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20 March 2024

Mr Rob Heferen  
Commissioner of Taxation  
GPO Box 9990  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear *Mr Heferen,*

**Is MyGov Broken?**

As a former ATO officer, I am writing to you to express my alarm and concern that the ATO is resorting to communicating with taxpayers via text message.

In October 2023, after lodging our tax returns, my wife and I received (and deleted) a series of text messages from the ATO which we assumed were scams.

When I finally and reluctantly contacted the ATO earlier this year to ascertain the reason for the processing delay, I was informed that the text messages were indeed related to our tax returns.

With the courtesy and professionalism of your ATO staff member Damian, we were able to resolve the issues around the processing delays, however, we were expecting to receive notifications via MyGov (as we had in the past) but certainly not via text message.

Text messages are the wild west of communication. Anyone who responds to them must be vigilant way beyond almost any other form of communication, and I point to the Federal Government's anti-scam website: <https://www.cyber.gov.au/protect-yourself> which cautions citizens on unsolicited text messages with perceived 'Authority'.

The knowledge that the ATO is communicating with taxpayers via text message in preference to MyGov (the secure communication system developed specifically for this purpose and at great expense to the public purse) presents an alarming prospect – and prompts a further worrying question: Why?

If you or any of your staff would like to discuss this matter further, please email me at [Theo@marinisgroup.com.au](mailto:Theo@marinisgroup.com.au). Please do not text.

Sincerely,

Theo Marinis  
Managing Director

*distinctly different*