

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) about the classification of *Final Fantasy XVI*, which we received on 21 August 2023.

You said:

Requesting following for Final Fantasy XVI PS5

By email:

- Examination transcript;
- Consideration Sheet;
- Summary of Reasons any Discussions in meetings, emails notes. especially regarding the Suicide in the game.
- Supplementary materials (could be video footage, content declaration questionnaire, cheat codes);
- Screenshots showing information from the database as seen by OFLC;
- Emails and its attachment to and/or from FVLB, OFLC, distributor,
- publisher, developer;

- Forms and its attachment to and/or from FVLB, OFLC, distributor, publisher, developer, Any other correspondence relating to this game.

In responding to your request, we have weighed up the factors in the OIA, including the purposes in <u>section 4</u> and the principle of availability in <u>section 5</u>.

Response to your request

Information we have decided to release

Please find attached to this letter a file containing the information you have requested.

Attached to this letter is a file containing all of the available information that you have requested that we have decided to release. This includes:

- the submission form and request for urgent classification from the publisher of *Final Fantasy XVI*;
- the consideration sheet and register page for Final Fantasy XVI;
- screenshots of the relevant record in the Classification Database Application and of the relevant classification Trello card; and
- relevant emails held by the Classification Office.



Parts of some of these documents have been withheld under section 9 of the OIA.

Information we have decided not to release

The publisher of *Final Fantasy XVI* supplied the Classification Office with two files in confidence to assist with the examination and classification of this game.

We have reviewed this supplementary material and consider that its release would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

We also believe that releasing this material would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the publisher's commercial position.

Accordingly, your request for supplementary material is declined under sections 9(2)(ba)(i) and 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA.

Information that is not available to release

Neither an examination transcript nor a summary of reasons were produced for this title.

Accordingly, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA.

Publication of response

This response may be published on the Classification Office's <u>website</u>. If it is published there, your personal information will be redacted.

Right of review

You have the right to make a complaint and seek a review by the Ombudsman of this response, and decision to transfer part of your request, under <u>section 28(3) of the OIA</u>. Information about this process is available at <u>ombudsman.parliament.nz</u> or freephone 0800 802 602.

Thank you for your interest in our mahi.

Ngā mihi nui, Te Mana Whakaatu—Classification Office



Final Fantasy XVI Release of information about

classification decision

Doc	ument		Date	Page & link
1.	Form (a) (b)	n s Submission form Urgency form	12 December 2022 11 January 2023	2 <u>4</u>
2.	Class (a) (b)	sification documents Consideration sheet Register page	17 January 19 January	<u>5</u> <u>15</u>
3.	Class (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g)	sification database Outline page Requests page (i) Urgency – Outline page (ii) Urgency – Status History page Addressees page Related Publications page Versions page Decisions page History page	11 January 11 January 11 January 11 January 11 January 11 January 18 January 1 February	16 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
4.	Trello	o card	9 December 2022– 1 March 2023	<u>26</u>
5.	Emai	il correspondence	10–11 January 2023	<u>31</u>

FREEPHONE: 0508 236 767 PHONE: +64 4 471 6770 EMAIL: info@classificationoffice.govt.nz Level 1, 88 The Terrace, PO Box 1999, Wellington 6140, New Zealand www.classificationoffice.govt.nz

Film and Game Submission Form



OFFICE OF FILM & LITERATURE CLASSIFICATION Te Tari Whakaröpü Tukuata, Tuhituhinga

Title:	Final Fantasy XV	1
	[_] Feature	[_] Trailer [X] Game Po {<u>t</u>d}r / Slick
Translated Titl	e or A.K.A.:	
Director:	Hiroshi Taka	
Producer:	Naoki Yoshic	a Year of Production: 2022
Country of Ori	gin: Japan	Release Date: 22/06/2023
Language:	EFIGS	Running Time: 0.00
Media:	Computer Game	Format/Zone:
For Theatrical:	[_]	
# of Trailers/Ex Footage:	ktra 0 	Barcode 5021290096868 Catalogue : Number:
Request for U	Irgency [X]	Request for Waiver or Group Submission [_] Digital Label Required [_]
For Office U	se Only	Publication #: 2300014.000
Received by: ^{§9}		
Date Received	· <u>```</u>	
11/01/2023	e ^O	
Applicant In	formation	
Applicant: E	Bandai Namco Game	s NZ Ltd Phone: S <i>9(2)(a)</i>
-	Kerrin OConnor	Email:
	evel 2, Suite 2. 33-97 Kippax Street	Application Date: 12/12/2022
9	Surry Hills, NSW 2010 Australia	Purchase Order:
Contents		Run Time
Final Fantasy	XVI	
No extra footage	chosen	

Distributor Declaration

The following components of the publication submitted for examination will NOT appear on the version that is to be made available to the public:

Please specify – e.g. burnt-in time code, trade on promotional notices, trailer, etc.

Released under the Official Information

URGENCY REQUEST (Pursuant to Regulation 4, Films, Videos, And Publications

Dep Clas PO I WEI	e: 11 January 2023 uty Chief Censor of F ssification Office Box 1999 LLINGTON	(Pursuant to Regulation 4 Classification (Film and Literature	Fees) Regulations 1994		1987
The	WEEK COMMENCING	v are the preferred urgent titles for examination li TITLE	Sted in order of priority. MEDIUM	RUNNING TIME	APPLICANT
1	16 th JANUARY	FINAL FANTASY XVI	Game		Bandai Namco
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		Signed	s 9(2)(a)		<u> </u>

s 9 (a) Signed Representative of Film & Video Labelling Body Inc.



Consideration Sheet

OFLC ref:	2300014.000
Submission channel:	s12(1)
Title of publication:	Final Fantasy XVI
Other known title:	Not stated
Medium:	Computer Game
Distributor:	Bandai Namco Games NZ Ltd
Director:	Hiroshi Takai
Country of origin:	Japan
Language:	English
Applicant:	Film & Video Labelling Body
X/*	9
Examination transcript No:	N/A
Examination date:	17 January 2023
Other identifying	

Components of Film

Components of film originally examined:

	Components	Running time
Game:	Final Fantasy XVI	<u> </u>
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Consideration of the Publication under the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1994 (FVPC Act)

Description

Final Fantasy XVI is a fantasy action role-playing game, played in the third person perspective. It is the sixteenth instalment in the series of *Final Fantasy* games.

The player assumes the role of Clive, the son of an archduke, who is tasked with protecting Joshua, his younger brother who is host to a powerful phoenix Eikon. The game takes place in the kingdom of Valisthea, where Clive and Joshua's kingdom has been destroyed by a dark Eikon. Clive is sent on a revenge quest in pursuit of the Eikon, meeting and battling against other dangerous characters along the way.

Throughout the game, players can interact with non-playable characters (NPCs) to trade or buy items, and can play side-quests to build relationships. To progress the storyline, the game is also interspersed with a series of animated cutscenes.

The game will be released on the PlayStation 5.

Section 3	Section 3(1): the Subject Matter Gateway			
Does the p	Does the publication describe, depict, express, or otherwise deal with matters such as:			
_	– Sex ¹			
\checkmark	Horror			
carnivorou neverthele	Horror is low level. The game includes fantastical creatures, such as goblins, dragons and carnivorous plants, which attack Clive. These creatures can appear macabre, but are nevertheless beautifully rendered and visually attractive. An eerie sound design also adds to the overall atmosphere.			
	Crime			
Leo.				
	Cruelty			

¹ Note that a publication can be found to deal with a matter such as sex if (a) the publication is or contains 1 or more visual images of 1 or more children or young persons who are nude or partially nude; and (b) those 1 or more visual images are, alone, or together with any other contents of the publication, reasonably capable of being regarded as sexual in nature. (s 3(1A)).

Violence is occasionally cruel. See section 3(3)(a)(i) for discussion. ✓ Violence See section 3(3)(a)(i) for discussion. – None of the above, proceed to s 3A and s 3B	Section 3	B(1): the Subject Matter Gateway
See section 3(3)(a)(i) for discussion.	Violence is	s occasionally cruel. See section 3(3)(a)(i) for discussion.
	\checkmark	Violence
- None of the above, proceed to s 3A and s 3B	See sectio	on 3(3)(a)(i) for discussion.
	_	None of the above, <u>proceed to s 3A and s 3B</u>

Section 3(2): Certain publications are "deemed to be objectionable" Does the content of the publication raise any of these issues? If it does, discuss, and conclude whether the publication promotes or supports, or tends to promote or support, that matter. s 3(2)(a) The exploitation of children or young persons for sexual purposes s 3(2)(b) The use of violence or coercion to compel a person to participate in, or submit to, sexual conduct s 3(2)(c) Sexual conduct with or upon the body of a dead person s 3(2)(d) The use of urine or excrement in association with degrading or dehumanising conduct or sexual conduct s 3(2)(e) Bestiality s 3(2)(f) Acts of torture or the infliction of extreme violence or extreme cruelty \checkmark None of the above

Section 3(2): Certain publications are "deemed to be objectionable"

If the publication promotes or supports (or tends to) any of these matters, could excisions be used to remove the problematic content?

_	Yes. Consider the rest of the publication under s 3(3) and s 3(4) and discuss the required excisions in the conclusion.	
_	No. The publication is deemed to be objectionable. Proceed to Conclusion	

Section 3(3): Matters to be given particular weight

If any of the following criteria apply, discuss in terms of the extent and degree to which, and the manner in which, the publication:

✓ s 3(3)(a)(i) Deals with the infliction of torture, serious physical harm, significant cruelty

The game features a moderate extent and degree of serious physical harm, with elements of cruelty. Gameplay involves battles between magical humans and fantastical creatures, such as dragons, wolves, reptiles, fairies and carnivorous plants. The game is inherently violent because it requires the player to kill enemies to progress the story. If the player fails to act against an attack, they are quickly mauled or bludgeoned to death, and the game is lost.

Battles occur in boxy arenas and require the player to minimise damage to themselves while choosing the opportune moment to make stronger attacks. The majority of attackers are easily dispatched, with the exception of Eikons or Dominants, which are 'boss' characters. These boss characters are difficult to kill - they require more time and skill. Players rely on magic or bladed weapons, such as swords, to attack their enemy. Other creatures use fireballs, magic spells or their bodies during battle. Magical strikes include sparks, colourful arcs of light, and the occasional split-second blood sprays. The combat can be intense but players have little time to dwell on the infliction of pain and injury as they must take a broad view of the action so they can dodge attacks. Players can use potions and other collectables to restore their health during battles.

If an enemy is killed, their body remains in the environment, accompanied by puddles of blood. Their injuries are not shown in any detail. If the player is killed, their body regenerates and they return to battle. It is impossible to injure or kill the non-magical human characters so all combat is directed towards magical humans and creatures, with varied interactions depending on their role within the game.

Some of the non-interactive cutscenes portray a somewhat stronger degree of violence. One such scene depicts Joshua watching his kingdom being invaded. He watches a soldier hold his father down and stab him. Joshua's face is sprayed with blood. Another cutscene briefly shows a soldier slitting a woman's throat from behind, causing a small bloody spray. While

	3(3): Matters to be given particular weight
	at cruel, these scenes are not particularly detailed and quickly cut away, focusing the emotional impact of the characters deaths.
_	s 3(3)(a)(ii) Deals with sexual violence or sexual coercion, or violence or coercion in association with sexual conduct
-	s 3(3)(a)(iii) Deals with other sexual or physical conduct of a degrading or dehumanising or demeaning nature
_	s 3(3)(a)(iv) Deals with sexual conduct with or by children or young persons
_	s 3(3)(a)(v) Deals with physical conduct in which sexual satisfaction is derived from inflicting or suffering cruelty or pain
_	s 3(3)(b) Exploits the nudity of children or young persons
_	s 3(3)(c) Degrades or dehumanises or demeans any person
	2°
_	s 3(3)(d) Promotes or encourages criminal acts or acts of terrorism
sled	s 3(3)(e) Represents that members of any particular class of the public are inherently inferior to other members of the public by reason of an characteristic that is a prohibited ground of discrimination specified in s 21(1) of the Human Rights Act 1993
_	The publication doesn't deal with any s 3(3) criteria

Section 3	A:			
extent or a	publication contain highly offensive language to such an degree that it is likely to seriously harm viewers under a	_	Yes	
certain ag	e?	\checkmark	No	
	cluding any necessary consideration of offensive language to any highly offensive language which is not likely to cause		U ,	g
lesser exte	", 'bastard' and 'cock' are occasionally used both colloquially ent, aggressively. For example, "I'll fucking kill you!" While the may startle children, the low extent means it is unlikely to en	use of hi	ghly offensive	е
Section 3	в:			
Does the p	publication contain any of the following material?			
_	Harm to a person's body, including self-inflicted death, self body modification (other than any already discussed unde			اد
	CTIC T			
_	Conduct that, if imitated, would pose a risk of serious harm than any already discussed under s 3(3) criteria).	to self or	others (othe	۶r
	, the			
	Physical conduct of a degrading, dehumanising or demea	ning natu	ire (other tha	ın

Visual images of a person's body that alone or with any other contents of the publication are of a degrading, dehumanising or demeaning nature (other than any already discussed under s 3(3) criteria).

None of the above

any already discussed under s 3(3) criteria).

 \checkmark

Section 3B:

Does the extent and degree of the material make the publication likely to cause any of the following harms to young people under a specified age because of their general levels of emotional and intellectual development and maturity?

- Cause them to be greatly disturbed or shocked
- Increase significantly the risk of them killing, or causing serious harm to, themselves, others, or both
- Encourage them to treat or regard themselves, others, or both, as degraded, dehumanised or demeaned.

Discuss likely harm/s or why the content is unlikely to cause these harms:

Submissions & consultations (if applicable)		
_	Consultation or enquiries required under s 21	
_	Submissions received from interested parties under s 20	

Any other information to be taken into account (if relevant)

(e.g. previous OFLC decisions, decisions of other classification bodies, research, books, articles, reviews, etc.)

UK: Not classified as at 18.01.2023. *Final Fantasy XIV* classified 12 Contains infrequent moderate language and sex references (2010) Australia: Not classified as at 18.01.2023.

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Conclusion

- In addition to all of the above matters, consider relevant s 3(4) matters: the dominant effect of the publication, character of the publication (including any merit, value or importance), impact of the medium, intended or likely audience, intended purpose, and any other relevant circumstances relating to its use
- Identify any likely injury to the public good from the unrestricted availability of the publication
- Determine the classification, taking into account the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 (NZBORA) and the need to impose the least restrictive limitation on the right to freedom of expression that will prevent injury to the public good

Final Fantasy XVI is a story-heavy and character-driven aesthetically pleasing fantasy-action game, which is likely to appeal to fans of the genre and series.

While the game deals with matters of violence, and to a lesser extent cruelty and horror, this is to a limited degree. The magical context and lack of injury detail means the violent content is unlikely to be injurious to the public good. The slightly stronger cutscenes focus on the emotional factors driving Clive's revenge plot and have a limited overall impact, although they are not suitable for young children. The occasional use of offensive language is not likely to seriously harm young viewers but indicates a mature intended audience.

Considering this, the publication is classified as unrestricted but with a recommendation that it is more suited to mature audiences aged 16 and over. This unrestricted classification does not impede the right to freedom of expression.

Classification
Unrestricted M
Descriptive note to cover: Violence and offensive language
Excisions (if applicable)

Display conditions (restricted publications only)Are display conditions necessary?-Yes

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Reason for any displa	y conditions:		
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Classification Office Decision

Title of publication:	Final Fantasy XVI	
Other known title(s):	Not stated	
OFLC ref:	2300014.000	S
Medium:	Computer Game	****
Distributor:	Bandai Namco Games NZ Ltd	PC.
Director:	Hiroshi Takai	0
FVLB Applicant:	Bandai Namco Games NZ Ltd	
Country of origin:	Japan	
Language:	English	
Applicant:	Film & Video Labelling Body	
Classification:	Unrestricted: Suitable for mature audiences	16 years of age and
	over.	
Excisions:	over. No excisions recommended	
Excisions: Descriptive note:	0	
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Descriptive note:	No excisions recommended Contains violence and offensive language. None	
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Descriptive note: Display conditions: Date of entry in Register Date of direction to issue a label:	No excisions recommended Contains violence and offensive language. None r: 19 January 2023 No direction to issue a label has been issued	Running time
Descriptive note: Display conditions: Date of entry in Register Date of direction to issue a label:	No excisions recommended Contains violence and offensive language. None r: 19 January 2023 No direction to issue a label has been issued	

Summary of reasons for decision:

Not Applicable

Publication Search Screen > Publication

Publication Outline for Final Fantasy XVI

	Streency Met			
Publication Number:	2300014.000			
* Publication Title:	Final Fantasy XVI			
Other Known Titles:				
* Submission Channel:	s12(1)		* Medium:	Computer Game
Is Associated Advertising?:				
Language:	Abkhazian Aboriginal Afar Afrikaans	English	•	ACT
Country of Origin:	Afghanistan Albania Algeria American Samoa 🔻	Japan	notic	
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Examination Transcript No:	N/A		ISBN:	
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File Notes		O		
Select Date:	Created By:	File Note:		
Release	15/02/2023 <u>59(2)(8</u>		On 19 January, Te Mana Wh classified Final Fantasy XVI unrestricted M. On 26 Janu member of the Informatior noticed that the game had a Brazilian rating of 16 wit warnings that included sex violence, prostitution, and crimes. In addition, the gan rated M17+ by the ESRB an in Australia. We decided we more information. On 8 Fel we received additional foo the distributor. On 13 Febr Classification Advisor and t Advisors reviewed the foot noted that there were som stronger instances of blood partial nudity, but that this sufficiently concerning tha would reclassify the game. game retains its current cla tion and warnings.	ary, a l Unit received h ual hate me was d MA15+ e needed bruary, tage from uary a wo Senior age and e l and s was not t we The
Fee Details Expected Fee (\$): 214 Less (-) Fee Waiver:	46.65	Base Fee (\$): Plus (+) Urgency Amount (\$): Recovery (\$):	1431.10 715.55	
Corrigendum Details	Date Created:	Created By: *	Type: * Status:	

23, 11:48 AM		OFLC Publ	ication - Final Fanta	5y 🗸 VI	
	15/02/2023	s 9(2)(a)	Retro Admin	Complete	
	* Corrigendum Deta	rating in another t	erritory, the receipt	egarding the publication of extra footage from al rating and content	
Upload Document					
Submission form - Final Far	ntasy XVI.pdf	Publish Document?			
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Requests for Final Fantasy XVI

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2300014.000 Computer Game

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Outline for Urgency

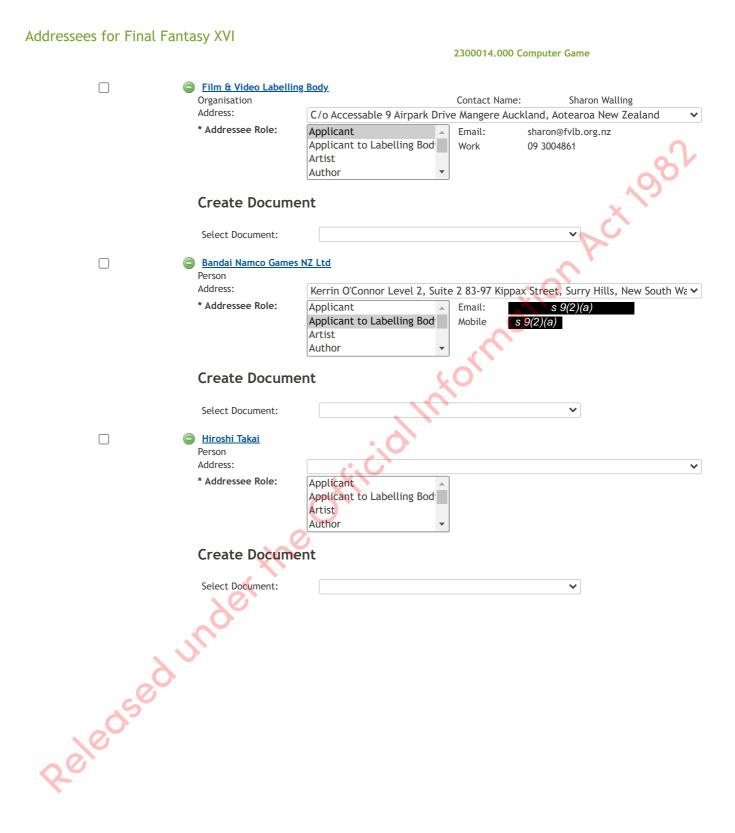
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Θ	Applicant Details				
	Applicant Name:	Film & Video Labelling Body	·. O`		
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	Contact Name:	Sharon Walling			
	Applicant Address:	C/o Accessable 9 Airpark Drive N	angere Auckland,	Aotearoa New Z	Zealand 🗸
	Phone Type:	Number:	Email: sharon	@fvlb.org.nz	
	Work	09 3004861			
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	Applicant to Labellin				
	Applicant Name:	<u>Bandai Namco Games NZ Ltd</u>			
	Person)
	Applicant Address:	Kerrin O'Connor Level 2, Suite 2			New South Wales, A 🗸
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		FANTASY XV under urgency [OFLC			
		2300014.000].pdf			

Status History for Urgency

Status	User Name	Date
Granted	Rupert Ablett-Hampson	11/01/2023
Awaiting Approval	s 9(2)(a)	11/01/2023
Logged	user Name Rupert Ablett-Hampson SO(2)(2) SO(2)(2)	
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Publication Search Screen > Publication



Related Publications for Final Fantasy XVI

2300014.000 Computer Game

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Publication Search Screen > Publication

Publication Versions for Final Fantasy XVI

			2300014.000 Computer Game
	Version 1		
	Publication Copied	: Date Copied:	
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Decisions for Final Fantasy XVI

2300014.000 Computer Game

Decision Summary

Create Date	Body	Classification	Туре	Excision Status
18/01/2023	<u>OFLC</u>	Unrestricted: Suitable for mature audiences 16 years of age and over.	No Excisions	~98'L
Consultation				
Consultation Required	:		P	
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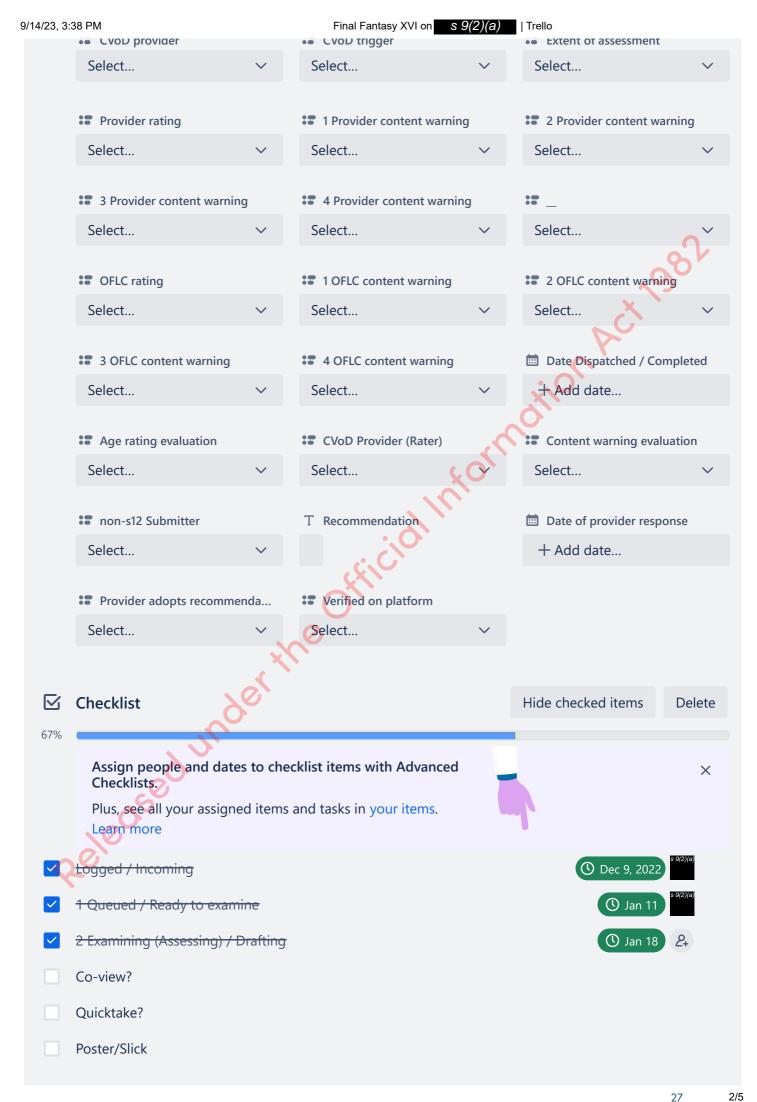
Publication History for Final Fantasy XVI





Cover









Final Fantasy XVI on s 9(2)(a) | Trello

^{s 9(2)(a)} s 9(2)(a) Jan 11 at 8:06 AM (edited) From FVLB, "FYI, the build is being sent through using Skeed SilverBullet, in case it comes to you direct. If not, I'll forward through this week." Waiting to be Queued Released under the Official Information Act 1982 C • <u>Reply</u>

From:	Nicola Denney
To:	<u>Submissions</u>
Cc:	<u>Games</u>
Subject:	RE: Ready for OFLC - FINAL FANTASY XV under urgency
Date:	Wednesday, 11 January 2023 10:12:11 am
Attachments:	image002.png
	Urgency Request Form FINAL FANTASY XVI.pdf
	Final Fantasy XVI PS5 age rating build - Please download the files sent from Kerrin O"Connormsg

Hi

otion Act 1982 Attached is a new urgency form with correct title. It should be FINAL FANTASY XVI, they submitted it incorrectly using XV. I've updated it online also.

Build is attached. I'll send password by separate email.

Kind Regards Nicola

Nicola Dennev Assistant General Manager



www.fvlb.org.nz | C/- Accessable, 9 Airpark Drive, Mangere, Auckland 2022, New Zealand | DDI +64 9 300-4861 | Mob s 9(2)(a)



From: Nicola Denney

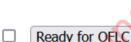
Sent: Tuesday, 10 January 2023 3:36 pm

To: Submissions (submissions@classificationoffice.govt.nz) <submissions@classificationoffice.govt.nz>

Cc: Games <Games@classificationoffice.govt.nz>

Subject: Ready for OFLC - FINAL FANTASY XV under urgency





Bandai Namco Games NZ Ltd

Final Fantasy XV

12/12/2022

Hiroshi

Takai

FYI, the build is being sent through using Skeed SilverBullet, in case it comes to you direct. If not, I'll forward through this week.

Kind Regards Nicola

Nicola Denney Assistant General Manager



www.fvlb.org.nz | C/- Accessable, 9 Airpark Drive, Mangere, Auckland 2022, New Zealand | DDI +64 9 300-4861 | Mob s 9(2)(a)

PLEASE CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENT BEFORE YOU PRINT THIS E-MAIL

Roleosed under the Official Information Act 1982

Password is below.

Kind Regards Nicola

Nicola Denney Assistant General Manager

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-----Original Message-----From: ^{\$9(2)(b)(1} [SkeedFileMessenger] <

s 9(2)(ba)(i)

Sent: Tuesday, 10 January 2023 3:39 pm

To: Nicola Denney <nicola@fvlb.org.nz>

Subject: Final Fantasy XVI PS5 age rating build [Password notification] Please download the files sent from Kerrin O'Connor.

Inform you the password to download the files sent from Kerrin O'Connor(s g(2)(a)

Password for Downloading: 9(2)(ba)(1) Keechington (1) Keeching

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From: Sent: To: Subject:	^{SECTOOM} [SkeedFileMessenger] < <u>S 9(2)(ba)(i)</u> > Tuesday, 10 January 2023 3:39 pm Nicola Denney Final Fantasy XVI PS5 age rating build - Please download the files sent from Kerr O'Connor.	in
Please receive the files se	nt from Kerrin O'Connor ($s 9(2)(a)$).	
Delivery Name: Final Fantasy XVI PS5 age	rating build	
Message from the Sender Hi Nicola - here's then do Thanks, Kerrin.	: wnload link for the game build. Supporting email will also be sent.	
Target Files: 1 files (83,7GBytes)	adtio.	
Password for Downloadin Inform you in a separate e		
Please download the files	until January 20, 2023 (Fri) 10:33:09 AM (Australia/West) from the page below. s 9(2)(ba)(i)	