



3 April 2019

The Convenor

Classification Review Board

By email: crb@classification.gov.au;

Dear Convenor,

Subject: Review of the film *Hellboy* (R18+) 2019

ACCM notes that the CRB is to conduct a review of the classification assigned to the 2019 film *Hellboy*. This film was classified R18+ by the Classification Board on 29/3/19, with the consumer advice “high impact violence, blood and gore”

ACCM assumes that the applicant for review is seeking to have the film reclassified MA15+.

ACCM requests that the CRB accept its submission below as from an interested party.

ACCM is an interested party by virtue of its long and active involvement in classification issues as they relate to children. ACCM’s views are well informed by virtue of its 17 years of providing reviews related to the age–appropriateness of current films, and through its ongoing study of the research relating to the impact of the content of films on children.

ACCM has been unable to see the film as the release date in Australia is April 11, but wishes the CRB to take the following points into account in making its decision.

1. ACCM has read the Classification Board report on the movie and we believe that the scenes and themes described in the Board report would create an impact greater than strong, and have significant potential to cause harm to persons under the age of 18 years.
2. ACCM has viewed the trailers for the movie, and notes the frequent, relished and glamorised high impact violence. The impact of this violence is not reduced by the sometimes comic tone of the film.
3. ACCM notes well established research findings that exposure to glamorised violence in which the hero is justified in using violence, wins by its use, and is rewarded and applauded, and in addition is in a comic context, increases the risk that viewers will choose to use aggression to solve conflict. Further if the violence has a high impact, this increases the risks of desensitisation to the use of violence (See refs)
This film therefore has the potential to cause harm to minors. .
4. ACCM notes that the Classification Act requires that:

1. Classification decisions are to give effect, as far as possible, to the following principles:...

(b) minors should be protected from material likely to harm or disturb them;

The Code also requires that “ films (except RC and X18+ films) that are unsuitable for a minor to see must be classified R18+.

5. For this film to be classified MA15+ , the CRB would need to be satisfied that a) the content has an impact which is no higher than strong, **AND** that b) the content will not harm minors.

Yours sincerely



Barbara Biggins OAM CF
Hon CEO

References

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