



Speech by

**Hon. Jarrod Bleijie**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

Hansard Thursday, 14 February 2013

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## **CLASSIFICATION OF COMPUTER GAMES AND IMAGES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Second Reading**



**Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.15 am): I move—  
That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the Classification of Computer Games and Images and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I note that the committee tabled its report on the bill on 4 February 2013 and I table a government response to that committee report.

*Tabled paper:* Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 20—Classification of Computer Games and Images and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, government response [\[2089\]](#).

The committee made four recommendations. The committee's first recommendation, that the Classification of Computer Games and Images and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 be passed, is quite welcome. Recommendation 2 is that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, after liaising with relevant ministers, update the Legislative Assembly on the status of the government's consideration of strategies for determining the effect of violent computer games on youth violence and continue to monitor the effects of violent computer games post the introduction of the R18+ classification and report to the Legislative Assembly in 24 months on its findings.

On 27 August 2010, the former government tabled the Queensland government's response to the final report on the Law, Safety and Justice Committee's inquiry into alcohol related violence. Recommendation 2 of that report was that the government consider strategies for determining the effect of violent video games on youth violence, including literature reviews, case studies and investigation. The response of the former government stated that the then department of communities will utilise and build upon work undertaken at the Commonwealth level in the development of strategies responding to youth violent offending. This will include analysis of existing literature and case studies on the effect of violent video games on youth violence.

In that same year, at the request of the ministers of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General, the Commonwealth Attorney-General's department prepared a comprehensive literature review on the impact of playing violent video games on aggression. The purpose of the review was to assist the ministers in considering whether the national classification scheme should be amended to include the R18+ classification for computer games. The review concluded that research into the effects of violent video games on aggression is contested and inconclusive. The government is of the view that the 2010 Commonwealth literature review fulfils the recommendation for analysis of existing literature on the effects of violent video games.

In relation to the recommendation for future monitoring, the Queensland government does not support that recommendation. Research solely on the effects of violent computer games would be problematic as this is the only one possible causal factor leading to youth violence. It would be extremely difficult to develop a rigorous research methodology that would allow research to isolate the effect of one

possible causal factor from the many other causal factors that may impact on youth violence, for example, child neglect and abuse, family violence, alcohol and drug misuse.

Recommendation 3 is that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice consider what information relating to the ongoing operation of the arrangement entered into by the chief executive are intended to be released by the government under the open data initiative, which was announced in 2012. I can advise that the following information will appear on the Queensland government e-tender website upon announcement of the successful tender: one, tender documents relating to the invitation to offer for recording and transcription services; two, the number of offers sought by government; three, the evaluation criteria and weighting set by the government; four, an overview of the contract entered into with the successful tenderer, the form of the contract with the successful tender, the deliverables that are expected of the successful tenderer under the contract, the contract milestones and how the contract performance is proposed to be managed by the government

Recommendation 4 is that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice consider a suitable mechanism for controlling the price of providing transcripts be implemented as part of the outsourcing arrangements. The outsourcing arrangements are not yet settled. The government will give consideration to including a suitable mechanism for controlling the price of transcripts. I can state, however, that it is not intended to control the price of transcripts produced by a private provider by regulation.

I would like to foreshadow that I intend to propose a number of amendments to the bill, all relating to the Recording of Evidence Act 1962, during the consideration in detail of the bill. These amendments have been, if not will be, circulated in my name. The amendments will address concerns raised by the Bar Association of Queensland in its submission to the committee. The purpose of the bill's amendments to the Recording of Evidence Act is to enable the outsourcing of the State Reporting Bureau's functions of recording and transcribing legal proceedings in Queensland. Arbitration, inquiries and examinations are not recorded or transcribed by the State Reporting Bureau and are not intended to be the subject of the outsourcing arrangements. The amendments will make special provision for the recording and transcribing of inquiry and examination proceedings by way of permitting inquiries and examiners to opt to make their own arrangements rather than require them to make contract with the provider with whom the state will contract for the work in the courts and tribunals. This will reflect current arrangements and will ensure no disruption to inquiries and examinations on foot. It does not preclude arrangements being made for the state contracted provider to undertake work in those types of proceedings should that be appropriate and prove convenient. This will ensure that current arrangements for inquiries and examinations can continue without disruption and with maximum convenience whilst maintaining that these proceedings are subject to the Recording of Evidence Act.

The amendments will also remove the arbitration proceedings from the ambit of the Recording of Evidence Act. This is being done to reflect what is effectively the current practice—that is, that parties make private arrangements for recording and transcribing—and to overcome the issues outlined by the president of the Bar Association of Queensland in his submission to the committee. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of others who have made submissions on this bill to the committee.

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to deal with one final matter arising from the introduction of the R18+ category for computer games. The new regime has resulted in the separation of the previous Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games 2008 into two separate guidelines: the Guidelines for the Classification of Computer Games 2012, which I tabled on 31 October 2012, and the new Guidelines for the Classification of Films 2012, which were gazetted by the Commonwealth government on 19 December 2012. In accordance with the Intergovernmental Agreement on Censorship, I will now table the Guidelines for the Classification of Films 2012.

*Tabled paper:* Guidelines for the Classification of Films 2012 [\[2090\]](#).

I look forward to the debate that will commence and I look forward to the consideration from the many gamers we have in the parliament. Particularly I am looking forward to the member for Brisbane Central's contribution because I know that he is a keen gamer in the scheme of things.