

# HAVE YOUR SAY

## TIMEBANDS, PARENTAL LOCKS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Do you ever look after children or young people and, if so, how do you decide what programmes are suitable for them to watch on free-to-air (FTA) television? There are a number of ways to help you, including timebands, classification labels, warnings and parental locks. The Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) wants to hear which tools you use and whether you think it's time to change some of them.

### CLASSIFICATION LABELS

Classification labels are used by FTA and pay television on all programmes except for news, current affairs, sports and live content. The labels give you an indication of a programme's likely content by indicating what age the content is suitable for and differentiates between that suitable for children (under 14 years old) versus more mature audiences and adults. However, the labels used vary between FTA and pay television. Would it be easier if they were all the same?

FREE-TO-AIR TELEVISION LABELS:	PAY TELEVISION LABELS (eg SKY):
<p><b>G</b> GENERAL</p> <p><b>PGR</b> PARENTAL GUIDANCE RECOMMENDED</p> <p><b>AO</b> ADULTS ONLY</p>	<p><b>G</b> APPROVED FOR GENERAL VIEWING</p> <p><b>PG</b> PARENTAL GUIDANCE RECOMMENDED FOR YOUNGER VIEWERS</p> <p><b>M</b> SUITABLE FOR MATURE AUDIENCES 16 YEARS AND OVER</p> <p><b>16</b> PEOPLE UNDER 16 YEARS SHOULD NOT VIEW</p> <p><b>18</b> PEOPLE UNDER 18 YEARS SHOULD NOT VIEW</p>

### TIMEBANDS

Timebands, which restrict when certain programmes can be aired on television, were introduced in 1989, when television and radio was the dominant content provider and we all sat down around the television and watched the same programmes at the same time.

Currently, timebands generally only apply to FTA television (not pay television). The most well-known timeband is the 8.30pm watershed, when Adult Only programmes can be shown. But there are other timebands too, including showing only G-rated programmes before and after school. The idea is to provide a simple way for viewers to decide whether a programme is suitable for a young audience.

These days we can record programmes to watch later, choose on-demand content, or watch online channels like YouTube or Netflix at any time of the day or night. Now with Freeview, we also have the ability to restrict what children watch on FTA television, by applying parental locks to content that is classified for mature audiences (PGR) and adults (AO).

We have the following FTA classification/timeband combinations and would like to know which you use and whether you think they are all still needed:

**G** MAY BE SCREENED AT ANY TIME

**PGR** MAY BE SCREENED 9AM-4PM AND 7PM-6AM

**AO** MAY BE SCREENED MIDDAY-3PM ON WEEKDAYS (except during school and public holidays) AND 8.30PM-5AM.

## OTHER TOOLS TO HELP AUDIENCES MANAGE TELEVISION VIEWING BY CHILDREN

In addition to the timebands and classifications, there are other tools parents and caregivers can use to help decide what their children watch. These include parental locks (which can be used through Freeview or SKY set top boxes), warnings (audience advisories) which are aired before programmes, and programme information in television guides.

On FTA television, parental locks are used through the Freeview set top box to block programmes by setting a

maximum rating (G, PGR, AO) and any content above that rating requires a password to view it. On SKY, you can block programmes or whole channels and all R18 content needs a PIN.

Were you aware of the parental locks and would you use them?

We are considering whether it is time to change the timeband restrictions. Before we do this, we would like your views.

## OPTIONS FOR CHANGE

The BSA is considering the following options and would like your views on these:

### CLASSIFICATION LABELS:

1. No change – keep FTA labels (G, PGR, AO)
2. FTA television to adopt pay TV classification labels (G, PG, M, 16, 18)

### TIMEBANDS (ASSUMING A CHANGE TO PAY TV LABELS):

1. **NO CHANGE** – we keep the existing timebands
2. **ADJUST CURRENT PGR TIMEBAND:** G/PG (PGR) – screened any time (with suitable classification and warnings and ability to set parental locks for PG content);  
M (PGR/AO) – screened after 7.00pm (broadcasters will adopt responsible programming principles, which means they will have regard to children's interests and usual viewing times when scheduling PG and M content);  
16 and 18 (AO) screened after 8.30pm (broadcasters will adopt responsible programming principles, which means they will have regard to children's interests and usual viewing times when scheduling 16 and 18 content).
3. **TRANSITION TO REMOVAL OF TIMEBANDS:** Option 2 for 12 months, following which there is a move to option 4. During the 12-month transition broadcasters will advertise and raise awareness about availability and use of parental locks, so that parents and caregivers are aware of and know how to use them, before the change to remove timebands takes effect.
4. **REMOVE ALL TIMEBANDS** – but with principles that classifications, programme descriptions and audience advisories will be used and responsible programming (per above) will be adopted to enable parents and caregivers to restrict what their children watch and the watershed will apply where filtering technology/parental locks are not available.

## LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK BY:

- Completing the survey form that comes with this leaflet.
- Completing the survey online at [bsa.govt.nz](http://bsa.govt.nz)
- Emailing your feedback comments to: [info@bsa.govt.nz](mailto:info@bsa.govt.nz)
- Writing to: Broadcasting Standards Authority, PO Box 9213, Wellington 6141

In your written submissions please answer the following questions:

### CLASSIFICATIONS:

1. **Do you agree that FTA television should now adopt the pay television classification labels?**
  - a. If yes, what benefit will this bring?
  - b. If no, why not?

### TIMEBANDS

1. **Are you aware of the FTA television timebands?**
2. **Do you use them to decide what programmes children in your care should watch?**
3. **Do you think that the timeband restrictions on FTA television ought to change?**
  - a. If **NOT**, why not?
  - b. If **YES**, then which of the three options do you consider is most appropriate and why?
4. **Are you aware of the ways in which you can restrict access to content in your home?**
  - a. If **YES**, what tools do you use?
  - b. If **NO**, what are the barriers to use, and what would enable you to use the tools?

**All submissions and surveys must be received by 31 August 2018 and any written submissions will be posted on the BSA website.**

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