

## Language Resources for Longreach and Central-West Queensland

There exist minimal language materials relating to the Longreach region; however there has been work undertaken during the 1970-80's in surrounding areas of the Central West, notably by Breen. In terms of recent linguistic work in the area, there has been an absence of any definitive studies. Despite this limited research base, there has been some language activity in terms of community-based projects; generally these have been small-scale in nature.

Iningai has long been recognised as the main language group of Longreach, however there is a lack of a representative group, such as Traditional Owners – this has impacted on language and cultural revival. The region also has several neighbouring language groups; some of these regional groups have similar or related languages. This is characteristic of their interaction with each other for trading, social and ceremonial activities.

There is enormous diversity across languages in the Central-West and North-West regions, which is based on the Eyre Basin. In addition to the Dieri trading markets, regional groups also interacted with each other along the river/drainage systems of the Cooper, Thomson and Diamantina crossing the contemporary state boundaries.

Language Groups of the Central West, include the following groups:

### *Mt Isa Region*

- Mount Isa – Kalkatunga/Kalkadoon, Yalarrnga, Yanda
- Cloncurry – Mitakoodi
- Richmond – Mbara, Wunumara
- Julia Creek – Jgawun, Mayi-Kulan
- Hughenden - Yirandali

### *Winton: Guwa*

### *Boulia: Pitta-Pitta, Wangkamana*

### *Longreach: Iningai and Kuungkari*

### *Desert Region [Birdsville, Windorah, Innamincka]*

- Wambaya, Alawa, Ngandji, Wakaya, Bularnu, Waluwarra, Wangkangurru, Birria, Maiawali, Karuwali, Wangkumara, Mithaka

### *Aramac: Dalleburra*

### *South-West Queensland*

- Bidjara
- Margany
- Kulilla

## Languages Today

This traditional landscape changed dramatically with the settlement of the Longreach region in the late 1870-1900's period as the pastoral expansion spread to the Central West. Those Aboriginals that survived the frontier conflict of this time were pushed to the fringe of towns in camps and later moved to missions such as Deebing Creek (via Ipswich), Taroom and later Woorabinda and Palm Island. There is evidence that many local Aboriginals remained in the area providing the workforce for cattle properties.

The Longreach region today has a small but active Aboriginal population comprising descendants of local groups as well as groups drawn from the surrounding regions, notably South-West Queensland communities as well as western centres such as Winton, Windorah and Boulia. Many of these people have moved to Longreach for economic reasons as rural centres decline; however they still maintain familial and cultural links back to country.

Despite this fragmentation of Aboriginal culture, there are some language materials/resources, including recordings of speakers for the Central-West language groups – linguists such as Blake and Breen undertook linguistic surveys in the 1970-80's; however these tended to be on surrounding languages and not Iningai. There have been some local community-based initiatives to revive languages and culture in the Longreach and Central-West region.

## Sources:

There are reference materials for Longreach and Central West Queensland located at The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), Canberra – this material may include sound recordings, as well as vocabulary and word lists. AIATSIS has an on-line catalogue: <http://mura.aiatsis.gov.au/>

### *AIATSIS Language Select Bibliographies*

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) in Canberra has produced PDF versions of *Select Bibliographies* for a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. AIATSIS has a community access policy to provide copies of materials back to communities. The *Select Bibliographies* provide a list of materials held by AIATSIS relating to specific languages, including those from Longreach and Central West Queensland.

A full list of these can be found at the following weblink: [www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/languagebibs.html](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/languagebibs.html) the Longreach area languages have been grouped under their respective names, e.g.:

- Iningai: [www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Iningai\\_Yiningay\\_Feb10.pdf](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Iningai_Yiningay_Feb10.pdf)
- Kalkadoon: [www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Kalkatungu\\_Kalkadoon\\_Sept\\_06.pdf](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Kalkatungu_Kalkadoon_Sept_06.pdf)
- Maruwali: [www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Majuli\\_Maiwali\\_Feb10.pdf](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Majuli_Maiwali_Feb10.pdf)
- Mithaka: [www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Midhaga\\_Mithaka\\_FEB10.pdf](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Midhaga_Mithaka_FEB10.pdf)
- Pitta Pitta: [www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Pitta\\_Pitta\\_Bittha\\_Bittha\\_Jan08.pdf](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Pitta_Pitta_Bittha_Bittha_Jan08.pdf)
- Yanga: [www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Yanga\\_May\\_08.pdf](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/docs/langbibs/Yanga_May_08.pdf)

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[Linguistic Resources \(continued\):](#)

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