

Full Text of Responses From Individuals

S/N	Date Received	Individual Respondents	Submission in Full Text
1.	12 May 2014	Anonymised on request	<p>With regards to the changes to the proposed amendments to PEMA, please ensure that steps are taken to enforce the rules and regulations regarding the type of content allowed for minors e.g. those under 12yrs old, 18yrs or 21yrs old.</p> <p>Please ensure that strict guidelines are implemented and if any of the Arts Groups fail to follow them, they will be fined for flouting the rules.</p> <p>Parents would like to see that MDA not go against the societal norms for families and children.</p> <p>A recent survey shows that Singaporeans are still conservative and sensitive to certain lifestyles such as homosexuality, lesbianism, erotic displays, foul and vulgar language, unwarranted nudity etc etc.</p> <p>Those in charge of MDA are also parents, uncles, aunties, grandmothers and grandfathers. As adults in authority, you should guide and also send the right signals for society and your own families.</p> <p>The Arts groups will always push the boundaries and try to circumvent the rulings. Let the ball be in their court with these changes. If they flout the rules, it is their actions that led to penalties and MDA has every right to fine them.</p> <p>Kindly ensure that the proposed changes include fines and other penalties if the Arts groups do not adhere to the guidelines.</p>
2.	13 May 2014	Anonymised on	I am personally not in favour of allowing the ARTS group to self-classify their own works.

		request	<p>There is a high possibility they may be less stringent in their censorship, ending up with young & impressionable minds being exposed to materials unsuitable for their age.</p> <p>If the new regulation is being approved, then I hope MDA will develop an effective & foolproof way of checking on the Arts groups, to ensure they do not flout the rules or be irresponsible in their censorship. Hefty fines should be imposed if the rules are broken. MDA should also withdraw any funding, privileges if a particular arts group negligently fails to follow the rules for self-classification.</p> <p>It is still MDA's responsibility to make sure that any acts, works in the art scene send the right messages to the young & not encourage immoral & liberal lifestyles that do not agree with values shared by majority of us, Singaporeans.</p> <p>Thank you for listening.</p>
3.	14 May 2014	See Wai Chie	<p>I am concerned that MDA intend to let Arts group determine their own rating. Why MDA wants to abdicate this area.. When boundaries are freely given, how to ensure that liberal values are not going to be conveyed under the guise of "art"!</p> <p>If you let them set their own standard, what is MDA role going forward? I hope your authority will have rules set up still and you to be strict about enforcing the rules to ensure the Arts Group do not break them.</p> <p>I as a concerned parent would like to see the authorities remain responsible and to help send the right message to the children by enforcing the rules. We are a society that still believes in the importance of stressing good moral values and wish that authorities would not abdicate its watchdog role.. In Taiwan, they have even allow sexual acts to be performed in shows under the guise of</p>

			<p>art and entertainment. This must not be tolerated in our country!</p> <p>Please continue to guard our precious values.</p>
4.	30 May 2014	Janice Koh, Nominated Member of Parliament	<p>(1) The new system appears to create a triplicate of assessments, which is counter-productive. It also transfers the liability for mistaken classifications to the companies and content assessors.</p> <p>The new system involves the following steps:</p> <p>(a) 20 days prior to the date of the event or performance, the arts company is obliged to “deposit relevant materials with MDA”. At this stage, the Licensing Officer (the “LO”) may, in accordance with Section 13 of the Act, “in his discretion, refuse to issue or renew any licence”. Further, he may, under Section 14 of the Act, “in his discretion, suspend or cancel a licence” if he is satisfied that the public entertainment is</p> <p>“(a) has been the cause or is likely to be the cause of a breach of the peace;</p> <p>(b) has been or is likely to be wholly or in part of an indecent, immoral, offensive, subversive or improper nature;</p> <p>(c) has caused or is likely to cause unnecessary suffering or any injury to any person or animal taking part in it, or to any member of the audience; or</p> <p>(d) has been provided or is likely to be provided otherwise than in accordance with the conditions of the licence or is contrary to the public interest; or</p> <p>(e) has been or is likely to be provided in contravention of a direction issued by the Art Entertainment Licensing Officer</p>

			<p style="text-align: center;">under Section 15C(1).”</p> <p>As is evident, the grounds for suspension or cancellation are rather wide. Under Section 11, security bonds may be required.</p> <p>(b) Even after the licence is granted, under the new Section 15B, the content of the arts entertainment will also be required to be “classified”. Such classification may be conducted by a registered content assessor (a “CA”) where the LO “requires” for it, or conducted by the LO himself. It is submitted that there is no transparency here as to when a classification is to be made by the CA or by the LO. If the assessments are generally performed by the LO, then the differences between the new and old schemes are very slight, and do not “create an environment where arts practitioners can undertake greater responsibility for their own content through co-regulation” – as stated as one of the principles underpinning these changes. Where a CA’s services are engaged, the CA is liable for wrongful classifications and may be penalised under Section 15A(5).</p> <p>(c) Under Section 15B(3), where the LO has required that a CA classifies the content, the arts company must appoint a registered CA to conduct the classification. However, even after the CA has done his job, the arts company is required to “confirm” whether the CA’s classification is in accordance with the classification code. Under Section 15B(7), the arts company itself may be liable if it wrongly confirms such classification by the CA. From the Act, it is clear that only CAs will be trained in the skills of content assessing. To place an obligation on the arts company to “confirm” such a classification puts the arts companies in a difficult position.</p>
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			classification code shall <u>be</u> guilty...”
5.	30 May 2014	Anonymised on request	<p>I am a grandmother, helping my children to raise 3 young boys. I have a profoundly deaf daughter and son-in-law, who will have much difficulty in teaching their boys if no proper boundaries are put in place on media.</p> <p>I read with concern the proposed changes in the PEMA. With the deteriorating moral values today and the constant tearing away of our Asian values, we seem to be making policy changes to suit the wants of our young people is not a wise decision. Our young people may be exposed to more information today than in the past but it does not mean that they have the moral maturity to handle derogatory speech and violence.</p> <p>I propose that there be two different departments to be involved in deciding the category of artists and entertaining events seeking for license to perform here in Singapore. If neighboring/other countries allow such artistes, let the mature ones go over to watch such events.</p> <p>Please remember that there are other special needs people in our society that must be guarded against too! With two deciding departments, we are better assured that if one overlook certain areas of society, the other can be alert to raise the alarm.</p> <p>Please consider the wider community in deciding the change - the pioneers, the special needs people, who needs hand-holding all their lives, etc. I would like to see Singapore No.1 in keeping good Asian values yet competitive in the economic front and able to enjoy good health entertainment. We have worked hard in our younger days and would like to be able to</p>

			<p>enjoy and see our children and their generations enjoy a secure home base with good morals without bending ourselves towards decadent values in the name of arts.</p>
6.	30 May 2014	Anonymised on request	<p>The proposed self-classification cannot achieve the purpose of enforcing current legislation. With increasing challenges to Authority among the young in Singapore, MDA should increase, and not relax its vigilance to detect possible breaches of peace before they occur and remove materials of indecent, immoral, offensive, subversive and improper nature in our multi-racial and religious society. Singapore needs independent and vigilant examiners to defend itself from increasing threats to our public interest.</p>
7.	30 May 2014	Anonymised on request	<p>I have been evaluating arts and artistic movements over the last 30 years and I am acutely aware of the mounting pressures to remove censorship altogether in developed nations. As both a practitioner of Architecture who is passionate about stretching artistic boundaries and a mentor to young practitioners, may I point out the following:</p> <p>This self-classification proposal seems innocuous enough but underestimates the power of Market forces driving event organisers, which are focussed on fame, fortune & influence more than our public interest as a young fragile nation.</p> <p><u>Present Proposals do not encourage confidence</u></p> <p>Most organisers who look at the highly simplistic 2 Tiers would over-sell the general nature of their own works.</p> <p>The evidence from Canada is that promoters of Music, film, books and videos are targeting younger and younger buyers to increase sales. Our free-to-air channels are</p>

			<p>already portraying coolness as making fun of parents teachers and the government, dressing skimpily to attract attention leading to 8 year-old in Canada starting to have eating disorders and other behavioural problems which lead to sterility and family breakdown.</p> <p>Lady Gaga’s 2013 concert in Britain, more specifically, was rated for audiences over age 15. In Singapore, such promoters would argue that it should now be in the general Category since it is being proposed that our only other Class is 18 and above!</p> <p>Self-classification, instead of saving time could end up being counter-productive in that it can lead to endless, time-wasting disputes, conflicts and potentially riotous behaviour.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With no mention of any legal liabilities for false declarations anywhere yet in your proposals, self-classifying promoters can move with impunity. 2. As you are well aware, Lady Gaga’s last concert show ample recorded evidence of her acts which were indecent, immoral, offensive, subversive and improper, contrary to the public interest and also in contravention of the Religious Harmony Act. 3. No description of what kind of training will be given. Will the same officers, who did nothing to heed the warnings about Lady Gaga before she arrived, be training others? I sincerely hope training content and personnel would be properly vetted. 4. No system of <u>penalties</u> are stated before self-classification for the Clause 14 breaches of the current
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			<p>unnecessarily challenging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, the tide seems overwhelming, but to even avoid comment is to say that Singapore Society has nothing of value to say in return. That itself breeds loss of the solid respect that Singaporean leaders need. <p><u>Does this Proposal make for a better Singapore Society?</u></p> <p>The Arts define our shared values. We can be a mature and say, we are Singaporeans, we do not do such things here.</p> <p>In fact, we encourage expression from young and old, east and west without needing to borrow from what others think is best.</p> <p>Singapore does NOT need, and should in fact reject, the offerings of economic vultures who fly in and fly out without concern for the havoc they stir up in their audiences here. In fact, some of these entertainers have already moved with IMPUNITY in Singapore as defiant monsters (Lady Gaga fans) ready to rise up against AUTHORITY, parental, educational and even national figures . They have even threatened neighbouring countries like Indonesia from here. Is this the kind of self-centred xenophobic generation Singapore we should allow, in the next 50 years?</p> <p>To rule with compassionate MATURE LEADERSHIP continues to be admired. Please do not allow Tier 2 productions to be self-classified.</p> <p>Allowing Tier 2 to be self-classified is to lose 2 opportunities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to elevate the people’s respect for your government and • to lead by example as a Singapore confident of its leadership of what is wholesome in all artistic expressions of the best in the human spirit.
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8.	4 June 2014	Anonymised on request	<p>I concur with MDA that the arts industry cannot be a stand alone, independent and self run industry. It influences the culture tremendously, hence is responsible to the larger society. So while it may provide varied entertainment to all kinds of groups and even audiences of specific subcultures, it must be moderated for the protection of the rest of the society at large. This is because not every subcultural behaviours and attitudes are welcome by all society to be established publicly as a social norm. MDA plays a critical role in managing such conflicting desires and to maintain the interest of public at large. I appreciate MDA's initiative to ask me to comment on the new Arts Entertainment License Scheme from my role as a parent.</p> <p>Censorship and classification, or any efforts</p>

		<p>to regulate the industry, while it might not be well received by players within the industry, or from audiences belonging to the subcultures of which these art plays cater to, is necessary. The message communicated through censorship and classification is that responsibility is expected from the arts and entertainment industry. When the industry has yet to show maturity or understanding of their responsibility to the larger society, measures to regulate the industry have to be implemented.</p> <p>MDA's new Arts Entertainment (AE) Term Licensing Scheme is welcome by parents like me. It calls for players in the industry to own the responsibility of understanding guidelines meant for the safeguarding of public by classifying their own shows. This promotes responsibility to the entire industry and challenges individual players to live up to their own integrity according to the classification they choose their shows to fall under.</p> <p>This said, it is important for MDA to understand how this scheme might be easily abused by the industry. Companies can form relationships with content assessors and inbreed widespread corruption within the industry. Assessors may classify the shows inaccurately according to the company's interest after the relationship is built up and deliberately fail to report controversial portions of the show. If the assessors come from the company itself, there might be a conflict of interest too, so MDA would have to look into the implementation of this carefully.</p> <p>This could be the fears of those who call on MDA to continue to be the sole arbiter of shows classification. So, unless there are deliberate and consistent checks from neutral, independently appointed assessors, who understand the importance of these measures, this whole AE scheme might fall</p>
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		<p>short. Hence, I suggest that the assessors must be accredited members of the public with a respected background. First of all, they must be people who understand clearly the important role they play in safeguarding public interest and promoting responsibility in the arts industry. Secondly, they should have good track records in the community and be responsible members of their own households. They should hold the institution of the family in high regard in tandem with mainstream values. Without this, it is as good as MDA relinquishing on their role and responsibility to allow self-censorship without checks and balances.</p> <p>In view of this, if MDA is able to refine and further strengthen their criteria of content assessors, then this self-classification measure will be a good measure for the public and the industry.</p> <p>As the arts industry is integrated with the society and culture, it is right of MDA as a responsible government agency to consider public interest e.g. parents views, effects on social norms, children, in drawing up policies relating to it. Censorship is necessary, plain and simple. MDA will do well if they do not allow players who disagree with public interest or fail to understand their social responsibility to lead and determine the industry. These are likely to be players who have publicly disagreed with MDA's new scheme as they might not wish to be held responsible should they flaunt classification rules.</p> <p>We need to allow and support players who love art but who also understand the responsibility they hold to the larger society, and who can be respectful in this aspect, to lead the art industry to flourish. These might be the players who would welcome MDA's proposed new policy, as self-classification signals lesser hassle in terms of administration and cost. In this aspect, MDA</p>
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			<p>can see how they can provide incentives to further encourage responsible players to welcome the idea. I believe there will be many of these players around who deserves to be supported.</p> <p>As MDA has also graciously allowed this policy to be optional, allowing companies to opt for status co if they do not wish to implement the new policy, there is little room left to complain regarding the policy by the arts industry players. What remains is the general direction which MDA must continue to responsibly draft, and for this, I believe, is not something to be decided by the arts industry alone, but by public interest at large.</p>
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