**Proposed changes to the**

**Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups (ASCRG)**

This document details the changes to the ASCRG that the ABS is proposing to make as an outcome of the current review. These changes include:

* The identification of new groups at the Broad Group (one-digit), Narrow Group (two-digit) and Religious Group (four-digit) levels;
* The retirement of one religious group; and
* A revised coding structure across the entire classification. In the proposed structure, Broad Groups have two-digit codes; Narrow Groups have four-digit codes and Religious Groups have six-digit codes. A concordance between the current and proposed new structure is provided in the spreadsheet [Coding Structure Concordance (current codes mapped to proposed codes](#_Coding_Structure_Concordance) linked at the bottom of this document.

These proposed changes have been developed through consultation with stakeholders, analysis of 2011, 2016, and 2021 Census data, research and the classification criteria ([Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2016 | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/classifications/australian-standard-classification-religious-groups/2016#building-the-classification)). The objectives of these changes are: to more accurately reflect the groups to which Australian have a religious affiliation; to improve the usability of the classification; to streamline the coding structure; and to better accommodate new groups over time.

The changes the ABS is proposing to make to the following groups are outlined below. No other changes are proposed at this time, pending feedback through this round of consultation:

[Buddhism](#_BUDDHISM)

[Christianity](#_CHRISTIANITY)

[Islam](#_ISLAM)

[Sikhism](#_SIKHISM)

[Other Religions](#_OTHER_RELIGIONS)

## BUDDHISM

*It is proposed that three new Religious Groups are created under the Buddhism Broad Group and the Buddhism Narrow Group:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CURRENT STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2016** |  | **PROPOSED STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2024** |
|  |
| **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |  | **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |
| 1 Buddhism |  |   |  | 15 Buddhism |  |   |
|   | 101 Buddhism |  |  |  1511 Buddhism |  |
|   |  | 1011 Buddhism |  |   |  | 151111 Mahayana Buddhism |
|   |  |  |  |   |  | 151112 Theravada Buddhism |
|   |  |  |  |   |  | 151113 Vajrayana Buddhism |

## CHRISTIANITY

*There are two changes proposed within the Christianity Broad Group:*

1. *That one new Religious Group be created under the Narrow Group Catholic (proposed code 2514), Syriac Catholic (proposed code 251414). The Religious groups in this Narrow group have also been reordered (in alphabetical order):*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CURRENT STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2016** |  | **PROPOSED STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2024** |
| **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |  | **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |
| 1 Christianity |  |   |  | 25 Christianity |  |   |
|   | 207 Catholic |  |  | 2514 Catholic |  |
|   |  | 2071 Western Catholic |  |  |  | 251411 Chaldean Catholic  |
|   |  | 2072 Maronite Catholic |  |  |  | 251412 Maronite Catholic |
|   |  | 2073 Melkite Catholic |  |  |  | 251413 Melkite Catholic |
|  |  | 2074 Ukrainian Catholic |  |  |  | 251414 Syriac Catholic |
|  |  | 2075 Chaldean Catholic |  |  |  | 251415 Syro Malabar Catholic |
|  |  | 2076 Syro Malabar Catholic |  |  |  | 251416 Ukrainian Catholic |
|  |  | 2079 Catholic, nec |  |  |  | 251417 Western Catholic |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 251499 Catholic, nec |

1. *That one Religious Group, Albanian Orthodox, be retired and included in the Eastern Orthodox Not Elsewhere Classified (nec, proposed code 252399) group:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CURRENT STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2016** |  | **PROPOSED STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2024** |
| **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |  | **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |
| 2 Christianity |  |   |  | 25 Christianity |  |   |
|   | 223 Eastern Orthodox |  |  | 2523 Eastern Orthodox |
|   |  | 2231 Albanian Orthodox |  |   |  | 252311 Antiochian Orthodox |
|   |  | 2232 Antiochian Orthodox |  |   |  | 252312 Greek Orthodox |
|  |  | 2233 Greek Orthodox |  |  |  | 252313 Macedonian Orthodox |
|  |  | 2234 Macedonian Orthodox |  |  |  | 252314 Romanian Orthodox |
|  |  | 2235 Romanian Orthodox |  |  |  | 252315 Russian Orthodox |
|  |  | 2236 Russian Orthodox |  |  |  | 252316 Serbian Orthodox |
|  |  | 2237 Serbian Orthodox |  |  |  | 252317 Ukrainian Orthodox |
|  |  | 2238 Ukrainian Orthodox |  |  |  | 252399 Eastern Orthodox, nec (including Albanian Orthodox) |
|  |  | 2239 Eastern Orthodox, nec |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## ISLAM

*It is proposed that three new Narrow Groups and six new Religious Groups are created under the Islam Broad Group:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CURRENT STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2016** |  | **PROPOSED STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2024** |
|  |
| **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |  | **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |
| 4 Islam |  |   |  | 45 Islam |  |   |
|   | 401 Islam |  |  |  4511 Shia |  |
|   |  | 4011 Islam |  |   |  | 451111 Shia |
|   |  |  |  |   | 4512 Sunni |  |
|   |  |  |  |   |  | 451211 Sunni |
|  |  |  |  |  | 4513 Other Islam |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 451311 Ahmadiyya |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 451312 Alawite |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 451313 Alevi |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 451399 Islam, nec |

## SIKHISM

*It is proposed that Sikhism be moved out of Other Religions (Broad Group 6) and a new Broad Group be created for Sikhism:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CURRENT STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2016** |  | **PROPOSED STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2024** |
|  |
| **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |  | **Broad Group** | **Narrow group** | **Religious Group** |
| 6 Other Religions |   |  | 65 Sikhism |  |  |
|   | 615 Sikhism |  |  | 6511 Sikhism |  |
|   |  | 6151 Sikhism |  |  |  | 651111 Sikhism |

## OTHER RELIGIONS

*It is proposed that one new group, Kirat Mundham (proposed code 851815), be added to Narrow Group 8518 (proposed new code) Miscellaneous Religions. In addition, Religious Groups in this Narrow Group have been reordered (in alphabetical order):*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CURRENT STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2016** | **PROPOSED STRUCTURE****1266.0 Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups, 2024** |
| Broad Group | Narrow Group | Religious Group | Broad Group | Narrow Group | Religious Group |
| 6 Other Religions |   |  | 85 Other Religions |  |  |
|  | 69 Miscellaneous Religions |  |  | 8518 Miscellaneous Religions |  |
|  |  | 6901 Mandaean |  |  | 851811 Caodaism |
|  |  | 6902 Yezidi |  |  | 851812 Church of Scientology |
|  |  | 6991 Caodaism |  |  | 851813 Eckankar |
|  |  | 6992 Church of Scientology |  |  | 851814 Jainism |
|  |  | 6993 Eckankar |  |  | 851815 Kirat Mundham |
|  |  | 6994 Rastafari |  |  | 851816 Mandaean |
|  |  | 6995 Satanism  |  |  | 851817 Rastafari  |
|  |  | 6996 Theosophy |  |  | 851818 Satanism |
|  |  | 6997 Jainism |  |  | 851821 Theosophy |
|  |  | 6998 Zoroastrianism |  |  | 851822 Yezidi |
|  |  | 6999 Religious Groups, nec |  |  | 851823 Zoroastrianism |
|  |  |  |  |  | 851899 Religious Groups, nec |

## Coding Structure Concordance (current codes mapped to proposed codes)

Attached is a mapping between the current coding structure in ASCRG (2016) and the proposed coding structure 2024. The key changes to the coding structure are:

* Broad Groups are indicated by two digits in the new structure; instead of one digit.
* Narrow Groups are indicated by four digits in the new structure; instead of two or three digits.
* Religious Groups are indicated by six digit codes in the new structure; instead of four digit codes.

New groups have been added in the Buddhism, Christian, Islam and Other Religions Broad groups, and are highlighted in **bold orange text**.

In addition, Religious Groups in the following Narrow Groups (by proposed code) have also been reordered (in alphabetical order):

* 2514 Catholic
* 2532 Other Christian
* 8518 Miscellaneous Religions

In the spreadsheet below, the proposed new structure is provided (i.e. codes and their associated Religious Group). The new structure is aligned with the current structure (ASCRG, 2016), so individual groups are easy to find.

