

## Thomas Abourizk

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**From:** Gary Johns <Gary.Johns@ato.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Saturday, 7 April 2018 10:55 AM  
**To:** Donna Ross  
**Subject:** Re: Signature block [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

There is nothing in your advice about a rule that would prevent me from instructing my staff to remove the acknowledgement.

A staff or corporate intention is not relevant to the perception of bias, only the perception of an outsider reading the Commission's letterhead.

I will therefore instruct my staff to remove the cultural comment as it indicates a preference which is inconsistent with my obligation to regulate all charities.

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**From:** Ross, Donna [[Donna.Ross@ato.gov.au](mailto:Donna.Ross@ato.gov.au)]  
**Sent:** 6 April 2018 at 3:23:00 pm  
**To:** Johns, Gary  
**Subject:** Signature block [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Good afternoon Gary...

Thanks for the opportunity to partner with you and provide some corporate context.

The ATO and APS perspective is the signature block is a cultural acknowledgment and not an endorsement of any kind that might imply preferential treatment.

Since the signature block became available, some years ago, across most (if not all APS agencies), we are not aware of any feedback which has indicates any concern that this acknowledgement compromise roles, functions or accountabilities or represents a conflict of interest.

It's provided for voluntarily adoption and the ATO supports it as an important element of our Reconciliation Action Plan and overall Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

Donna

Regards

**Donna Ross** - CPHR

Director | People Support Team - Melbourne | ATO People

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