



Eidos Interactive Limited

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Video Games Classification  
Department for Culture, Media and Sport

20<sup>th</sup> November 2008

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Dear Sirs,

**Video Games Classification: a consultation  
Response by Eidos Interactive Ltd**

Eidos Interactive is the creator of some of the world's leading videogame properties and the home of videogaming's leading lady, Lara Croft and the Tomb Raider franchise.

We are a global business with a head office in Wimbledon, London. In the UK we have two development studios, a stake in a third UK development studio and also a distribution business. Eidos is responsible for games such as Tomb Raider, Hitman, Just Cause, Deus Ex, Pony Friends and Championship Manager.

We are a member of ELSPA and we fully support the submission that they are making to this consultation in favour of Option 3. We agree that the UK should now adopt PEGI and PEGI Online as the single age rating system for games.

As games are increasingly available and played online, the UK should take the opportunity to update and future-proof its age rating system. A UK-only rating is out of step with what is happening elsewhere in Europe. PEGI and PEGI Online provide pan-European coverage and represent a safe, successful and strong system for classifying age-related content.

Over recent months PEGI has undergone further significant improvements which clarify the ratings and make it easier for parents and children to understand game content. We believe these improvements add to the protection PEGI offers to children playing online. PEGI is also "future-proof", since it has the flexibility, scalability and efficiency to allow it to cope with enormous increases in online gaming that the industry expects to see in coming years.

PEGI also delivers better understanding of the game-playing experience and the ratings challenges this presents. Finally, from the perspective of my business, PEGI's widespread coverage and acceptance offers greater opportunities for us to publish high quality games across the large European market.

We agree with the detailed arguments contained in the ELSPA submission. However, I wanted to add some further detail on the specific questions you ask as they relate directly to my company:

***Q26: What are the likely implications (including costs) for games producers of having a BBFC classification system that does not automatically translate across to some other European countries?***

It means we have a UK specific rating system, when we need a system which will ensure our products are appropriately rated for every consumer throughout Europe. Some of our games are made specifically for a certain age group and we have several examples of games that have received different ratings from the BBFC and PEGI. We rate our games so that they reach their intended consumer and no one else, we do everything we can to ensure this is not compromised.

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The PEGI system offers consistency throughout Europe without the need to create specific country versions which would be an additional financial burden. The extra admin could mean that games are released later in the UK reducing UK revenues. Being able to produce one version for Europe reduces the publisher risk in stock holding as the stock can be sold where the demand is. Having multiple versions under different (and potentially inconsistent) rating systems raises the risk that players could also unknowingly purchase the non-UK version of a game from an internet supplier creating customer support issues.

***Q41: Do you think the PEGI-only option would be more or less costly to the games industry than both the current system and the hybrid system and if so what evidence do you have of this?***

A large number of our titles have been classified by the BBFC under current regulation. From our internal accounting we can see there is an additional cost borne by us for these titles over a PEGI only game. Therefore, a PEGI only solution would provide a cost saving on these titles. However, the reasons for our support of Option 3 are not about the cost savings. We support putting in place the best rating system available, to ensure that our games only reach their intended consumers and we protect the interests of anyone outside of the intended age range. We would have no problem with PEGI introducing new charges to rate games, our main objective remains to rate these games and educate the consumers and their guardians appropriately.

Yours faithfully,



Anthony Price  
Director  
Eidos Interactive Ltd