

I manage the Metropolitan Police Service's Obscene Publications Unit. We deal with the distribution and publication of very extreme material. We prosecute offences under the Obscene Publications Act 1959 and will do so under legislation in the new Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 (possession of extreme pornographic images).

The vast majority of material is dvd based. As such, we have developed a very good working relationship with the BBFC. This particularly, but not completely, relates to the classification of R18 filmworks. As a result of this partnership the BBFC is fully aware of what material is currently viewed as obscene and which would consequently be unlawful to put in a film for distribution. This partnership has developed over time into one which is trusted and strong.

As a result of our working together it makes sense to us that the BBFC take on the role of classifying video games. Whilst at present our role in video gaming is minimal there is a possibility that this will change over time. Game producers may push the boundaries of obscenity legislation and if this happens the BBFC are best positioned to work with us for advice on classification. The BBFC is a recognised independent organisation easily identified by the general public and very experienced in classifying filmworks. To introduce another organisation in the classification process may cause confusion on the Public's part.

If you need to discuss this further please contact me on the number below.

Kind regards

Andy

[Inspector Andy Shortland](#)