The ABS Indigenous Standard and the standard question development and evolution

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Purpose of the Standard

To enable the consistent collection of data that:

● tells the ongoing statistical story about, and for, Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples, and

● provides a basis for the allocation of government funding for both general and specifically targeted services.
2013 Review of the Standard

- 41 organisations and groups consulted to November 2013 and 38 submissions and other input received

- Matters arising from discussions:
  - The current Standard Question is strongly supported, but...
  - Collection of information about sub-population groups is very strongly supported, but...
  - A coding change for ‘multiple responses’ is called for
The current Question
...from 1996 Census to date

Is the person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

- No
- Yes, Aboriginal
- Yes, Torres Strait Islander

For persons of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, mark both Yes boxes
The previous version
...from 1981 to 1991 Censuses

Is the person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

(For persons of mixed origin, indicate the one to which they consider they belong)

- No
- Yes, Aboriginal
- Yes, Torres Strait Islander
Collecting data about sub-population groups

- Language group, nation, clan, tribe, mob, country, mission?
- In all ABS collections and all non-ABS administrative collections, or just some? Or just the Census?
- Respondent burden?
- Not all data collected likely to be releasable for respondent confidentiality reasons
Coding ‘unclear multiple responses’

- An ‘unclear multiple response’ is one where the respondent has ticked ‘No’ but also ‘Yes, Aboriginal’ and/or ‘Yes, Torres Strait Islander’
- Currently, such a response is coded to either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or both
- Proposal from stakeholders that if the response cannot be clarified with the respondent then code to ‘Not Stated’
More about the 2013 review

- Part of normal rolling examination of all ABS standards
- ABS taking into consideration impact on time series, as well as costs associated with any potential change to the Standard
- Full text in Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity (ABS Cat. no 1289.0)