



File No: T11/5660

Australian Government

Classification Board

Decision Report

Classification decisions are made in accordance with the Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 (the Act), the National Classification Code and the Classification Guidelines.

Production Details:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Title: | SYNDICATE |
| Alternate titles: | YELLOW HUNTSMAN |
| Publisher: | ELECTRONIC ARTS |
| Programmer: | STARBREEZE |
| Production Company: | |
| Year of Production: | 2012 |
| Duration: | VARIABLE |
| Version: | ORIGINAL |
| Format: | MULTI PLATFORM |
| Country/ies of origin: | SWEDEN |
| Language/s: | ENGLISH |
| Application type: | CG2 |
| Applicant: | ELECTRONIC ARTS |

Dates:

Date application received by the Classification Board: 23 November 2011

Date of decision: 19 December 2011

Decision:

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Classification: | RC |
| Consumer advice: | |

Synopsis:

This first person shooter is set in a futuristic world where people have installed computer chips in their brains that allow them to interact with the "dataverse". A player controls Kilo, an operative for Eurocorp, as he undertakes missions and discovers that his employers may not be as innocent as they appear. The game consists of 12 single player levels and 9 cooperative levels.

Reasons for the Decision:

In making this decision, the Classification Board has applied the Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995 (the Classification Act), the National Classification Code (the Code) and the Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games 2005 (the Guidelines).

In the Board's view this game warrants an 'RC' classification in accordance with item 1(d) of the computer games table of the National Classification Code:

"1. Computer games that:

(d) are unsuitable for a minor to see or play;" will be Refused Classification.

The game contains violence that is high in impact and is therefore unsuitable for persons aged under 18 years to play. The Board notes that this report does not contain an exhaustive list of the content that caused the game to be Refused Classification.

The game is set in a futuristic dystopia where people have computer chips in their heads that allow them to interact with the "dataverse". It is a first person shooter with realistically rendered graphics. A player controls Kilo, an agent of one of the "Syndicates" (powerful corporations), as he moves through levels completing objectives such as rescuing Eurocorp employees and extracting chips from people's heads.

In order to complete the missions, a player has to engage in intense combat with swarms of enemy combatants who are clad in light armour. A variety of weapons is available and these often cause decapitation, dismemberment and gibbing during frenetic gunfights. For example, an intense sequence of violence commences when a player collects a "G290 minigun", which operates much like a Gatling gun. A player moves through a building rapidly firing at enemy combatants. Combatants take locational damage and can be explicitly dismembered, decapitated or bisected by the force of the gunfire. The depictions are accompanied by copious bloodspray and injuries are shown realistically and with detail. Flesh and bone are often exposed while arterial sprays of blood continue to spurt from wounds at regular intervals.

Similar injuries can be caused by many other weapons, including shotguns, high-calibre revolvers, sniper rifles, assault rifles, rocket launchers, laser guns and grenades.

The game also allows a player to repeatedly damage enemy combatants' corpses. This is shown in realistic depictions. For example, it is possible for a player to decapitate a corpse with a headshot before individually blowing off each of its limbs. Depending on the weapon used, it is also possible to bisect a corpse, with realistic ragdoll effects noted. The depictions are again accompanied by arterial sprays of blood and detailed injuries that include protruding bone.

Throughout the game, a player consistently encounters unarmed civilians and has the choice of whether to target them or not. Civilians can be shot, accompanied by copious bloodspray, but it is not possible to decapitate or dismember them, whether they are alive or dead. Their corpses can still be targeted, resulting in bloodspray only. In single player mode, the game treats civilian deaths neutrally, but it is noted that in cooperative gameplay, points are awarded for civilian casualties.

In the opinion of the Board, the game contains intense sequences of violence which include detailed depictions of decapitation and dismemberment that are high in playing impact. The game also contains the ability to inflict repeated and realistic post mortem damage which exceeds strong in playing impact. It is therefore unsuitable for a minor to see or play and should be Refused Classification pursuant to item 1(d) of the computer games table of the Code.

Decision:

This game is Refused Classification.