

INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER

Q1 – 2025



From the Acting CEO's Desk

As we reflect on the first quarter of 2025, we are proud to share the strides that the Film and Publication Board (FPB) has taken in championing safer digital spaces and empowering South Africans through responsible media regulation.

The pace of digital innovation continues to accelerate, presenting both opportunities and new risks, particularly for children and vulnerable groups. In this evolving landscape, the FPB's role as a regulator remains critical. Our work this quarter has reinforced the importance of vigilance, agility, and collaboration in addressing harmful online content and upholding societal values.

During this period, we prioritised stakeholder engagement, strengthening our relationships across sectors to ensure a coordinated approach to content classification, compliance, and education. Our proactive outreach to schools and communities laid the groundwork for a more informed public, capable of making safer digital choices. In particular our awareness campaigns have gained momentum, supported by media platforms and civil society partners who share our mission.

Importantly, we remain focused on institutional sustainability. Our collaboration with social media platforms such as TikTok at their Digital Wellbeing Summit on the 26 June as well as with Meta at their Youth Summit 2025 on the 28 June shows our commitment in working closely with strategic partners in enabling a safe digital space for all.

Internally, we continue to refine our systems and embrace digital tools that improve our regulatory effectiveness. Investments in our ICT infrastructure and staff development are bearing fruit, enhancing our ability to respond swiftly and smartly to content-related challenges.

The road ahead is promising. As we move further into 2025, our focus will remain on ensuring financial sustainability for the FPB, collaborating with strategic partners in rolling out our Online Safety Programme as well as working very closely with law enforcement agencies in protecting children online.

"I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the FPB team, our partners, and the South African public for unwavering support in realising our vision, a society where content is consumed consciously, and children are protected at all costs," - Acting CEO Ephraim Tlhako

In this newsletter you can expect:

Celebrating Films

Crushing CSAM Crimes

CSAM reporting lines



Film and
Publication
Board

Content Regulatory Authority of South Africa.

Dear Esteemed Stakeholder,

We are pleased to present this edition of our newsletter, which focuses on the latest advancements, insights, and trends in content regulation, specifically designed for our esteemed industry partners.

As we navigate the dynamic landscape of content creation and distribution, our primary focus remains on protecting children and fostering responsible media practices. This newsletter highlights the collaborative efforts between industry stakeholders and our organisation, showcasing how, together, we are building a resilient and principled online environment, not just in South Africa but worldwide.

Stay informed and engaged as we work together to set industry standards that prioritize safety and ethical practices. We truly value your ongoing involvement and look forward to sharing details about our upcoming events in 2025.

Be sure to connect with us on social media and keep your contact information updated to receive the latest news on these important initiatives.

In this edition...

We are elated to announce our current Initiatives and strategic focus.

Happy reading!
Keep sending us your stories

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<https://www.fpb.org.za/newsletters/>



CSAM - Child Sexual Abuse Material

The FPB has worked with Law Enforcement Agency's to tackle 69 suspected CSAM cases (2020-2024), helping secure prosecutions and protecting children online.

Year	Referred cases	Content Analysed	CSAM Identified
2023/2024	18	90 142	51 143
2022/2023	12	176 406	12 122
2021/2022	16	49 390	8 789
2020/2021	23	733 810	27 174

Milestone

FPB IDENTIFIES 99,000+ CSAM FILES IN FOUR YEAR CRACKDOWN

HALF A CENTURY OF FILMS – A MODERN EYE

Movies that turn 50 in 2025 and how the FPB's role evolved beyond

As 2025 unfolds, several cinematic classics are celebrating their golden anniversaries. Films released in 1975 like *Jaws*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, and *Dog Day Afternoon* have now stood the test of time, becoming cultural milestones that continue to influence global audiences. In South Africa, the redistribution and re-release of such films through streaming services, cinemas, and public screenings highlights a critical role played by the FPB even in relation to content that predates the FPB's establishment.



From being labeled censorship to classification

While the FPB was officially established in 1996, its mandate reflects a clear break from the former Censorship Board. Where the previous regime sought to suppress, the FPB exists to empower, educate, and protect, balancing the right to freedom of expression with the need to shield children and vulnerable groups from harmful content.

As these 50-year-old films resurface in modern formats, the FPB's relevance becomes even more evident. Their reclassification for streaming, public viewing, or educational use ensures content is contextualized for today's audience, particularly in an era where access is borderless and on-demand.

Why reclassification matters

Content from 1975 was created in a vastly different socio-political and cultural climate. Scenes involving violence, outdated gender norms, language, or substance use may require updated age ratings and consumer advisories to ensure viewers, especially young ones are informed.

Rather than censor or ban, the FPB works to inform choices, allowing audiences to engage critically and responsibly with historic cinema. This ensures South Africans are not shielded from the past but can instead understand and reflect on it, with the right tools in place.

Celebrating legacy, promoting responsibility

Movies that turned 50 in 2025 are not just old, they're timeless. And through our evolving classification framework, the FPB helps preserve their legacy while reaffirming the importance of protecting the public in a digital age.

As we continue to encounter older films in new formats, we remain committed to ensuring that content is age-appropriate, context aware, and culturally relevant proving that even decades later, classification matters more than ever.

CSAM FILES EXPOSED

FPB identifies 99,000+ CSAM files in four year crackdown

In collaboration with law enforcement agencies, we made significant strides in tackling the scourge of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) between 2020 and 2024. Through its vigilant classification, analysis, and partnership with authorities, the FPB has helped secure prosecutions and contributed to the protection of children in the digital space.

From 2020 to 2024, the FPB worked on 69 suspected CSAM cases, analysing millions of digital files to identify and flag exploitative content. The data highlights not only the volume of material processed but also the agency's growing efficiency and commitment to child protection.

Key Yearly Highlights:

2020/2021:

- 23 cases referred
- A staggering 733,810 pieces of content analysed
- 27,174 instances of CSAM identified

This period marks a major milestone, with the highest volume of content examined. The sheer scale of material suggests the increasing threat posed by online platforms used to share such illegal content.

2021/2022:

- 16 cases referred
- 49,390 pieces of content analysed
- 8,789 CSAM items identified

Though fewer cases were referred, the FPB continued to uncover large volumes of harmful material. This year demonstrated a more targeted focus on cases with high-yield evidence.

2022/2023:

- 12 cases referred
- 176,406 items analysed
- 12,122 instances of CSAM identified

The volume of content analysed rose significantly again, reflecting either more complex cases or broader digital sweeps in coordination with law enforcement.

2023/2024:

- 18 cases referred
- 90,142 items of content analysed
- 51,143 CSAM images and videos identified

This year revealed a sharp increase in the number of CSAM materials identified. Despite fewer items analysed compared to 2022/2023, the detection rate surged suggesting better tools, improved targeting, or more severe cases. Over the four years, the FPB has strengthened its role not just as a classification authority, but as a vital partner in South Africa's fight against digital child exploitation. The organisation's ability to adapt and evolve with the changing nature of online threats is evident in its increasingly efficient identification and analysis of CSAM.

ANALYSED CSAM STATS

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GOT A COMPLAINT?

REPORT INAPPROPRIATE ONLINE CONTENT & MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY



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