

SUMMARY OF CRC's RECOMMENDATIONS AND GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSES

CRC Recommendation		Response
	Internet and the Future Media Landscape	
1	MDA to undertake an in-depth expert-led study to design and eventually implement a robust and consistent regulatory framework that could be applied on any new media forms, and which is clear and transparent to both the industry and consumers.	Agree. MDA will be conducting a Media Convergence Study to develop a forward-looking licensing and content regulatory framework. The study will, among other things, look at the widening reach as well as the impact of new digital media services on current licensing and content framework.
2	Classification systems and content standards governing the different media platforms to be harmonised wherever possible so that consumers are better able to understand and utilise the ratings to make informed decisions.	Agree.
3	Existing content codes governing broadcast services to be extended to mobile-only content services. Content that is freely accessible to all mobile service subscribers only via mobile devices and not via the Internet should be subject to FTA TV content standards.	Agree. MDA is developing a suitable content code and will consult the industry and the community on this.
4	Those offered on a subscription/on-demand basis to mobile service subscribers only via mobile devices and not via the Internet should be subject to subscription TV/VOD standards.	Agree. MDA is developing a suitable content code and will consult the industry and the community on this.
5	The symbolic 100-website ban imposed by the government should be replaced with a transparent, server-level filtering service, combined with a simple and well-highlighted choice to opt-in at the point of subscribing to or renewing the Internet service.	Disagree that the 100-website ban should be replaced by a server-level filtering service. However, we agree that a filtering service will be useful and we will direct the ISPs to offer optional Internet filters to subscribers.
6	Government should retain power to ban websites on the grounds of national security. However, some forms of checks should be put in place to ensure transparency and accountability.	Agree.
7	Public education efforts on media literacy and cyber wellness should be enhanced to ensure that the public is equipped with updated information and knowledge to deal with the emergence of new media forms and the attendant evolution of media regulations. This will enable parents to take frontline responsibility for their children's explorations in cyberspace and ensure that children can deal with any undesirable content they may	Agree.

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	encounter.	
	Public Education	
8	A sustained cyber wellness programme for all primary and secondary students, which is consistent across all schools, should be incorporated into the curriculum by the Ministry of Education (MOE). Such a programme should be made compulsory for all schools.	Agree. See paragraph 23 ¹ .
9	Schools should continue to engage the services of community groups for additional cyber wellness initiatives.	Agree. See paragraph 23.
10	A single, permanent and properly resourced body should be tasked to oversee and coordinate all media literacy and cyber wellness programmes across ministries.	Agree. This is already being done by the Inter-Ministry Cyber Wellness Steering Committee (ICSC), co-chaired by MICA and MOE, which works closely with MDA's Internet and Media Advisory Committee (INMAC) and supports the efforts of other ministries and agencies. See paragraph 22.
	Parental Empowerment	
11	The aggregating body of public education efforts should work with the National Family Council (NFC) to strategise, coordinate and implement effective outreach programmes for parents to increase their level of awareness, understanding and skills in mitigating potential risks of media on their children.	Agree. We will explore working with NFC.
12	There should be greater promotion of tools such as Internet filters, parental lock mechanisms, the media classification systems and so on through public education to facilitate parents in guiding their children's media consumption.	Agree.
13	If R21 content is introduced on subscription channels and on Video-on-Demand (VOD), operators should set the parental locks on by default.	Agree.
14	MDA to simplify the nomenclature of ratings across all classification systems to facilitate intuitive understanding and promote greater usage of the classification systems.	Agree.
15	For free-to-air (FTA) and pay TV programmes, classification advisory logo should be displayed on screen for the entire duration of the programmes.	Agree that the advisory logo can be displayed more frequently throughout the programme, although not necessarily on screen for the entire programme. MDA will consult the industry and advisory committees on this.

¹ Paragraph numbers refer to corresponding paragraphs in the Government's response to the CRC recommendations.

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16	Classification advisories should be accompanied by consumer advice in press/publication/website programme listings, as well as during the introduction of the programme.	Agree. For TV broadcasts, the PG logo is already carried during the introduction of a PG-rated programme, as well as after each commercial break. Ratings are also reflected in TV programme listings in magazines and newspapers. MDA will explore how ratings and advisories can be reflected on website programme listings.
Community Engagement		
17	Progressively move towards a tripartite engagement involving regulator, community and industry.	Agree.
18	More resources should be devoted to facilitate this so as to ensure deeper engagement with the community and the industry.	Agree.
19	A youth panel should be set up to reach out to the younger generation by communicating and garnering their views on content and media issues.	Agree that MDA should reach out to all segments of the community, including the youths. MDA will look into ways to further engage the youths.
20	Emphasise public consultation as an essential process in policy and regulatory reviews.	Agree. See paragraphs 24, 30 and 31.
21	Increase the transparency of regulatory processes to the community by increasing the information made available to the public. This could include developing a database of public complaint cases and the publication of survey findings, policy reviews and content guidelines.	Agree. Content regulatory processes and guidelines are published on the MDA website. MDA has also shared public survey findings during talks given to the public and industry and will do the same on the MDA website. MDA will also provide more information on its regulatory work, including classification, content regulatory matters and consultations with the advisory committees.
22	Evaluation and measurement mechanisms should be developed to track the success of community engagement efforts.	Agree.
23	Improve the transparency of the membership selection process of the various citizen committees advising MDA on content issues. MICA to take the lead in drawing up a set of principles, objectives and criteria to guide the nomination and appointment process for	Agree. See paragraph 29.

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	members of these committees.	
24	Broaden public participation in the regulatory process by allowing for public nomination for a proportion of the advisory committee positions. MDA to have a correspondingly reduced role in the direct selection of citizen committee members so as to enhance the committees' independence and credibility. MDA should publicise the opportunity to serve on committees through advertisements and on government websites, with sufficient information on the commitment and qualifications required.	Advisory committee members are appointed by MICA, and selected to represent a cross section of society. Committee members are expected to act in the best interests of the community, and their decisions have to stand up to public scrutiny. Interested individuals who are keen to volunteer can submit their details for consideration.
25	Increase industry representation on the citizen committees for better sharing of insights and concerns.	The citizen committees must be broad-based and representative of the community. Some advisory committee members do have industry knowledge and experience. MDA also consults the industry on a regular basis.
26	To eventually distance MDA from the selection of appeal committee members since the latter is set up to consider appeals against MDA's decisions.	Appointments are made by MICA.
27	The Broadcast, Publications and Arts Appeal Committee to be given the final decision-making power to align the powers of this committee with that of the Films Appeal Committee.	Agree that this can be done for Arts appeals. For Broadcast and Publications appeals, we will need to further study the issue as legislative amendments are required.
Industry Engagement		
28	Regular formal consultations with the industry should be introduced to provide a framework/channel for industry to propose changes to policies and guidelines.	Agree. See paragraphs 30 and 31.
29	Promote greater Industry-Community dialogue and interactions.	Agree.
30	Increase representation of industry practitioners on content advisory committees.	The citizen committees must be broad-based and representative of the community. Some advisory committee members do have industry knowledge and experience. MDA also consults the industry on a regular basis.
31	Industry practitioners should be allowed to make formal	Agree that advisory

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	representations to the advisory committees to facilitate Industry-Community dialogue.	committees should seek inputs from relevant stakeholders, including industry practitioners.
32	An inclusive term licensing scheme for arts entertainment to be introduced expeditiously.	Agree. A 1-year term licence will be issued to invited arts groups. See paragraph 43.
33	An online self-declaration system for niche arts performances to be introduced so that such performances do not have to go through the pre-vetting process.	Some niche genres of arts performances are already exempted from licensing. With the implementation of the Term Licensing Scheme, arts groups on the scheme would not need to have their scripts pre-vetted.
34	Co-regulation of video content up to a PG13 rating to be introduced.	Agree. See paragraph 33.
35	Industry should support the regulatory framework and be encouraged to assist in ensuring greater compliance by all parties.	Agree.
36	Industry to be encouraged to participate in the setting up and maintenance of a community-wide focused online media portal.	Agree.
37	For mediums that are not mandated to provide consumer advice such as audio recordings, industry players should be encouraged to take on their social responsibility by voluntarily providing consumer advice on explicit and mature content.	Agree. MDA will consult and work with the local music distributors and importers on this.
Classification Policies and Standards		
<i>Principles of Classification Framework</i>		
38	A simple, consistent and, where possible, harmonised framework for classification to be adopted to better guide parents in making media choice for their families.	Agree. See paragraphs 34 and 35.
39	The Film Classification System should be used as a reference standard for other media.	Agree. See paragraphs 34 and 35.
40	The labellings on ratings for the Film Classification System should be reviewed to make it more intuitively understood by public.	Agree.
<i>Film and Video Classification System</i>		
41	A PG13 rating should be introduced to provide a stronger signal to parents on the nature of the content and to facilitate appropriate rating of films with some mature content.	Agree. See paragraph 36.
42	Industry co-regulation should be introduced for videos meant for distribution, up to a PG13 rating.	Agree. See paragraph 33.
<i>R21 Rating</i>		
43	The R21 rating should be retained as the highest rating.	Agree. See paragraph 37.

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44	A calibrated approach should be adopted towards allowing R21 content on various platforms.	Agree. See paragraphs 38 to 39.
45	R21 content should be allowed at HDB estate cinemas with various mitigating measures such as time-belting and restrictions on advertising.	Disagree with screening of R21 films at HDB estate cinemas. See paragraph 40.
46	R21 content should be allowed on subscription television and VOD with a strong caveat that a simple-to-use parental lock mechanism is available.	Agree with R21 content on VOD, provided appropriate parental controls are in place. See paragraph 38.
47	R21 videos should be allowed only when the industry is able to reassure stakeholders of its ability to enforce the restriction of sale to minors.	Disagree that sale of R21 videos should be allowed. See paragraph 39.
48	An adequate, transparent and enforceable penalty system should be put in place.	Agree.
49	A tripartite relationship between the public, industry and the regulator should be strongly encouraged so that better mechanisms can be put in place to guide and protect the young.	Agree.
	<i>Film Festivals</i>	
50	Current approach of giving greater leeway for films screened at film festivals to encourage film appreciation and audience development for niche performances should be continued; the films should nevertheless meet the fundamental guidelines of not undermining public order or nation's security, denigrate race or religion or erode moral values with extreme content.	Agree. This is the current approach taken by MDA.
	<i>Mature Content on FTA TV</i>	
51	PG films should be screened after 10pm. Content rated under the new PG13 rating to be screened on FTA TV after 11 pm, with consumer advice. Standards for TV PG-rated programmes should be aligned with that of PG-rated films.	Agree.
52	Further liberalisation of content on FTA TV to be guided by the consultative committees for TV programmes following the introduction of PG13, which would make PG-rated films more innocuous than at present.	Agree that further liberalisation of content on FTA TV should be guided by advisory committees.
	<i>Video Games Classification System</i>	
53	The current Video Games Classification System which has ratings up to M18 to be retained; but continue to monitor need for a R21 rating.	Agree. The current video games classification system focuses on games with higher ratings (Age Advisory 16+ and Mature 18). MDA will monitor the need to refine the rating system. The highest video games rating of M18 is consistent with other video games rating systems in the world.

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54	A participative forum, with user-driven information system which also provides relevant information to parents and users, should be encouraged; for example, a local version of the Internet Movie Database with information for parents and a local online forum which allows users to edit content.	Agree. MDA currently provides information on the ratings of video games on its video games database. It also provides tips for parents on its website. A user-contributed website will be useful for members of the public and the industry to share information on video games. MDA is currently exploring setting up an online portal whereby professionals from the gaming industry can contribute classification information for online games.
55	The use of local ratings for online games developed locally should be encouraged for greater social responsibility and effective self regulation.	Agree. MDA is in favour of encouraging local developers of online games to make use of the BFC's games classification ratings to inform consumers about the suitability of games content. MDA is prepared to train and work with local online game developers to foster greater social responsibility and effective self-regulation.
56	MDA to work with industry to provide more information on video games at point of sales.	Agree. As there are no lower ratings for video games classified in Singapore, parents can refer to ratings from ESRB ² and PEGI ³ found on the packaging of retailed video games. Parents can refer to these ratings as they provide useful information on the content of various games. MDA will work with the industry to provide more information in retail outlets for parents who need help in choosing age-appropriate videos and video games.
	<i>Publications</i>	
57	Existing system of co-regulation with the industry for publications should be continued; there is no need for a detailed classification system.	Agree.

² ESRB is the United States and Canadian computer and video games ratings system. Ratings include eC (Early Childhood), E (Everyone), E10+ (Everyone 10+), T (Teen), M (Mature 17+) and AO (Adults Only). All the ratings are advisory.

³ PEGI is the European computer and video games ratings system. PEGI is a voluntary ratings system and comprises five age categories of 3, 7, 12, 16 and 18, and various content descriptor keywords, e.g., violence, profanity, sex, drugs.

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58	Position on adult publications such as <i>Playboy</i> should be guided by general social norms. CRC 2010 Survey reflects that a majority continue to oppose the sales of such magazines.	Agree.
59	Same content guidelines should be applied to both foreign and local magazines, with consistent requirements of shrink wrapping and prominent display of advisories for racier adult lifestyle magazines.	Local publications, such as magazines, have generally been held to higher content standards as compared to foreign publications. The Government will retain this practice. See paragraph 40.
60	A clear set of guidelines for self regulation of magazine covers should be developed and published.	Agree. There is already a clear set of guidelines for magazines, which includes guidelines for covers. The guidelines are reviewed as part of MDA's regular review of content guidelines.
<i>Audio Materials</i>		
61	Status quo of self-regulation and voluntary consumer advice for sensitive content for audio materials to be maintained. Online portals should be encouraged to enable user-generated consumer advice.	Agree. MDA will consult and work with local music distributors and importers on this.
<i>Content Standards</i>		
62	Content standards to continue to be guided by MDA's consultative committees as judgment on standards requires experience and knowledge.	Agree.
63	A flexible and contextual approach for homosexual content should be adopted.	Agree. The current practice is already sufficiently flexible. Industry and artists must also be prepared to be more explicit in advising consumers on homosexual content.
64	More emphasis should be placed on context and impact of usage when assessing coarse language in media content and not to censor such content so long as intent is not to denigrate any race or religion.	Agree. This is the current practice. MDA will continue to treat offensive or denigrating language with greater sensitivity.
65	Independent research should be undertaken to establish a firm basis for the full liberalisation of dialect content policies. In the interim, a calibrated approach to be adopted. This could involve allowing for an expansion of the number of subscription and VOD channels with dialect content, and taking a more accommodating approach in approving locally-made films that use dialect in a contextually justifiable way.	Disagree. There is already sufficient leeway given to locally-made and foreign films to use dialect in a contextual way. Dialect movies are also available on VOD and in video stores. See paragraphs 41 and 42.

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66	Where content is banned for reasons of public interest, the competent authority should be named for clearer accountability to help build a collaborative tripartite partnership for classification with regulator, industry and community.	MICA and MDA will consult and take into consideration the input of the relevant agencies, and make a decision on these matters that come under our legislative purview.
Regulating Arts Entertainment		
67	A term licensing scheme that will be extended to arts groups based on agreed criteria should be implemented. The criteria would be decided by the regulator in consultation with the consultative panels and arts groups. The scheme should include an effective and transparent compliance system.	Agree that a Term Licensing Scheme should be implemented. A 1-year term licence will be issued to invited arts groups. See paragraph 43.
68	The information (including rating and consumer advice) provided to consumers to help them make informed choices should be enhanced. This could be done by engaging advisory committee members and the public to provide their inputs on the sort of content they would find useful in the Arts database.	Agree. To enhance a better understanding of regulatory decisions, MDA has since February this year started to display on its website ratings and consumer advice for all plays and musicals that it licenses. Going forward, MDA will also publish the reasons for its ratings and consumer advice, and will also work with the Arts Consultative Panel to publish its views on arts performances and content to guide the public.
69	The categories of arts entertainment that can be exempted from licensing to be reviewed and expanded. Other means of co-regulation for performances targeted at a niche audiences to be explored such as through an online declaration system for content.	Agree. MDA regularly reviews the genres of arts entertainment to see which can be exempted. An online self-declaration system for niche art performances is however not necessary. The Term Licensing Scheme would suffice.
70	The Broadcast, Publications and Arts Appeal Committee (BPAAC) should be empowered with final-decision making power, as in the case of the Films Appeal Committee.	Agree that this can be done for Arts appeals. For Broadcast and Publications appeals, we will need to further study the issue as legislative amendments are required.
71	Regulator should further enhance its domain expertise as an arts regulator.	Agree. In regulating arts content, MDA consults the National Arts Council for professional assessment of

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		arts entertainment. It also consults the Arts Consultative Panel which has members who are knowledgeable about the arts. MDA arts officers also attend plays and arts events regularly to enhance their understanding of the arts. However, in assessing arts content, MDA must also consider societal values and sensitivities.
72	Regulator should engage in more active dialogue with the arts groups and make public the basis of their decisions, as the public is ultimately the judge of what constitutes sound decisions.	MDA, as the regulator engages in dialogues with all stakeholders, including the arts groups and the citizens committees.
	Encouraging Compliance	
73	An effective and holistic regulatory system needs to be supported by measures to encourage compliance. This should be supported by educational outreach programmes.	Agree. Greater co-regulation needs to be accompanied by an effective penalty framework, which can achieve a sufficient deterrent effect, especially for persistent breaches.
74	The range of penalties should be calibrated to include deterrent penalties for persistent breaches.	
75	The penalty system for each industry segment should be transparent to both industry and the public.	Agree.
76	MDA should review the manner in which enforcement activities are undertaken to improve their effectiveness, and seek ways to enhance community oversight.	Agree.
77	Greater resourcing of enforcement efforts is required to facilitate the introduction of policy change towards greater co-regulation.	Agree.
78	Feedback channels should be easily accessible and prominently publicised.	Agree.
	Media Advisory Council (MAC)	
79	MICA to consider the need for a body such as the Media Advisory Council (MAC) to undertake the following efforts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the focal point for community participation by subsuming the committees under the MAC, taking on the responsibility of advising the MDA on content regulations and having oversight of the list of Government-blocked websites. • Aggregate the existing public education efforts and centralised Government outreach programmes; acting as a single interface between Government and private organisations. • Undertake research to assist the MDA's media content policy formulation. 	We note that the CRC has no consensus on the scope of the MAC and it says this requires further study.

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	Future CRCs	
80	Future CRCs should be renamed to reflect the diverse nature of issues involved in media regulations.	Agree.

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Number of Films and Arts Events Disallowed from 2007 to 2009

Only a very small number of films and arts events have been disallowed over the last three years as they had gone beyond the classification guidelines.

Films

- Out of 2,351 films classified over the past 3 years, only 9 films or **0.38%** were disallowed by the Board of Film Censors (BFC).
- 25 films were edited for content at the BFC's request.
- The table below does not include films edited by distributors to obtain a lower rating, and videos.

Year	Total	Without Edits	With Edits	NAR	With Edits (%)	NAR (%)
2007	742	733	8	1	1.08%	0.13%
2008	835	825	6	4	0.72%	0.48%
2009	774	759	11	4	1.42%	0.52%
Total	2351	2317	25	9	1.06%	0.38%

Arts Events

- Out of a total number of 2,724 events licensed by the MDA from 2007 – 2009, only 1 event in 2007 was disallowed, making up only **0.04%** of the total.
- No event was disallowed in 2008 and 2009.

Year	No. of Licences issued	No. of Licences rejected due to Content	Event Title	% of total	Licensed with conditions	Event Title	% of total
2007	911	1	<i>Kissing</i>	0.11%	1	¹ Tall Tales & Short Stories	0.11 %
2008	916	0		0.0%			
2009	897	0		0.0%			0.0 %
	2724	1		0.04%	1		0.04 %

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