

Dear Sir/Madam

We are very concerned by the proposed extension of R18+ access restrictions to MA15+ Content.

ACP magazines serves over half of the men's lifestyle audience with sites such as ZOO, FHM and Ralph serving MA15+ to these audiences.

The proposed regulations appear impractical and discriminatory

The impracticality of the proposed measures

There seems no practical way to restrict this type of content to 15-17 year olds. we are not aware of an effective system working anywhere else in the world.

Credit cards don't work. If you can't get a credit card until you turn 18 and most 15 and 16 year olds don't have drivers licences, these cannot be used to verify someone's age on the internet.

This leads to an alternative of MA15+ content being only sold to over 18's. This defeats the purpose of having a classification for MA15+ in the first place.

It is also not clear how this would work for sites that publish consumer generated content like the social networking sites.

The proposed measures seem discriminatory

There's no restricted access system for viewing MA15+ television program on television yet this measure is sought online. It seems unfair to have one set of rules for broadcast television and another for online.

Conclusion

We would be happy to make this submission in person if suitable. We are concerned as these measures seem impractical and discriminatory. We suggest that the proposals are abandoned.

Irrespective of the desire of content service providers to comply with the MA15+ provisions, the impracticality and cost of maintaining a restricted access system may encourage content providers to host overseas for simplicity's sake. Given the amount of Australian content and applications now hosted overseas because of the local cost of hosting and data charges, do we really want to give people even more reasons to move offshore? Not exactly creating the sort of environment that supports a strong local content market.

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