

# Arnold Bloch Leibler

Lawyers and Advisers



## Mark Leibler AC, LLB (Hons) (Melb) LLM (Yale) Senior Partner

- Australian Taxation Office (ATO) audits and dispute resolution
- corporate strategy
- tax, estate and trust planning

Mark Leibler is one of Australia's leading tax lawyers and corporate strategists. As the senior partner of law firm Arnold Bloch Leibler, and head of its taxation practice, Mark has, for over 35 years, acted in the tax affairs of Australia's largest businesses and many of the nation's corporate leaders.

Mark joined Arnold Bloch Leibler in 1966 and became a partner in 1969. He graduated from The University of Melbourne's Law School with first class honours, sharing the Supreme Court Prize awarded to the year's top law graduate, and later obtained a Master of Laws with honours from Yale University.

Under Mark's leadership, Arnold Bloch Leibler's taxation practice has developed an unparalleled reputation in Australia. It has achieved outstanding results, particularly in the areas of complex tax audits, corporate tax strategy, and tax, estate and trust planning.

Mark is at the cutting edge of taxation law and his input into government tax policy has been sought under successive governments. He has been Deputy Chairman and Chairman of the Law Council of Australia's Taxation Committee, and at various times was a member of the Commissioner of Taxation's Advisory Panel and the National Tax Liaison Group. In April 2008, Mark was appointed to the Australian Tax Office's High Wealth Individuals Taskforce consultancy group.

A highly sought after keynote speaker, Mark is regularly asked to address industry groups on issues of taxation and revenue law reform. He has published many articles on taxation and related subjects in major Australian professional and taxation publications and is a frequent media commentator on taxation issues. Mark is the only practising lawyer cited in a *Business Review Weekly* survey that identified the 50 most influential business people in Australia. He has also been cited among the nation's 30 pre-eminent lawyers by Australian Legal Business and, in 2008, was included in the inaugural Australian edition of *Best Lawyers International*.

Mark is also an active contributor to the wider corporate community in Australia and, at the invitation of the former Prime Minister, was a delegate to the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) Business Summit held in Sydney in September 2007. He is a former Director of Coles Myer Limited, then Australia's largest retailer. On his retirement from the Board of Coles Myer after nearly ten years of service, Mark's outstanding contribution, particularly in the areas of audit, corporate governance and legal issues, was publicly acknowledged by the company.

An activist in the area of social justice and public affairs, Mark is a tireless supporter of Indigenous rights. Since 1993, Arnold Bloch Leibler has acted on behalf of the Yorta Yorta in their native title claim, and the firm continues to provide pro bono services to a range of Indigenous and charitable organisations. Mark was appointed to the board of Reconciliation Australia when it was established in 2000 and served as Co-Chair from February 2005 to February 2011.

Reconciliation Australia is a not-for-profit organisation established by the Commonwealth Government that promotes reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for the wellbeing of the future of the nation. In December 2010, Mark was appointed by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, as Co-Chair of the Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians. In March 2008, Arnold Bloch Leibler became the first law firm to launch a Reconciliation Action Plan at which the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, the Hon Jenny Macklin, acknowledged Mark's leadership of Reconciliation Australia, describing him as "an inspiration to many". She also acknowledged his role and that of Reconciliation Australia "in making possible the national apology and the events surrounding this very significant step in the reconciliation process". In 2009, the then Australian Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd, recognised Mark's longstanding dedication to reconciliation, stating that his work "has been simply outstanding over many years."

In 2007, Mark was the recipient of a Distinguished Pro Bono Service Award from the Victoria Law Foundation for his tireless commitment to advancing Indigenous rights, both in the local and national settings. In June 2008, Julia Gillard, who was Deputy Prime Minister at that time, recognised his involvement in an address to the Jewish National Fund, saying: "I acknowledge the outstanding contribution of so many Jewish Australians to the cause of reconciliation, including Mark Leibler, Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia".

Mark is also Deputy Chairman of the National Australia Bank Yachad Scholarship Fund, which enables Australian scholars of diverse backgrounds – including Indigenous scholars – to study in Israel and to return with ideas and experiences of advantage to Australia. His 2006 essay 'Crossing the Wilderness: Jews and Reconciliation', published in *New Under the Sun – Jewish Australians on Religion, Politics & Culture*, examined the parallels between the Jewish and Indigenous Australian experience and considered the importance of land to both cultures.

Mark is deeply involved in Jewish affairs, occupying senior leadership roles in several Australian and international Jewish bodies. In Australia, he holds the positions of National Chairman of the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council, Life Chairman of the United Israel Appeal of Australia and Governor of the Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce. He is also a Patron of the Victorian Chapter of the Australian Friends of Tel Aviv University. Mark served for ten years as President of the Zionist Federation of Australia and for six years as the President of the United Israel Appeal of Australia. Internationally, Mark recently completed his term as Chairman of the World Board of Trustees of Keren Hayesod – United Israel Appeal, serves on the executive of the Jewish Agency for Israel, and holds office as a Governor of both Tel Aviv University and the University of Haifa in Israel.



Mark's contributions to political and legal life in Australia, and his service to the Jewish community and Australia-Israel relations, have also been publicly recognised by successive Australian governments. At Arnold Bloch Leibler's 50th anniversary celebration in 2003, the then Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon John Howard, observed: "I have known Mark Leibler for more than twenty years. I don't think in my life I have met a person with a keener intellect, a sharper sense of advocacy for the causes in which he believes, and also a great capacity to generously see another point of view". At the 2008 launch of the United Israel Appeal in Melbourne, Australia's former Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, publicly recognised Mark saying: "I acknowledge the great contribution you have made as an Australian business leader and as a member of the Jewish community. We thank you for your leadership".

In 2009, Israeli and World Jewish leaders celebrated the completion of Mark's four-year term as Chairman of the World Board of Trustees Keren Hayesod-UIA. In a screened video message, the then Australian Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd honoured Mark's achievements and described him as "a proud son of Australia, a proud son and leader of the Australian Jewish community". The Hon John Howard also paid tribute by saying, "I want to salute his contribution to Jewish causes within his own country and also around the world. Mark is a single-minded, committed, dedicated Jew, a man who believes in the integrity of the State of Israel, and a man who in every way has demonstrated himself as being a wonderful Australian citizen".

In 1987, he was appointed an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia in recognition of his service to the community, in particular to the Jewish community. In 2005, Mark was appointed a Companion in the General Division of the Order of Australia in recognition of his service to business, to the law, particularly in the areas of taxation and commercial law, to the Jewish community internationally and in Australia, and to reconciliation and the promotion of understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. A Companion in the Order of Australia is the highest honour within the Order of Australia and is awarded for eminent achievement and merit of the highest degree in service to Australia or to humanity at large.

### **To contact Mark Leibler**

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