

38TH MEETING
18 MAY 2001

23-33 MARY STREET
SURRY HILLS NSW

PRESENT: Ms Barbara Biggins (Convenor)
Mr Jonathan O'Dea (Deputy Convenor)
Ms Glenda Banks

APPLICANT Roadshow Film Distributors Pty Ltd

BUSINESS: To review the decision of the Classification Board to assign the classification PG under the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995* to the film *Pokemon 3 -- The Movie* with the consumer advice "Adult themes, Low Level Violence".

DECISION AND REASONS FOR DECISION

1. Decision

The Classification Review Board decided to confirm the decision of the Classification Board to classify the film *Pokemon 3 - The Movie* PG, but to vary the consumer advice line to "Frequent Violence, Some Themes May Upset Young Children."

2. Legislative provisions

The *Classification (Publications, Film and Computer Games) Act 1995* (the Act) governs the classification of films and the review of classification decisions. The Act provides that films be classified in accordance with the National Classification Code and the classification guidelines. Relevantly, the National Classification Code (the Code) in paragraph 6 of the Table under the heading "films" provides that films (except RC films, X films, R films, MA films and M films) that cannot be recommended for viewing by persons who are under 15, are to be classified PG. Para 7 of the Table provides that all other films are to be classified G.

3. Procedure

- 3.1 Three members of the Review Board viewed the film *Pokemon 3 - The Movie* at its meeting on 18 May 2001.

4. Matters taken into account

In reaching its decision the Review Board had regard to the following:

- (a) the applicant's Application for Review
- (b) the film *Pokemon 3- The Movie*
- (d) the relevant provisions in the Act
- (e) the relevant provisions in the National Classification Code as amended in accordance with Section 6 of the Act.
- (f) the current Classification Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Videotapes determined under Section 12 of the Act.

5. Findings on material questions of fact

The plot

- 5.1 This animated feature contains the story of the young girl Molly whose father is taken by The Unknown, and she is led to believe that Pokemon Entei is her father. Pokemon trainer Ash and friends find the town of Greenfield turned into a crystallised prison. They attempt to rescue Molly and Ash's mother.

The scenes and themes

- 5.2 The Review Board considered the adult themes and scenes of violence cited by the Classification Board as warranting a PG classification.

The Classification Board cited a number of scenes related to the loss of Molly's mother and father and their substitution by the Pokemon Entai and Ash's mother, as contributing to adult themes which, while (in the view of the Classification Board) were dealt with discreetly and with mild impact, required explanation by the parents of young children.

5.3 The Review Board found that the treatment of the theme of Molly's loss of her father and his substitution by the creature Entei, and the substitution of Ash's mother for Molly's mother was not careful and discreet as required in the G category. Examples of such scenes occurred at:

20-25mins: Molly's father is taken, Molly finds her father and her mother are gone, and she is led to believe that Entei is her father

35- 38mins: Molly expresses a desire for a mother and Ash's mother is taken to be Molly's mother

56mins: Molly is happy that she now has come to believe that Entei and Ash's mother are parents

82 mins: Entei leaves, with Molly upset and calling "Papa"

5.4 The Review Board also found that there were frequent scenes of violence, which were not discreetly implied as is required if the film is to be classified G. Examples of such scenes included:

6-7mins: a savage animal chases and threatens an attack on Pokemon

20mins: the eye appears and takes Molly's father

23mins: eyes and slime surround Molly

54mins Molly takes part in a Pokemon battle in which three creatures battle others, and are injured

59 mins: Molly and Ash's friend do battle with Pokemon and Molly expresses her pleasure at winning. "This makes me so happy"

64-66 mins: water gun attacks with creatures disappearing, ferocious images, and explosions

67mins: Charizard is knocked over by a blast from Entei

69-73 mins: Entei emits fireballs, there is fighting, explosions, flames, until Molly calls a halt.

77-79 mins: fire and explosions, and the crystals pushing up through the ground, pursue Molly and rescuer.

81mins: more fire, explosions, and roaring.

5.5 The Review Board found therefore that the film contained depictions and references which could be confusing or upsetting to children without adult guidance, and was appropriately classified PG.

6. Reasons for the Decision

6.1 The Review Board based its decision to confirm the Classification Board's decision to classify the film *Pokemon 3 - The Movie* PG on the content and impact of the film as set out in 5.3 and 5.4 above.

- 6.2 The Review Board found that the theme of Molly's loss of her father and mother and their substitution by a Pokemon and another boy's mother respectively, and that boy's distress at losing his mother, to constitute a theme that would be upsetting or confusing to young children without adult guidance. The Review Board found that the treatment of this theme could not be categorised as careful and discreet as required by the Guidelines for the G category.
- 6.3 In relation to scenes of violence, the Review Board found that these were not discreetly implied (ie with little or no detail and generally brief, and further, only inferred and not actually seen). In addition the scenes of violence were not infrequent. As such, these scenes cannot be accommodated in the G category.
- 6.4 The Review Board therefore concluded that the film could be upsetting or confusing to young children without adult guidance, and was appropriately classified PG.

The Review Board's decision to vary the consumer advice to "Frequent Violence, Some Themes May Upset Young Children" was taken having regard to the film's content as set out in 5.4 and 5.3 respectively.

7. Summary

The Review Board's decision is to confirm the decision of the Classification Board to classify the film *Pokemon 3 - The Movie* PG. The Review Board has decided to vary the consumer advice to "Frequent Violence, Some Themes May Upset Young Children".

This decision is taken after full consideration of the applicant's submission, and after assessing the film as a whole against the relevant legislative criteria, including those contained in the Code, and in the current Classification Guidelines for Films and Videotapes determined under Section 12 of the Act.

Barbara Biggins
Convenor