



11th March 2011

Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary,

RE: Inquiry into the Australian film and literature classification scheme

Thank you for providing an extension with respect to the abovementioned inquiry. Attached is a copy of the submission made to the inquiry by the Australian Council on Children and the Media (ACCM). I commend that organisation's submission and will refer to some specific aspects of it in accordance with the inquiry's terms of reference.

a) the use of serial classifications for publications;

Support ACCMs comments.

b) the desirability of national standards for the display of restricted publications and films;

Support ACCMs comments.

I specifically endorse the comments made with respect to the legislative arrangement in South Australia. I have fielded various complaints from parents expressing their concerns about children being exposed to so-called "adult" material in retail shops and video hire shops.

c) the enforcement system, including call-in notices, referrals to state and territory law enforcement agencies and follow-up of such referrals;

Support ACCMs comments.

Constituents report that the complaints procedure is something that is not well understood in the general community. There is a view that the

complaints procedure should be better promoted and advertised. Those wishing to lodge a complaint ought be able to do it quickly and easily. Responses to complaints must be provided in a timely manner.

d) the interaction between the National Classification Scheme and customs regulations;

No comment.

e) the application of the National Classification Scheme to works of art and the role of artistic merit in classification decisions;

Support ACCMs comments.

f) the impact of X18+ films, including their role in the sexual abuse of children;

No comment.

g) the classification of films, including explicit sex or scenes of torture and degradation, sexual violence and nudity as R18+;

Support ACCMs comments.

There is a strong demand, especially by parents, to be able to access clear, up-to-date, detailed information about the content of material in films, videos, video games and computer games. They are looking for this information to assist them make decisions about purchases or, to guide their children with respect to consumer choices that they are making.

h) the possibility of including outdoor advertising, such as billboards, in the National Classification Scheme;

Support ACCMs comments.

The matter of outdoor advertising, particularly with respect to large billboards and signage at bus-stops, is a source of ongoing complaint by the general public. Many people hold the view that it is an area of particular concern because it takes place in the public domain. As they say, it is "out there and is in your face and your children's face." There is a strong desire for proper regulation of this area of advertising.

i) the application of the National Classification Scheme to music videos;

Support ACCMs comments.

- j) the effectiveness of the 'ARIA/AMRA Labelling Code of Practice for Recorded Music Product Containing Potentially Offensive Lyrics and/or Themes';**

No comment.

- k) the effectiveness of the National Classification Scheme in preventing the sexualisation of children and the objectification of women in all media, including advertising;**

Support ACCMs comments.

- l) the interaction between the National Classification Scheme and the role of the Australian Communications and Media Authority in supervising broadcast standards for television and Internet content;**

Support ACCMs comments.

- m) the effectiveness of the National Classification Scheme in dealing with new technologies and new media, including mobile phone applications, which have the capacity to deliver content to children, young people and adults;**

Support ACCMs comments.

- n) the Government's reviews of the Refused Classification (RC) category; and**

Support ACCMs comments.

- o) any other matter, with the exception of the introduction of a R18+ classification for computer games which has been the subject of a current consultation by the Attorney-General's Department.**

Support ACCMs comments.

Yours sincerely,

Greg Donnelly MLC