

Video violence under attack

ABOUT 200 people in the Hastings have already backed a nationwide campaign calling for change in the computer game classification system.

A petition – available in Port Macquarie at video and PC games retailer, GAME, and online – aims to keep the pressure on governments for a game classification of R18+.

Nationwide more than 3000 signatures were received in the first 48 hours of having the petition in GAME's 120 stores.

GAME has joined forces with gaming news website, Pal Gaming Network, to lobby for change.

The highest classification level for computer games stands at MA15+.

GAME managing director Rob Lukic is calling on governments to support parents in understanding which games were suitable for adults over 18 and which games weren't.

Supporters say an introduction of the



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R18+ classification would allow adults the freedom of choice to play games with mature content and protect children from mature-themed games.

Paul Hamerlok from Wauchope said a new classification was needed.

"I think adults should be allowed to make decisions on what they buy, rather than the government controlling it," Mr Hamerlok said.

"There's a market for those kind of games."

The gaming industry and gamers have created a website to harness the support for the R18+ game classification:

www.everyoneplays.org.au

Pal Gaming Network director Roland Kulen said the more signatures on the petition, the better.

"The R18+ classification means mums and dads would have a better understanding of what type of game they should buy for their kids," Mr Kulen said.

At the moment, games are pushed into the MA15+ category or banned altogether.

A survey on the Pal Gaming Network showed almost half of core gamers were gaming with family members.

NSW Attorney-General John Hatzistergos has warned retailers that selling restricted games to minors is an offence.

Those caught selling MA15+ computer games to someone under the age of 15 face fines up to \$5500 for sole traders and \$11,000 if trading as a company.

Meanwhile, the petition is available from GAME Port Central or online at www.everyoneplays.org.au



□ **Having a say:** Computer game fan James Smith and GAME Port Central assistant manager Mat Cooper talk about the petition.