



Australian Government
Classification Review Board

CLASSIFICATION REVIEW BOARD

5 December 2003

**23-33 MARY STREET
SURRY HILLS, NSW**

MEMBERS: Ms Maureen Shelley (Convenor)
Mr Jonathan O’Dea (Deputy Convenor)
Dr Robyn Harvey
Ms Kathryn Smith

APPLICANT: Roadshow Entertainment

BUSINESS: To review the Classification Board’s decision to classify the film *One Perfect Day* MA (Mature Accompanied) under the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995*

DECISION AND REASONS FOR DECISION

1. Decision

The Review Board unanimously determined that the film, *One Perfect Day* is classified M15+ with the consumer advice ‘drug and death themes’.

2. Legislative provisions

The *Classification (Publications, Film and Computer Games) Act 1995* (the Classification Act) governs the classification of films and the review of classification decisions. Section 9 of the Classification Act provides that films are to be classified in accordance with the National Classification Code (the Code) and the Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games 2003.

3. Procedure

The Review Board convened in response to an application from the applicant, Roadshow Film Distributors Pty Ltd. The Review Board watched the film *One Perfect Day*, and received written submissions and heard oral submissions from the applicant's representatives Mr Brett Rosengarten General Manager Roadshow Entertainment, Mr John Dickie and Mr Paul Currie, Director.

4. Evidence and other material taken into account

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

- (i) the applicant's application for review (including written and oral submissions);
- (ii) the report of the Classification Board relating to *One Perfect Day*;
- (iii) the film *One Perfect Day*;
- (iv) the relevant provisions in the Classification Act;
- (v) the relevant provisions in the Code, as amended in accordance with section 6 of the Classification Act; and
- (vi) the *Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games 2003*.

5. Synopsis

The applicant stated that the film has as its main focus a young man and his journey of self-discovery and creative expression. The film is set within the contemporary dance world – one that involves drug usage – with a concentration on music and communication. The applicant stated that it was important that the film maintains “a sense of authenticity within the context of the film's modern day dance party backdrop”.

The central character, Tommy, returns from London on the death by drug overdose of his teenage sister who is portrayed as a school girl. During the course of the film his girlfriend also dies of a drug overdose. Tommy searches for meaning in his sister's world of the dance party and finds solace in creative expression.

6. Findings on material questions of fact

The Review Board found that *One Perfect Day* contains:

- (a) scenes of drug use that had a moderate impact
- (b) some scenes of drug use that were moderate to strong where the impact was mitigated by the educational merit of the film
- (c) scenes of death and risk-taking behaviour that had a moderate impact.

The Review Board also found that the director of the film Mr Paul Currie had a long standing connection with working with disadvantaged groups and with young people in particular. It was the Review Board's finding that he had made a bone fide attempt

to produce an educational film that would appeal to a teenage audience through its setting and context yet provide a strong anti-drug message.

7. Reasons for the decision

In the Review Board's opinion, the film warrants an M15+ classification because the scenes with more than moderate impact were mitigated by the film's significant educational merit.

Mr Currie has worked for more than 10 years in assisting young people through voluntary organisations including Reach Youth. The application for review was supported with various statements, including from:

- Associate Professor Nick Santamaria the Principal Research Scientist at The Alfred Hospital and the University of Melbourne;
- Acting Professor Pierre Baume the Founding Director of the Australian Institute of Suicide Research and Prevention and currently working in the department of psychological medicine at Monash University; and
- Judge Jennifer Coate the President of the Children's Court Victoria.

These referees attested to Mr Currie's work with the Reach Youth program and his commitment to working for benefit of young people. They also advocated the value and suitability of the film for young people.

The Review Board accepted that Mr Currie was a responsible person with a serious purpose in trying to assist young people and that he had directed *One Perfect Day* as a film that would appeal to young people and deliver a strong anti-drug message.

The applicant, in written and oral submission, stated

“The film makers have set out to maintain a sense of realism to keep a young audience open to the storyline and its messages and there are several scenes involving drug use.

However, the film makers have been aware of the importance of maintaining the film's strong anti-drug message by highlighting the ramification of choices we make. All incidents of drug use have been followed by negative and unpleasant result to combat any form of glorification or the potential for “copy cat” behaviour.”

Drug themes

At approximately 15 minutes Emma, Tommy's sister, receives a packet of what appears to be drugs. At approximately 19 minutes she opens the packet and tips white powder on to the back of her hand. She then explicitly snorts the powder into her nose. At approximately 20 minutes Emma stumbles towards Tommy's girlfriend Alysse in a drug daze. The scene uses slow motion and hyper-real camera effects.

At approximately 24 minutes Emma collapses and Alysse gives her CPR. Alysse assists Emma to hospital and then abandons her.

The Review Board accepted that the film makers had made significant efforts to highlight the negative consequences of drug taking.

Violence and Sexual Violence

At approximately 79 minutes Hector, a drug dealer and music promoter, attempts to rape Alysse. The scene is brief and not detailed. No nudity is shown. However, it does have a moderate impact.

At approximately 84 minutes Hector stabs Alysse with a syringe filled with what implicitly is proscribed drugs. The scene has a moderate to strong impact.

Death themes

The death of Emma, at approximately 26 minutes has a moderate impact.

The death of Alysse, at approximately 88 minutes, has a moderate to strong impact.

The Review Board found that the drug taking and death themes were not glamorised nor exploitative or gratuitous. The Review Board found that the film depicted youth culture sensitively and realistically and that the drug taking and death scenes were justified by the context and were not likely to emotionally harm or distress children under the age of 15.

8. Summary

The Review Board believed that the impact of the classifiable elements in the overall context of the film did not warrant an MA15+ classification. The Review Board found that while the film contained some moderate to strong scenes of drug and death themes, these were justified by the context and the impact mitigated by the film's significant educational merit.

The Review Board unanimously determined that the film *One Perfect Day* is classified M15+ with the consumer advice 'drug and death themes'.