



File No: T13/1607

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: STATE OF DECAY
Alternate titles:
Publisher: MICROSOFT
Programmer: UNDEAD LABS
Production Company: NOT SHOWN
Year of Production: 2013
Duration: VARIABLE
Version: ORIGINAL
Format: MULTI PLATFORM
Country/ies of origin: USA
Language/s: ENGLISH
Application type: CG2
Applicant: MICROSOFT PTY LTD

Dates:

Date application received by the Classification Board: 20 May 2013
Date of decision: 26 June 2013

Decision:

Classification: RC
Consumer advice:

Synopsis:

This third-person survival shooter, for the XBOX 360, is set in a small American town during the aftermath of a zombie apocalypse. Players navigate open-world environments, battling zombie attacks, as they scavenge for supplies and collaborate with other survivors to ensure survival of the human race.

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 Computer Games 2012 (the Guidelines).

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

"1. Computer games that:

(a) depict, express or otherwise deal with matters of sex, drug misuse or addiction, crime, cruelty, violence or revolting or abhorrent phenomena in such a way that they offend against the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults to the extent that they should not be classified;" will be Refused Classification.

Computer games that exceed the R 18+ classification category will be Refused Classification. At the R 18+ classification, the Guidelines state: "Drug use related to incentives and rewards is not permitted".

The Guidelines also state that computer games will be Refused Classification if they contain "illicit or proscribed drug use related to incentives or rewards".

The game contains the option of self-administering a variety of "medications" throughout gameplay which act to restore a player's health or boost their stamina. These "medications" include both legal and illicit substances such as methadone, morphine, amphetamines, stimulants, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, codeine, aspirin, "trucker pills", painkillers and tussin. Of these, methadone, morphine, and amphetamines are proscribed drugs and the term "stimulant" is commonly used to refer to a class of drugs of which several are proscribed.

Players obtain drugs by scavenging for them in the environment or by manufacturing them in a "Medical Lab". When players find drugs in the environment the name of the drug appears onscreen and the drug is also represented by a visual icon such as a pill bottle or syringe. Within the "Medical Lab" players are prompted to make substances such as "Potent Stims", "Mild Stims" and "Painkillers". The laboratory includes a "research library" and "chemical dictionary".

When administering drugs, the player is briefly depicted moving a pill bottle toward their mouth. The sound of pills rattling in the bottle accompanies the depiction. The name of the drug appears onscreen along with its representative icon. Consumption of the drug instantly increases a player's in-game abilities allowing them to progress through gameplay more easily. The Applicant has stated that a "player can choose not to make any drugs or scavenge for them, but it would be very difficult to complete the game without some form of medication".

In the Board's opinion, the game enables the player's character to self-administer proscribed drugs which aid in gameplay progression. This game therefore contains drug use related to incentives or rewards and should be Refused Classification.

Decision:

This game is Refused Classification.