

Citation - Mark Leibler

Mark Leibler is one of Australia's leading tax lawyers and corporate strategists, and is the senior partner of law firm Arnold Bloch Leibler, and head of its taxation practice.

Over his career he has played a significant role in the area of social justice and public affairs. For over two decades he has been a tireless supporter of Indigenous rights and empowering Indigenous communities.

As a leading taxation lawyer, Mark has been a strong advocate for reform, and has committed many hours on a voluntary basis to serve on committees and advisory groups to share his expertise.

Mark 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 National Tax Liaison Group. He was appointed in 2008 to the Australian Tax Office's High Wealth Individuals Taskforce consultancy group.

Mark graduated from The University of Melbourne's Law School in 1966 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. He joined Arnold Bloch Leibler in 1966 and became a partner in 1969.

Mark is deeply involved in Jewish affairs, occupying senior leadership roles in several Australian and international Jewish bodies. Mark is National Chairman of the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) and a Governor of the Australia Israel Chamber of Commerce. He is a past Chairman of the World Board of Trustees of Keren Hayesod – United Israel Appeal, a member of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Israel and a member of the Board of Governors of Tel Aviv University.

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. 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In early 1993 Arnold Bloch Leibler, through Mark's efforts and the late Ron Castan's introduction, was given the opportunity to act as pro-bono lawyers and advisers to the Yorta Yorta peoples during their monumental native title struggle for land justice and beyond.

The landmark Yorta Yorta case, which was decided by the High Court in December 2002, examined critical native title matters of national and international significance. This includes the source and content of native title for Indigenous peoples, such as native title to inland water, and the correct methodology by which a native title claim must be proven.

After Mabo, Yorta Yorta is universally recognized as one of the seminal cases in the development of native title law in this country.

Based on solid, mutually respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples, Mark has further enhanced his reputation as a trusted ally of and fearless adviser to Indigenous peoples throughout Australia.

Mark is intimately respected by Indigenous communities and individuals, as well as by industry and by government, as someone who honours his relationships with Indigenous peoples and empowers them, on the basis of free, prior and informed consent.

In 2007 Mark received the Distinguished Pro Bono Service Award from the Victorian Law Foundation for his work on advancing Indigenous rights at the local and national level.

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.

Mark has made an extraordinary contribution to society over many years. In view of his eminent public service and his distinguished contribution to Indigenous Australia, most of it provided while pursuing an important legal career, the University of Melbourne has pleasure in admitting its distinguished alumnus, Mark Matthew Leibler, to the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.