



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of the **Premier and Cabinet**
Office of the **Director General**

Our Ref: 24-55009
Enquiries: Courtney Barron

Senator Guy Barnett
Chair
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Barnett

Inquiry into the Australian Film and Literature Classification Scheme

Thank you for your email dated 29 November 2010 regarding the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs Inquiry into the Australian Film and Literature Classification Scheme.

Western Australian Government agencies are supportive of the principles of the current National Classification Code and are of the view that the current National Cooperative Classification Scheme has operated successfully since 1995.

It is important that this Scheme continues to reflect and implement the Constitutional division of powers, roles and responsibilities between the Commonwealth and the States. This is not an area of social governance which requires, or would benefit from, the centralisation of legislative and regulatory control. The various interests and views which surround censorship issues, are much more appropriately and adequately taken into account and addressed through federal, cooperative arrangements.

A particular facet of the Scheme which would merit consideration by the Inquiry is the process by which the artistic merit of works is assessed. In the interests of supporting freedom of artistic practice, consideration should be given the introduction of a requirement that any assessment of literary or artistic merit is conducted taking into account the views of highly regarded arts professionals specialist in the medium that is subject to the assessment.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely

Peter Conran
DIRECTOR GENERAL

28 FEB 2011