



31 OCT 2008

Celia Barlow MP  
House of Commons

Ref: Mel Crow  
Bygone



Barbara Follett MP  
Department of Culture, Media and Sport



Your Ref:

Wednesday, 29 October 2008

Dear Barbara,

I am writing to you on with reference to the Government consultation on UK video games classification system, with specific interest in the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) rating system in comparison to the Pan European Gaming Information (PEGI) rating system.

Following the publication of the Byron Review earlier this year, I understand that the Government is now consulting on the appropriate video games classification standard to be used in Britain. Although the recommendation of the Byron Review was to continue with an amended version of a hybrid PEGI/BBFC system, I would like to express my support for implementing a single PEGI system of classification.

The PEGI system has numerous advantages over the BBFC system, stemming from the fact that it has been designed by gaming specialists specifically for computer games. Computer gaming is a globalised market, where consumers can purchase games in many different countries. The PEGI system currently operates in 29 different countries, and this consistency can help ensure that standards remain universal.

In addition, the PEGI system has the ability to rate online games, unlike BBFC. It is the case that more and more children are playing computer games across the internet and this needs to be considered seriously when deciding on the appropriate rating system. Indeed, it concerns me that BBFC has rated a number of games more liberally than PEGI. This may lead to a situation where a UK child playing a 12 rated game could be playing against an 18 year old in another country where the game has received a higher classification.

I am aware that there may be limitations of the PEGI system, particularly the issue of consumer recognition and understanding of this system in contrast to the BBFC system. I have been informed that PEGI is currently being altered to ensure that it is appropriate for the British market. Such alterations should go some way in overcoming these issues of consumer recognition.

Any information that you have on the consultation would be greatly appreciated, and I hope that you have found my comments useful. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.



Celia Barlow MP  
House of Commons



Yours sincerely

Celia Barlow  
Labour MP for Hove and Portslade

