



## Indigenous Audio Bibles

### Overview

Bible Society Australia (BSA) is working together with like-minded mission and Bible translation organisations to produce audio recordings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scriptures, providing the gospel in a format communities can readily access. This includes translation work, using the Oral Bible Translation method.

### The Need

A printed Bible, even translated into a heart language, is at times not sufficient for people to Open The Bible for themselves. Because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are oral cultures, important information is conveyed through story-telling rather than the written word. This means that Indigenous communities readily engage with audio content in a way non-Indigenous cultures do not often appreciate or understand.

Year 2023 saw a growing demand for audio players with Scripture 'in language', particularly via churches, hospital and prison chaplains.



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Indigenous Australian languages currently have translated Scripture that require audio recordings

21<sup>/56</sup>

Indigenous languages with Scripture translated has some Scripture audio available

1,000

audio players were distributed by early 2023, and a new order for 1,000 placed to meet community needs

**"Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God"**

# Goals

In 2024, BSA's goal is to ensure greater accessibility to Indigenous language translations through audio recordings. Audio Scriptures will be distributed, with a new supply of audio players for Australian communities ready to use.

The Plain English Version (PEV) Multi-voice audio recording project is anticipating the launch of the PEV Audio Mini Bible in 2024.

Work will continue on the recording of the Old Testament in Kriol and finalising the Noongar Book of Ruth release. Further recordings in KukatJa, Alyawarr, Burarra and Eastern Arrente are anticipated.

BSA will continue partnering with YWAM Perth on Oral Bible Translation Projects, with plans to recommence translation workshops for the Kimberley Kriol language project this year, along with discussions with three other Kimberley language groups who are interested in Bible Translation assistance.

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# Impact

In 2023, BSA coordinated the recording of significant portions of the PEV (Plain English Version) audio Bible, encompassing the Gospels, Acts, 1 & 2 Samuel and chapters of Genesis.

As of mid-2023, 69% of the Kriol Old Testament was recorded. The Kriol Audio Recording will impact approximately 30,000 people across Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland.

Portions of Mark's Gospel were recorded in KukatJa, Colossians in Alyawarr, Old Testament recordings in Burarra, and the Eastern Arrente New Testament, all now accessible through the Australian Bibles App.

The Oral Bible Translation (OBT) Project for Kimberley Kriol faced a temporary halt in 2023 due the passing of a key translator and other factors. Despite this, a 'Relationship Building' Trip in April revealed a positive shift in attitudes, fostering collaboration across denominations for Bible Translation. One impact of the Kimberley Kriol OBT Project is that three other language groups and (with four additional interested groups) have approached YWAM for Bible translation assistance.

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# Testimonies

"I gave away to an Indigenous patient from Titjikala the last of our BSA audio Bibles in Pitjantjatjara. She was so thankful. When she was discharged, I went to see her one last time and noticed it was on top of her personal belongings where she could access it quickly — such was the value she placed on it. So, I am politely seeking some more such audio Bibles, please, for use and giving away." — Chaplain at the Royal Adelaide Hospital

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# Prayer Needs

- Pray that these audio recordings of Scripture will bless many generations across Australia.
- Thank God that many people who are unable to read can embrace the gospel and know God's love through the spoken word.
- Pray for more opportunities to record Scripture in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.
- Pray for capable readers to offer their time and abilities to serve God and his people.