persons who are under 15	M
6	Films (except RC films, X 18+ films, R 18+ films, MA 15+ films and M films) that cannot be recommended for viewing by persons who are under 15 without the guidance of their parents or guardians	PG
7	All other films	G

Computer games

4. Computer games are to be classified in accordance with the following table:

Item	Description of computer game	Classification
1	Computer games that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) depict, express or otherwise deal with matters of sex, drug misuse or addiction, crime, cruelty, violence or revolting or abhorrent phenomena in such a way that they offend against the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults to the extent that they should not be classified; or b) describe or depict in a way that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult, a person who is, or appears to be, a child under 18 (whether the person is engaged in sexual activity or not); or c) promote, incite or instruct in matters of crime or violence 	RC
2	Computer games (except RC computer games) that are unsuitable for viewing or playing by a minor	R 18+
3	Computer games (except RC and R 18+ computer games) that depict, express or otherwise deal with sex, violence or coarse language in such a manner as to be unsuitable for viewing or playing by persons under 15	MA 15+
4	Computer games (except RC, R 18+ and MA 15+ computer games) that cannot be recommended for viewing or playing by persons who are under 15	M
5	Computer games (except RC, R 18+, MA 15+ and M computer games) that cannot be recommended for viewing or playing by persons who are under 15 without the guidance of their parents or guardians	PG
6	All other computer games	G

Appendix B: Photo credits and artwork attribution

The Classification Board would like to give special thanks to all those who supplied images to the Classification Board Annual Report 2020–21:

Page(s)	Attribution
14-24	Penny Clay Photography
35	<i>Spirit Untamed</i> © 2021 Dreamworks Animation LLC. All Rights Reserved.
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39	<i>Martin Eden</i> © 2020 Palace Films. All Rights Reserved.
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Glossary

Term/abbreviation	Explanation
AACG Scheme	Authorised Assessor Scheme for Computer Games
ACA Scheme	Additional Content Assessor Scheme
Advertising Scheme	Advertising of Unclassified Films and Computer Games Scheme
APS	Australian Public Service
ATSA Scheme	Authorised Television Series Assessor Scheme
BSA	<i>Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (Cth)</i>
Call in	The Director of the Classification Board may call in a publication if they have reasonable grounds to believe it is a submittable publication and that it is being published in an Australian state or territory. The Director of the Classification Board may also call in a film or computer game if they have reasonable grounds to believe it is not exempt and that it is being published in an Australian state or territory
Classifiable elements	The six classifiable elements in a film and a computer game are: themes; violence (including sexual violence); sex; coarse language; drug use; and nudity. In publications, 'themes' are referred to as 'adult themes' and the remaining five elements are also applied and assessed
Classification Act	<i>Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 (Cth)</i>
Classification Board	Statutory body established under the Classification Act. The Classification Board classifies computer games, films and certain publications
Classification Board member	A statutory appointee to the Classification Board established under the Classification Act
Classification Branch	The Classification Branch of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications. The Classification Branch provides administrative support to the Classification Board and Classification Review Board
Classification guidelines	See Guidelines
Classification Review Board	Statutory body established under the Classification Act. The Classification Review Board is a part-time statutory body convened, as required, to review decisions made by the Classification Board
Classification Review Board member	Statutory appointee to the Classification Review Board under the Classification Act
Code, the	The National Classification Code

Term/abbreviation	Explanation	
Computer games classifications		
Classification	Advisory/Restricted	Impact Level
G	General (advisory category)	Very mild
PG	Parental Guidance (advisory category)	Mild
M	Mature (advisory category)	Moderate
MA 15+	Mature Accompanied (legally restricted category)	Strong
R 18+	Restricted (legally restricted category)	High
RC	Refused Classification	
Consumer advice	The Classification Board and Classification Review Board determine consumer advice for films, computer games and certain publications. Films classified G, PG, M, MA 15+, R 18+ and X 18+, and computer games classified G, PG, M, MA 15+ and R 18+, must be assigned consumer advice. Consumer advice generally identifies the classifiable elements that have contributed to the classification of the content and indicates the intensity and/or frequency of those elements. The Classification Board and the Classification Review Board may also provide consumer advice to publications classified Unrestricted	
Convenor	Member of the Classification Review Board who is responsible for the management of the Classification Review Board's business	
Deputy Convenor	Member of the Classification Review Board who may exercise some of the Convenor's powers in the Convenor's absence	
Deputy Director	Full-time member of the Classification Board who is the operational manager of that Board and who may exercise some of the Director's powers in the Director's absence	
Determined markings	Classification symbols and descriptions and, as set out in the <i>Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) (Markings and Consumer Advice) Determination 2014</i>	
Director	Full-time member of the Classification Board responsible for the management of the Classification Board	
eSafety Commissioner	The Office of the eSafety Commissioner is committed to empowering all Australians to have safer, more positive experiences online. The Office was established in 2015 with a mandate to co-ordinate and lead the online safety efforts across government, industry and the not-for-profit community	
Exempt film	A film exempt from classification requirements as defined by section 6B of the Classification Act	
Fee waiver	The waiving of classification application fees in specific circumstances, as provided by the Classification Act	

Term/abbreviation	Explanation	
Film classifications		
Classification	Advisory/Restricted	
	Impact Level	
G	General (advisory category)	Very mild
PG	Parental Guidance (advisory category)	Mild
M	Mature (advisory category)	Moderate
MA 15+	Mature Accompanied (legally restricted category)	Strong
R 18+	Restricted (legally restricted category)	High
X 18+	Restricted to 18 years and over (contains consensual sexually explicit activity between adults)	–
RC	Refused Classification	–
FOI Act	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i> (Cth)	
FOI	Freedom of Information	
Guidelines	Under the Classification Act (section 12) the Minister may, with the agreement of each state and territory, determine guidelines to assist the Board in applying the criteria in the Code. There are separate guidelines for the classification of films, computer games, and publications which may be viewed online at www.legislation.gov.au	
Industry assessors	Persons authorised by the Director to make recommendations to the Classification Board on the classification and consumer advice for the ACA Scheme, the ATSA Scheme, the AACG Scheme and the Advertising Scheme	
National Classification Scheme (the Scheme)	A co-operative Commonwealth, state and territory regulatory scheme for classification of films, computer games and certain publications	
National Classification Code (the Code)	A code that sets out how films, computer games and certain publications are to be classified	
Prohibited Exports Regulations	<i>Customs (Prohibited Exports) Regulations 1958</i> (Cth); regulation 3 relates to the exportation of “objectionable goods” (including computer games, computer generated images, films, interactive games and publications)	
Prohibited Imports Regulations	<i>Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956</i> (Cth); regulation 4A relates to the importation of “objectionable goods” (including computer games, computer generated images, films, interactive games and publications)	
Publications classifications		
Unrestricted	Unrestricted	
Category 1 restricted	Not available to persons under 18 years	
Category 2 restricted	Not available to persons under 18 years	
RC	Refused Classification	
Serial classification declaration	A declaration issued by the Classification Board on the classification, and any conditions that apply, to issues of a publication periodical for a specified period	
Submittable publication	Defined under the Classification Act (section 5) to mean an unclassified publication containing depictions or descriptions that is likely to cause the publication to be classified RC, or is unsuitable for a minor to see or read, or is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult to the extent that the publication should not be sold or displayed as an unrestricted publication	

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