

# Person—Indigenous status, Housing assistance Indigenous status code N{.N}

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# Person—Indigenous status, Housing assistance

## Indigenous status code N{.N}

### Identifying and definitional attributes

<b>Metadata item type:</b>	Data Element
<b>Short name:</b>	Indigenous status
<b>METEOR identifier:</b>	270380
<b>Registration status:</b>	<a href="#">Housing assistance</a> , Retired 15/04/2010
<b>Definition:</b>	Whether a person identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, as represented by a code. This is in accord with the first two of three components of the Commonwealth definition.
<b>Data Element Concept:</b>	<a href="#">Person—Indigenous status</a>
<b>Value Domain:</b>	<a href="#">Housing assistance Indigenous status code N{.N}</a>

### Value domain attributes

### Representational attributes

<b>Representation class:</b>	Code
<b>Data type:</b>	Number
<b>Format:</b>	N{.N}
<b>Maximum character length:</b>	2

	Value	Meaning
<b>Permissible values:</b>	1	Indigenous (not further defined)
	1.1	Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin
	1.2	Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin
	1.3	Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
	2	Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
<b>Supplementary values:</b>	9	Not stated/inadequately described

### Collection and usage attributes

**Guide for use:**

This metadata item is based on the ABS Standard for Indigenous Status. For detailed advice on its use and application please refer to the ABS Website as indicated in the Origin section.

The classification for 'Indigenous Status' has a hierarchical structure comprising two levels. There are four categories at the detailed level of the classification which are grouped into two categories at the broad level. There is one supplementary category for 'not stated' responses. The classification is as follows:

Indigenous:

- Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander Origin
- Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal Origin
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Origin

Non-indigenous:

- Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander Origin

Not stated/inadequately described:

The not stated/inadequately described category is not to be available as a valid answer to the questions but is intended for use:

- primarily when importing data from other data collections that do not contain mappable data;
- where an answer was refused;
- where the question was not able to be asked prior to completion of assistance because the client was unable to communicate or a person who knows the client was not available.

Only in the last two situations may the tick boxes on the questionnaire be left blank.

**Collection methods:**

The standard question for Indigenous Status is as follows:

[Are you] [Is the person] [Is (name)] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

(For persons of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, mark both 'Yes' boxes.)

No.....

Yes, Aboriginal.....

Yes, Torres Strait Islander.....

This question is recommended for self-enumerated or interview-based collections. It can also be used in circumstances where a close relative, friend, or another member of the household is answering on behalf of the subject.

When someone is not present, the person answering for them should be in a position to do so, i.e. this person must know the person about whom the question is being asked well and feel confident to provide accurate information about them. However, it is strongly recommended that this question be asked directly wherever possible.

This question must always be asked regardless of data collectors' perceptions based on appearance or other factors.

The Indigenous status question allows for more than one response. The procedure for coding multiple responses is as follows:

If the respondent marks 'No' and either 'Aboriginal' or 'Torres Strait Islander', then the response should be coded to either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander as indicated (i.e. disregard the 'No' response).

If the respondent marks both the 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' boxes, then their response should be coded to 'Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Origin'.

If the respondent marks all three boxes ('No', 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander'), then the response should be coded to 'Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Origin' (i.e. disregard the 'No' response).

This approach may be problematical in some data collections, for example when data are collected by interview or using screen based data capture systems. An additional response category

Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.....

May be included if this better suits the data collection practices of the agency or establishment concerned.

There has been some controversy over the issue of whether South Sea Islanders need to be included in the definition of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The ABS clearly states that South Sea Islanders are not Indigenous and should therefore be coded accordingly. Subsequently, South Sea Islanders are to be coded under category 2 'Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin'.

## Source and reference attributes

Origin: Australian Bureau of Statistics. [Standards for Social, Labour and Demographic Variables](#). Viewed 13 October 2005.

## Data element attributes

## Collection and usage attributes

**Comments:**

Some service providers may find it difficult to ask a question about a person's Indigenous status. Furthermore, some Indigenous persons may be reluctant to answer a question about their Indigenous status because previous experience has led them to believe that identifying as an Indigenous person may disadvantage them. Without assistance with implementing this data element the data provided are likely to be of low validity and reliability.

Presently, the housing data collections do not differentiate between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. Commonly, the question asked is 'Does the person (client) identify themselves as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?' and the possible responses are Yes/No/Not known.

This does not conform with the ABS national standard, which incorporates the more detailed data domains of:

1. Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin
2. Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin
3. Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
4. Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin
9. Not stated/inadequately described

It is also not possible to map the response of 'Indigenous - not further defined' to the ABS standard.

The following definition, commonly known as 'The Commonwealth Definition' was given in a High Court judgement in the case of *Commonwealth v Tasmania* (1983) 46 ALR 625.

'An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives'.

There are three components to the Commonwealth definition:

- descent;
- self-identification; and
- community acceptance.

## Source and reference attributes

**Submitting organisation:** National Housing Data Development Committee

**Reference documents:** Australian Bureau of Statistics. [Standards for Social, Labour and Demographic Variables](#). Viewed 13 October 2005.

## Relational attributes

**Related metadata references:** Is re-engineered from  [Indigenous status, version 1, DE, NHADD, NHDAMG, Superseded 01/03/2005.pdf](#) (24.9 KB)  
*No registration status*