

# Censorship Information for Libraries No. 17 January 2009



Welcome to the library newsletter from the Office of Film and Literature Classification. Feel free to contact us if you have any queries or suggestions for future content (our contact details are on page 2). You can also forward this newsletter to others who may be interested in its content.

## Libraries Newsletter

### New restricted publication:

*Ecodefense: A Field Guide To Monkeywrenching Third Edition*

By Various Authors

Publishers: Abzug Press

ISBN: 0-9637751-0-3

*Ecodefense: A Field Guide To Monkeywrenching Third Edition* was classified as R18 in December 2008. Libraries holding this book are required to apply to the Film and Video Labelling Body for an official classification label to attach to the book's cover. No additional display conditions have been set. However, it is advisable for libraries to store restricted publications on closed shelves, as staff must ensure that no patrons under the age of restriction have access to them.

### Labelling Requirements and Exemptions

Confusion about the labelling requirements for some DVDs, videos and electronic games arises due to the combined effect of sections 6 and 8 of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993. Under section 6, all videos and DVDs supplied or exhibited to the public must be labelled but under section 8 there are exceptions to this requirement. Videos and DVDs that fulfil criteria in section 8(1) (including 8(1)(q) videogames) are exempt from labelling requirements so long as there is nothing in the video, game or DVD that might be classified as restricted or objectionable. The law places the onus for the decision about whether a video, DVD or game is exempt on the person or company supplying it to the public. An exemption cannot be granted by the Classification Office or by any other organisation.

### Common Section 8 Exemptions:

#### *Documentaries*

Subsection (1)(g) lists "any film of news and current affairs, any documentary, and any historical account containing a unity of subject-matter" as being exempt from labelling requirements. Nevertheless, the film must not contain levels of sex, horror, crime, cruelty, violence or offensive language that would require it to be given a restricted classification.

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## Video and computer games

Although subsection (q) states that video games are exempt, many games contain material that is likely to be restricted. For this reason, all games classified MA15+ in Australia, or any other game likely to be restricted, must be submitted for classification in New Zealand and obtain a New Zealand label. If your library holds games with Australian MA15+ labels and no official New Zealand label then you should withdraw them from your shelves until your supplier has submitted them to the Film and Video Labelling Body for a New Zealand classification and label. Alternatively you could submit them yourself by contacting the Film and Video Labelling Body on 09 3613882 or [www.fvlb.org.nz](http://www.fvlb.org.nz).

## Sporting films

Although it appears under subsection (1)(h) that sporting films are exempt from labelling, if a film deals with matters such as crime, cruelty or violence in a way that is likely to be harmful to the public good, it must be submitted for classification.

## Educational films

In order for educational films to be exempt under subsection (1)(l), they must be directly related to the curriculum of pre-school, primary, secondary or tertiary educational institutions.

For further information on exemptions contact the Information Unit at the Classification Office.

## Summary

Your library may have DVDs, videos and videogames that do not have New Zealand classification labels. It is possible that the distributors have determined that such labels were unnecessary due to the section 8 provisions described above. If you are unsure, you should in the first instance contact your supplier who can obtain the correct labels if required, or your library could submit the publication to the Film and Video Labelling Body itself.

## Contact Details

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Contact Details