

IRISH FILM CLASSIFICATION OFFICE

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Annual Report of the Director of Film Classification 2016

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY

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IRISH FILM CLASSIFICATION OFFICE

To Charles Flanagan  
T.D., Minister for  
Justice and Equality

Dear Minister,

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Director of Film Classification for 2016 as prescribed by Section 29 of The Video Recordings Act 1989.

Our statutory functions are governed by the Censorship of Films Act 1923 and The Video Recordings Act 1989 together with their relevant amendments. We also adhere to the following principles:

- We believe that adults (i.e., persons over 18) should be free, within the law, to choose what they wish to view.
- We have a duty to protect children and young people from harm.
- We strongly encourage and promote the exercise of parental responsibility.

In 2016, the core business of classifying both cinema films and DVDs showed differing trends. Cinema films, excluding trailers, showed a 13% increase from 371 to 420. However, DVD classifications were down by 6% from 4,065 to 3,830.

It should be noted that an ever-increasing percentage of home entertainment product is obtained by streaming, over which IFCO has no statutory function. As stated previously, it is reassuring that our business partners continue to seek IFCO classification for product available in Ireland, regardless of method of delivery.

In September, we completed the construction of our in-house cinema, which will deliver significant savings over the coming years.

We reviewed our published guidelines during the year and I am of the opinion they remain fit for purpose but nevertheless subject to ongoing evaluation.

During 2016 no decisions were appealed to the Classification of Films Appeal Board.

In November, for the first time, we engaged in a public recruitment process for Assistant Classifiers positions. This elicited a very large response and the positions will be filled in early 2017.

I would like to place on record my appreciation of the work done by IFCO staff, the Assistant Classifiers and also to acknowledge the constructive input of John Laffan and the Corporate Governance section of the Department.

Yours Sincerely

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Ger Connolly  
Director of Film Classification



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'Very mild rude humour and threat.'  
(Consumer advice for *Trolls* on IFCO's website)



Trolls  
Director: Mike Mitchell, Walt Dohrn.



## **Key Developments in 2016**

### **Operational Activity**

The total number of cinema feature films certified during 2016 was 420, an increase of 49 on 2015. This is a significant increase and it is worth noting that 64 (16%) of these titles originated from India. There were also significant submissions of French and Polish origin.

The total number of DVDs certified was 3,830, a decrease of 6% on 2015. As stated in previous years, given the multitude of on demand services over which IFCO has no statutory role, it is reassuring that our business partners continue to submit such volumes of material for classification. This is a confirmation of the value of the IFCO trust mark to these organisations.

### **Appeals**

There were no appeals to the Classification of Films Appeal Board during 2016.

### **Video Games**

During 2016 IFCO examined 26 games rated 18 by the Pan European Games Information System (PEGI) to ensure compliance with provisions of The Video Recordings Act 1989. This system of self-regulation, introduced in 2003 and overseen by PEGI, has proved to be a very effective model in the provision of consumer advice and continues to evolve to meet the changing environment.

### **Focus Groups/Presentations**

Assistant Classifiers David Power and Mark Brennan made a number of interactive presentations to Second and Third Level Students during the year. It is planned that an educational presentation modelled for Transition Year students will be made available 'on demand' for schools in 2017.

Members of the classification team also took part in a number of lectures/Q&As, including those at the Dublin International Film Festival and the Cinemagic Film Festival.

### **Guidelines**

Following on from IFCO's public consultation, we conducted a review of the existing published guidelines. We concluded that, for the time being, the current advice is fit for purpose but subject to ongoing evaluation.



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'Mild martial arts action.'  
(Consumer advice for *Kung Fu Panda 3* on IFCO's website)



Kung Fu Panda 3  
Director: Alessandro Carloni, Jennifer Yuh.



### **Smartphone App/Website**

The provision of a IFCO mobile app was examined during the year and it was decided to engage with relevant expertise with a view to implementation during 2017. It was also felt that the IFCO website required an update and redesign and this will also progress during 2017.

### **Complaints**

During the year, IFCO received 14 complaints from the public relating specifically to classifications awarded. The largest number was in relation to JASON BOURNE, which was classified 12A with the accompanying consumer advice "*Strong weapons and hand to hand combat action consistent with previous films in this franchise.*"

The correspondence related to the level of violence portrayed and while we felt it was consistent with decisions in other cases, it does highlight a trend which we are aware of and continue to monitor. This trend was the subject of a research project carried out by Assistant Classifier David Power entitled '*Ratings Creep & Violence in Films for Young Teens*' which was presented by him at the International Classifiers Conference held in Dublin Castle in October.

### **Cinema**

In September, our in-house cinema became operational for the screening of films due for theatrical release. This project was undertaken over the previous two years and our thanks is due to the OPW for their input and co-operation in the process. This facility will produce significant cost savings over its lifetime.

We are grateful to the LightHouse cinema for the provision of facilities over the previous number of years.

### **International Classifiers Conference**

The annual conference of international classifiers was held in Dublin Castle in October of this year. This provided a forum for the various countries' participants to discuss issues of concern in both territorial and global markets and to discuss advancements in policy, technology and best practice in the field of media regulation/classification.

The arrangements for the event were chiefly carried out by Assistant Classifier Dani McClafferty and we are grateful to the staff at Dublin Castle for their support during the event.



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'Intense sci-fi violence, threat and destruction.'  
(Consumer advice for *Independence Day: Resurgence* on IFCO's website)



Independence Day: Resurgence  
Director: Roland Emmerich.



## **Certification for Court Proceedings**

Complaints regarding breaches of the provisions of the Censorship of Films Act, 1923, and the Video Recordings Act, 1989, are referred by the Office to An Garda Síochána for investigation. Under Section 23 of the Video Recordings Act, 1989, the Film Classification Office may issue certificates to provide certain information which is admissible as evidence in court proceedings.

The total number of Certificates issued in 2016 indicating that Supply Certificates were not in force under Sec.14 (3) (b) in respect of certain works was 45.

## **Financial**

The fees charged by the Office for the certification of cinema films and DVD/videos and for the issuing of licences in 2016 were as follows:

<b>Video</b>	<b>€1,018,303.67</b>
<b>Film</b>	<b>€412,411.23</b>
<b>Licences</b>	<b>€206,009.99</b>
<b>Labels</b>	<b>€3,854.45</b>

Total income remitted to the Department in 2016 was **€1,640,579.34**.



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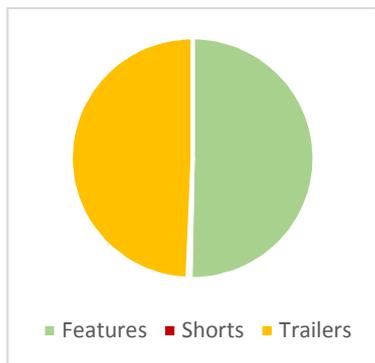
'Strong violence and sex scenes. References to spouse abuse.'  
(Consumer advice for *The Girl on the Train* on IFCO's website)



The Girl on the Train  
Director: Tate Taylor.

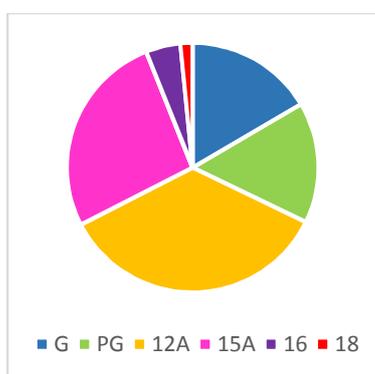


**Certification of Cinema Submissions**  
**Cinema Submissions Certified 2016**



**All by Type**

Features	417
Shorts	3
Trailers	409
<b>Total</b>	<b>829</b>



**All by Category**

G	137
PG	130
12A	292
15A	220
16	37
18	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>829</b>

**Features by Category (2013 – 2016)**

	2013	2014	2015	2016
G	24	38	28	37
PG	37	49	47	62
12A	105	114	117	131
15A	125	139	129	142
16	34	44	38	35
18	19	7	12	13
	344	391	371	420

**Single Country of Origin;**

176	USA
64	India
42	UK
20	Ireland
14	France
10	Poland
8	Australia
7	Japan
6	China
5	Italy
4	Denmark
2	New Zealand
2	Norway
1	Argentina
1	Belgium
1	Chile
1	Colombia
1	Germany
1	Hong Kong
1	Hungary
1	Israel
1	Mexico
1	Netherlands
1	Russia
1	Spain
<b>372</b>	<b>Total</b>

**Multiple Country of Origin**

8	UK/USA
3	Canada/USA
2	Hong Kong/China
2	South Korea/China
2	UK/India
2	USA / France
1	Australia/Ireland
2	Belgium/France
1	France/Germany/Turkey/Qatar
1	China/USA
1	France/USA
1	Germany/USA/UK/France
1	Iceland/Denmark/Norway/Poland
1	India/USA
1	Ireland/Netherlands/France/USA
1	Ireland/Netherlands/Luxembourg
1	Ireland/UK
1	Ireland/USA/UK
1	Italy/France
1	Japan/Russia/Australia/Germany/USA
1	Mexico/Taiwan/USA
1	Netherlands/UK/Qatar
1	Norway/France/Denmark
1	Russia/USA
1	UK/Canada
1	UK/Canada/USA
1	UK/Ireland
1	UK/USA/Bulgaria
1	UK/USA/Germany
1	UK/Germany
1	USA / France / Denmark
1	USA/Australia
1	USA/China/Canada
1	USA/France
<b>48</b>	<b>Total</b>

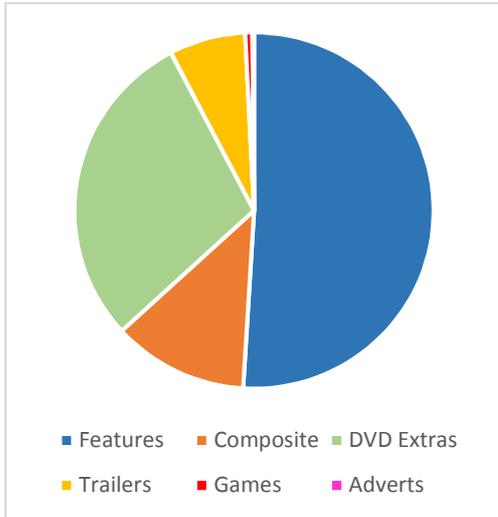
'Strong gory violence throughout.'  
(Consumer advice for *Green Room* on IFCO's website)



Green Room  
Director: Jeremy Saulnier.

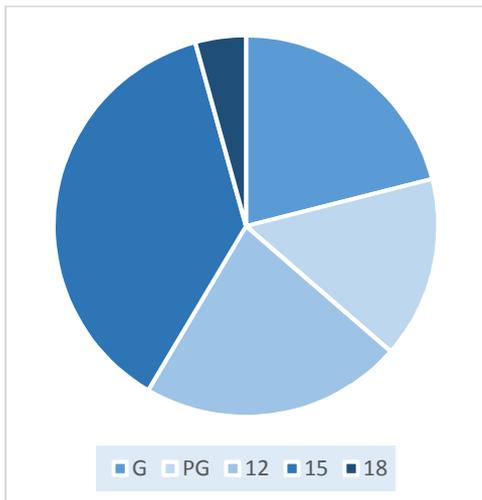


**Certification of Video/DVDs**  
**DVD/Video Works Certified by Category 2016**



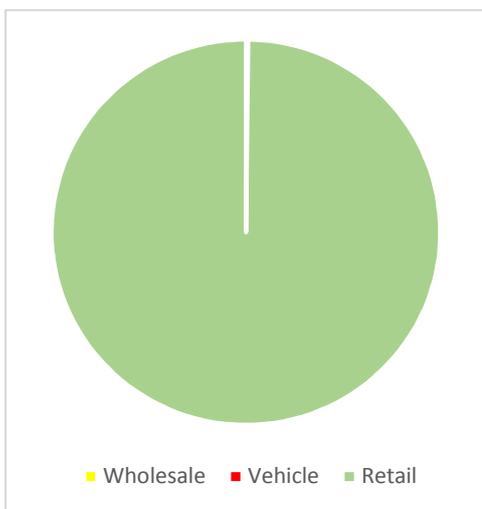
**By Type of Work**

Features	1,952
Composite	468
DVD Extras	1,117
Trailers	262
Games	26
Adverts	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,830</b>



**By Category**

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>G</b>	924	676	726	805
<b>PG</b>	817	675	610	590
<b>12</b>	1,033	884	905	845
<b>15</b>	1,317	1,331	1,596	1,427
<b>18</b>	245	227	228	163
	<u>4,336</u>	<u>3,793</u>	<u>4,065</u>	<u>3,830</u>



**Licences Issued**

Wholesale	1
Vehicle	1
Retail	1,041
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,043</b>



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'Frequent strong drug misuse, strong violence and sexual content.'  
(Consumer advice for *T2: Trainspotting* on IFCO's website)



T2: Trainspotting  
Director: Danny Boyle



## **Staff**

### **Director of Film Classification**

Ger Connolly was appointed as Director of Film Classification in May 2016. He was formerly an Assistant Censor and Acting Director.

Ger was born and lives in Kildare town. He graduated from UCD with a B. Comm Degree, studied accountancy with Deloitte, Haskins & Sell, and worked in that capacity in the advertising and manufacturing industries. He was appointed a part-time assistant film censor in November 1993. He served as Deputy Film Censor from 2003 to 2009 and Acting Director from 2009 to 2016.

He represents Ireland on the board of PEGI, the Pan European Games classification system, and sits on both its Advisory Board and Complaints Board.

### **Part-Time Assistant Classifiers During 2016**

Mark Brennan  
Journalist and TV Producer

David Power  
TV Producer

Olga Bennett  
Former Public Representative

Mairead Marron  
Counsellor/Psychotherapist

Dani McClafferty  
Counsellor

The Office Manager is Daniel Sugrue, who supervises a team of Civil Servants.

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