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A RECORD NUMBER OF EVERYDAY AUSTRALIANS HAVE TOLD THE GOVERNMENT THEY WANT AN R18+ GAMING CLASSIFICATION...

SO...HOW MUCH MORE CONSULTATION WILL IT TAKE?

NEXT STEP -- GAME / PALGN PETITION TO BE TABLED IN THE AUSTRALIAN SENATE

Despite a record number of Australians signing a petition at GAME stores calling on the Federal Government to create an R18+ gaming classification, the country's censorship ministers still feel the issue needs "more consideration".

In what is a history making petition, in just eight weeks, over 89,000 Australians signed a petition in GAME stores across the country in support of a change in PC and video game ratings. The in-store R18+ PC and Video Game Petition, is set to beat any other "wet signature" petition in the shortest period of time, eclipsing the November 05 Work Choices online petition count of just over 85,000.

Architect of the recent record-breaking petition, director of the games website PAL Gaming Network (PALGN), Roland Kulen and Rob Lukic, GAME Managing Director, both agree that the country's Attorneys-General have let down Australian families by failing to make a decision on gaming censorship at the recent SCAG meeting in Melbourne.

"Censorship ministers have not yet made a decision on whether or not an R 18+ classification for computer games should be introduced and have requested further analysis of community and expert views," Home Affairs Minister Brendan O'Connor said recently.

Rob Lukic said this week, "Over 89 000 people walked into GAME stores in a two month period and physically signed the petition calling on the Government to create an R18+ gaming rating. Our petitioners are mums, dads, grandparents, young adults, new gamers, core gamers - everyone."

So what's next for GAME's quest to establish an R18+ classification?

GAME's auditors, BDO, will confirm the official petition count and then GAME will table the petitions in the Australian Senate.

Roland Kulen says that, "tabling the petitions in the Senate is a key step to showing the Government that everyday Australians really want an R18+ gaming classification. To put the GAME / PALGN petition in perspective... the "Work Choices" online petition count was a key issue, among others, that brought down the Howard Government, Rob and I feel our petition count represents the 'voice of Australian society' on the R18+ game classification issue."

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"By tabling our petitions in the Australian Senate our voice gets formally heard; and we definitively hope the speed of the government's so-called further consultation process is dramatically increased", continued Kulen and Lukic.

"Some games are played by everyone, but some are really only meant for those over 18. And right now because there is no R18+ classification in Australia, some content that should be rated 18+ is currently rated MA15+," explained Rob Lukic, GAME Managing Director. "And that's what the GAME petition was all about".

"Australia currently does not have an adult video game classification. We are the only country in the western world without one. Games that are only suitable for adults are either pushed into the MA15+ category or simply banned altogether," said Lukic.

GAME and PALGN believe that an R18+ classification will allow adults the freedom of choice to play games with mature content, and more importantly, help to ensure that these games are not rated MA15+ under any circumstances.

Kulen and Lukic have presented petitions personally to the State Attorneys-General in QLD, WA and ACT and plan to make personal presentations to the Victorian and NSW State AG's in the coming weeks.

The Victorian AG has written to Kulen saying he is still considering the issue via public consultation and the NSW AG has written to Kulen saying he supports a national approach to classification based on public consultation.

Links: www.game.com.au

www.Everyoneplays.org.au

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Roland Kulen is a director of the games website PAL Gaming Network - PALGN. PALGN writes news, reviews and articles on PC and video games. Kulen is the architect of the GAME / EveryonePlays R18+ PC and Video initiative that includes the support of Robert Lukic, Managing Director, GAME, 120 GAME stores across Australia, operation and marketing teams, a dedicated website (www.everyoneplays.org.au), social media, in-store communications materials and offline / online PR.