



21 November 2008

Dear Sir/Madam

CONSULTATION ON VIDEO GAMES CLASSIFICATION

First of all, apologies for missing the deadline for the above consultation.

We nevertheless very much hope that our response will be considered alongside others given the importance we attach to current discussion of the BBFC's role going forward.

First and foremost, the CEA is very keen to see consistency across the classification of creative content, not least in terms of consumer understanding.

While the CEA has no direct interest in the issues raised with regards the classification of video games, it does in particular wants to put on record its support for the expertise and professionalism shown the BBFC in its role as a classifier of film content. In the CEA's opinion the BBFC's classification system is trusted, authoritative and robust and is well understood by the public and the industry.

BBFC classifications are understood and trusted by the British public because they are independent; made after a proper contextual assessment of harm and suitability in an environment free of commercial pressure; and are based on extensive consultation with the public.

The CEA believes the BBFC offers unrivalled information to consumers through its symbols, clear Consumer Advice and bespoke Extended Consumer Advice, as well as its media literacy work in schools.

In terms of the potential to extend its activities to the classification of video games, quite aside from its independence from industry pressure, the BBFC seems to the CEA well resourced in terms of both expertise and the ability to take on extra work.

It offers a robust initial classification; properly resourced monitoring; full and independent information provision; and an effective complaints mechanism. The BBFC is also best placed in relation to the convergence between film and video games given technology (eg, Blu-ray discs) which enables game and film material to appear on the same retail disc.

As the CEA can attest, the BBFC has a strong track record of working with industry to meet its changing requirements, including in relation to classifying downloads; and absorbing huge increases in workload while simultaneously reducing turnaround time.

I hope this contribution is useful and, as I said at the outset, can be considered alongside others' responses.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Clapp', written in a cursive style.

PHIL CLAPP
Chief Executive