

IRISH FILM CLASSIFICATION OFFICE

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Annual Report of the Director of Film Classification 2021

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An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt  
Department of Justice

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IRISH FILM CLASSIFICATION OFFICE

To Helen McEntee T.D  
Minister for Justice

Dear Minister,

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Director of Film Classification for 2021 as prescribed by Section 29 of 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 as described on our website [www.ifco.ie](http://www.ifco.ie):

- 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 2021 a total of 293 films were certified for cinema release in Ireland. This is an increase of 13.1% on the previous year. This increase was due to the reopening of cinemas in the second half of 2021.

The total number of DVD titles certified in 2021 was 1,913, a decrease of just under 2.5% on the previous year.

During 2021 there were no decisions appealed to the Classification of Films Appeal Board.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ger Connolly, who retired as Director in February 2022. Ger served as Director of Film Classification since May 2016, was the Acting Director from 2009 to 2016 and was formerly an Assistant Censor and Deputy Director.

Ger played a crucial role in the evolution of this office in providing an informative, helpful resource for consumers and in particular, parents.

I would like to place on record my appreciation of the work done by my IFCO colleagues, the Assistant Classifiers and also the Governance team in the Department of Justice for their continued support.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'George Sinclair'.

George Sinclair  
Acting Director of Film Classification

## **Statements of Compliance with State Body**

### **Governance**

**1.** I confirm that an Oversight Agreement has been agreed with the Department of Justice, which indicates compliance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

**2.** An appropriate assessment of IFCO's principal risks has been carried out. The two main risks identified were:

- Possible Brexit implications of materials delivery from UK which could hamper our commitment to client service delivery.
- Possible breakdowns in online data transmission also resulting in delayed service delivery.

I am satisfied that measures taken by this office, particularly through the use of technology to provide reliable methods of IFCO receiving content, has addressed those risks.

**3.** IFCO is adhering to the Public Spending Code.

**4.** IFCO is compliant with Irish tax law.

**5.** On Behalf of the Irish Film Classification Office, I acknowledge my responsibility as Acting Director for ensuring an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated.

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a tolerable level rather than to eliminate it. The system can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or detected in a timely way.

### **Risk and Control**

A risk register is in place which identifies key risks facing IFCO and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance.

The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for operation of controls assigned to specific staff. I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- Procedures for all key business processes have been documented.
- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- There is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management.
- There are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems.
- There are systems in place to safeguard the assets.

### **Procurement**

I confirm that IFCO has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines.

### **Internal Control Issues**

No weaknesses in internal control were identified in 2021 that require disclosure.

### **Protected Disclosures**

I confirm that no Protected Disclosure submissions were made in respect of IFCO in 2021.

### **Financial control environment**

I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- Financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability.
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned.
- Formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.

### **Administrative controls and management reporting**

I confirm that a framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place, including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget, which is kept under review by management.

- There are regular reviews by management of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts.
- A risk management system operates within IFCO.
- IFCO ensures that there is an appropriate focus on good practice in purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant guidelines and procurement policy.

## **Compliance with Section 42 of the Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014**

I confirm that IFCO is in compliance with the relevant provisions of the Act having regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment of staff and persons to whom we provide services, and protection of human rights and service users.

These commitments are reflected, as required, in the current Strategic Plan.

'No issues.'

(Consumer advice for *Paw Patrol: The Movie* on IFCO's website)



Paw Patrol: The Movie

Director: Cal Brunker.





## **Key Developments in 2021**

### **Operational Activity**

The total number of cinema feature films certified during 2021 was 293, an increase of 13.1% on the previous year.

The total number of video works certified was 1,913. As the demand for physical DVDs continues to decrease so too will the number of submissions. This is also reflected in the number of Video Licences issued which has halved in the last 10 years.

### **Appeals**

There were no appeals regarding classification decisions in 2021.

### **Video Games**

During 2021, IFCO examined 23 games rated 18 by the Pan European Games Information System (PEGI) to ensure compliance with provisions of The Video Recordings Act, 1989.

This Pan European classification model for video games, instituted in 2003 with IFCO as a founding member, continues to evolve. George Sinclair is a member of the PEGI Council which establishes classification criteria.

### **Focus Groups/Presentations**

Due to Covid, IFCO was not in a position to conduct interactions with focus groups as it had been in previous years.

IFCO will seek to re-establish links with interested parties and will engage to roll out in person interactions and engagements.

### **Research**

The research project which examined suitability of classification guidelines, attitudes to, and awareness of, the work of IFCO and also possible future direction of the office went for tender in early 2020, has been completed and the findings will be published shortly.



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'Mild violence and threat.'

(Consumer advice for *Encanto* on IFCO's website)



Encanto

Director: Jared Bush, Byron Howard, Charise Castro Smith



## **Complaints**

During 2021, IFCO received 3 complaints from the public which related specifically to classifications awarded. This low volume is reasonable given the closure of cinemas for a significant part of the year.

## **Goals and Performance 2021**

The following were the main outcomes of the targets set for 2021:

- The number of classifications issued was 2,596 which was an increase of 5.8% on the total of classifications issued in 2020.
- The undertaking of wide, independent and statistically valid research was completed in 2021 and the findings will be published shortly.
- All client deadlines were achieved. This was greatly facilitated by the online delivery system introduced in 2019. This allowed viewing and classification of many video works remotely.
- The target of not exceeding €500,000 expenditure was achieved. The outturn for the year was €495,715.
- The income target of €660,000 was exceeded with a total income in 2021 of €821,598.

'Intense action consistent with the franchise.'

(Consumer advice for *Spider-Man: No Way Home* on IFCO's website)



Spider-Man: No Way Home

Director: Jon Watts.



## **Financial**

The fees charged by the Office for the certification of cinema films and DVD/videos and for the issuing of licences in 2021 were as follows:

• <b>Video</b>	<b>€353,092.88</b>
• <b>Film</b>	<b>€297,705.35</b>
• <b>Licences</b>	<b>€170,800.00</b>

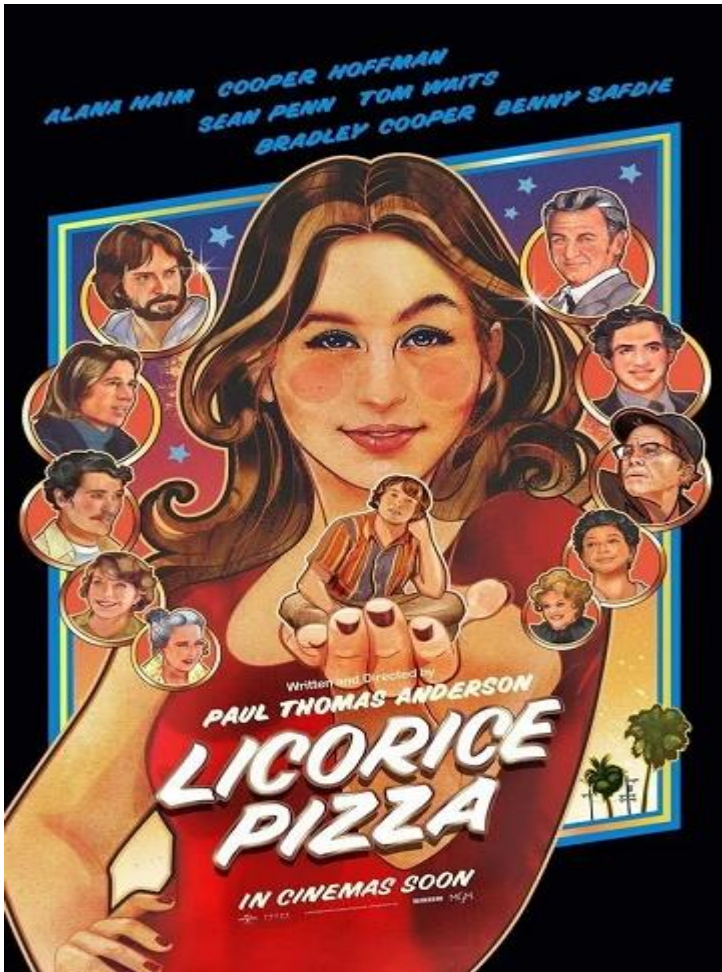
Total income received on behalf of the Department in 2021 was **€821,598.23**.



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Strong language, sex references and soft drug use.'

(Consumer advice for *Licorice Pizza* on IFCO's website)



Licorice Pizza

Director: Paul Thomas Anderson





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## Certification of Cinema Films

### Cinema Submissions Certified 2021

Features	289
Shorts	4
Trailers	<u>390</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>683</b>

### All by Category

G	149
PG	95
12A	237
15A	141
16	39
18	<u>22</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>683</b>

### Features/Shorts Certified by Category

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
G	41	45	31	33
PG	61	64	29	27
12A	124	138	75	91
15A	159	177	78	85
16	52	64	31	37
18	<u>23</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>20</u>
	<b>460</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>293</b>

### Single Country of Origin

67	USA
60	UK
22	India
14	Ireland
11	Japan
9	Poland
8	France
3	China
2	Denmark
2	Germany
2	South Korea
1	Australia
1	Canada
1	Djibouti
1	Iran
1	Italy
1	Netherlands
1	Spain
<b>207</b>	<b>Total</b>

### Multiple Country of Origin

11	UK/USA
8	Canada/USA
4	USA/Canada
4	USA/UK
2	Australia/USA
2	France/Belgium
2	UK/Canada/USA
2	USA/Australia
1	Canada/Belgium
1	Canada/Ivory Coast/France/Senegal
1	China/USA
1	Colombia/Thailand/France/Germany/UK
1	Czech Republic/France/Slovakia/Poland
1	Denmark/France/Sweden/Norway
1	Finland/Russia/Estonia/Germany
1	France/Germany/Belgium/Chad
1	France/Japan/USA
1	France/Luxembourg/Belgium
1	France/Mexico/USA
1	France/USA
1	Germany/Chile/UK/USA
1	Germany/USA/Canada
1	Hungary/Latvia/France/Germany
1	Iceland/Sweden/Poland
1	Ireland/Canada/USA/UK
1	Ireland/UK
1	Ireland/USA
1	Mexico/France
1	Norway/Sweden/Denmark
1	Norway/USA/UK
1	Peru/Netherlands
1	Poland/Germany/Netherlands
1	Romania/Lux/Czechia/Croatia/Switzerland/UK
1	Spain/UK
1	Switzerland/France/Argentina
1	Tunisia/France/Belgium/Germany
1	UK/Australia/USA/Canada/New Zealand
1	UK/Canada
1	UK/China/USA
1	UK/France
1	UK/France/Germany/USA
1	UK/Germany/USA
1	UK/India
1	UK/Ireland
1	UK/Italy
1	UK/Italy/Romania
1	UK/UAE
1	UK/USA/Canada/Italy
1	UK/USA/UAE/Japan
1	USA/Canada/Japan
1	USA/Czech Republic/Romania/UK
1	USA/Greece
1	USA/Iceland
1	USA/Ireland/Canada
1	USA/Mexico
1	USA/Mexico/Canada
1	USA/Serbia
1	USA/UK/Cyprus/Russia
<b>86</b>	<b>Total</b>





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'Strong violence and bloody action.'

(Consumer advice for *The Suicide Squad* on IFCO's website)

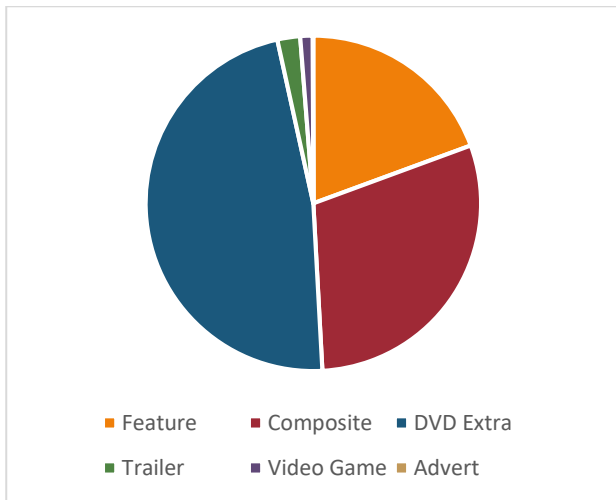


The Suicide Squad

Director: James Gunn

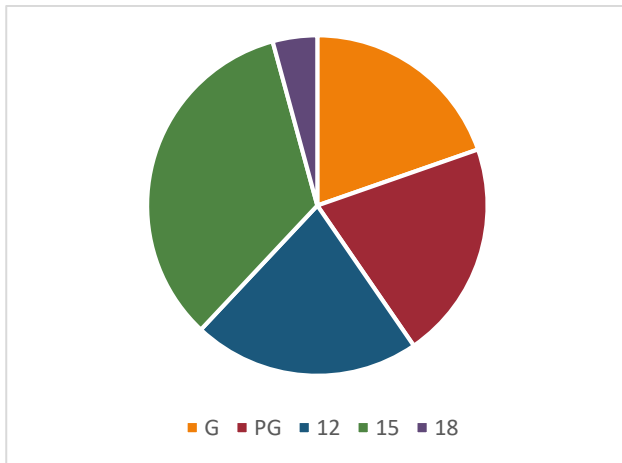


## Certification of Video/DVDs 2021



### By Type of Work

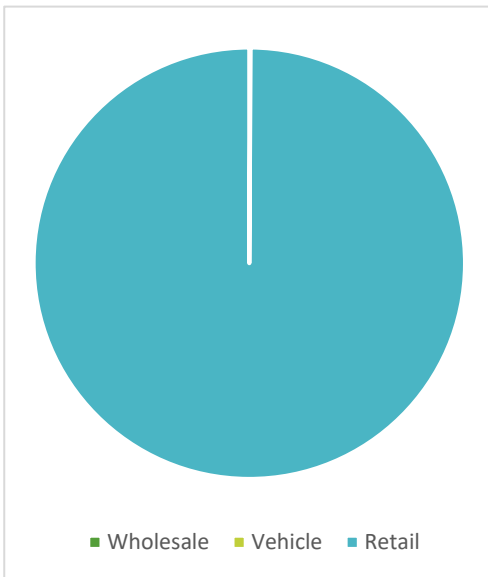
Feature	371
Composite	569
DVD Extra	907
Trailer	42
Video Game	23
Advert	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1913</b>



### DVD/Video Works Classified by Category

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
G	471	385	545	376
PG	436	306	421	397
12	657	489	354	413
15	929	653	566	646
18	128	109	75	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>2621</b>	<b>1942</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1913</b>

**Licences Issued 2021**



Wholesale	0
Vehicle	0
<u>Retail</u>	<u>605</u>
Total	605



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'Strong sexual violence, violence, sex and language.'

(Consumer advice for *The Last Duel* on IFCO's website)



The Last Duel

Director: Ridley Scott



## **Classification Team**

### **Acting Director of Film Classification**

George Sinclair was appointed as Acting Director in February 2022.

He represents Ireland on the Council of PEGI, the Pan European Games classification system.

### **Part-Time Assistant Classifiers During 2021**

#### **Zélie Asava**

PhD in Film Studies

#### **Mark Brennan**

Journalist

#### **Niamh McCole**

PhD in Film Studies

#### **David Power**

TV Producer

#### **Martin Scanlon**

Barrister

[www.ifco.ie](http://www.ifco.ie)



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