

Tabled Document 4

By: Senator Barnett

Date: 21/2/2011

28 October 2010

The Hon Chris Bowen
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I am writing to seek clarification on the current confusion surrounding the status of Bibles as "gifts" under the current Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code. I refer also to recent communications I have had with the Bible Society of Tasmania who have serious concerns. I seek your confirmation that Bibles have not been - and will not be - banned at citizenship ceremonies.

In particular, I draw to your attention Hansard from Senate estimates on October 19 where I raised these concerns and the current issue surrounding the banning of Bibles as gifts at various citizenship ceremonies in Tasmania. Under questioning, a DIAC official stated that he did not believe gifts were banned under the current code. However, as highlighted in *The Mercury* on Friday, October 22 (*Battle of the Bible giving, page 3*), a DIAC spokesperson declared that Bibles *are* banned as gifts. Which is correct?

Many community groups, charities, and Non-Government Organisations, including the Bible Society, have continuously offered a range of gifts to new Australian citizens at citizenship ceremonies, all of whom have the choice to decide which gifts they would like to take home with them. This practice should continue.

Prompt clarification from you on this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Guy Barnett
Liberal Senator for Tasmania



Guy Barnett
Liberal Senator for Tasmania



January 12 2011

The Hon Chris Bowen
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister *Chris,*

I refer to my previous correspondence dated October 28, 2010 addressing the confusion surrounding the status of Bibles as "gifts" under the current Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code

As at the date of this letter no response has been received. Your early response would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Guy Barnett
Liberal Senator for Tasmania