

Video Games Classification: a consultation Response by Rising Star Games

Video Game Publisher: Wii, DS & PSP

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?

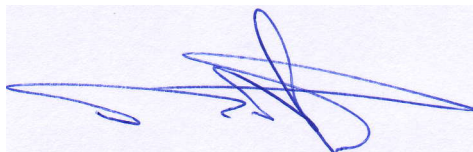
Apart from having a greater cost (for submissions to different agencies/bodies and changes to packaging) having more than one system would dilute the age rating message and importance. A standard recognised rating across Europe would be a stronger, clearer message to consumers.

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?

Having one standard Age rating system would reduce the both time spent on admin work and costs. It makes total sense for us to all use the PEGI system, delivering one strong pan-European message to both retail and consumers.

In our view PEGI is a system that works, there is room for improvement but on the whole it is a proven, effective route for the classification of video games.

Yours sincerely



Martin Defries
Managing Director & C.O.O. Rising Star Games Limited