Indigenous languages added to data.gov.au

Accurately identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages will be greatly enhanced by using three key AUSTLANG data sets, now available at data.gov.au, the central source of open data in Australian government agencies.

“The AUSTLANG data sets will help people to distinguish Australian Indigenous languages and their context among the hundreds of Indigenous language varieties that exist in this country,” AIATSIS CEO, Craig Ritchie said.

“Individuals or organisations are free to use the AUSTLANG data sets to build new resources incorporating data, to cross reference material, find resources and ultimately make better, data-informed decisions when it comes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.”

AUSTLANG provides information about Indigenous Australian languages which have been assembled from referenced sources. The data sets now available on data.gov.au contain the language names, each with a unique code to act as a stable identifier, alternative names and spellings and the approximate location of each language variety.

In addition to these data sets, the complete AUSTLANG resource also includes:

- Comments about the language variety from referenced sources
- Geographical location from referenced sources
- Links to MURA the AIATSIS catalogue for items about the language, and OZBIB a curated bibliography
- Links to programs; people; and a variety of community resources
- Speaker numbers surveys
- Documentation scores for known word lists; text collections; grammars; audio-visual resources
- Classifications from various linguistic surveys

The addition to data.gov.au comes after the US Library of Congress added the AUSTLANG language codes to their Machine-Readable Cataloging (MARC) Language Source Codes in October 2018. The AUSTLANG language codes replaced the single ‘aus’ MARC language code for Australian languages, making published materials relating to more than 800 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language varieties easier to identify and locate.

Links:
Complete AUSTLANG resource: https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/about

Media enquiries: Commsmedia@aiatsis.gov.au or P: 0476 843 522