



Office of the Auditor General of Canada

2024 Annual Progress Report on the OAG Accessibility Plan 2022–25



Office of the
Auditor General
of Canada

Bureau du
vérificateur général
du Canada

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Table of Contents

General	1
Feedback process and alternate formats	1
Executive Summary	3
Main Achievements in 2024	4
Progress to Date	5
Employment	5
The built environment	8
Information and communication technologies	11
Communication, other than information and communication technologies	14
The procurement of goods, services, and facilities	17
The design and delivery of programs and services	18
Transportation.....	18
Our Additional Actions in 2024.....	19
Consultations.....	20
Consultations linked to the Employment priority area.....	20
Consultations linked to the Built Environment priority area	21
Consultations linked to the Information and Communication Technologies priority area	21
Consultations linked to the Transportation priority area.....	21
Consultations between the Accessibility Working Group responsible for implementing the plan and employees with disabilities and their allies	21
Feedback	22
What We Learned From 2024	23
Glossary.....	24

General



Karen Hogan, FCPA,
Auditor General of Canada

The [OAG Accessibility Plan 2022–25](#) was published on 19 December 2022 and provides an overview of our mandate, our accessibility initiatives, and our commitments to removing and preventing barriers to access over 3 years.

This report details the progress made during the second year of the plan's deployment, from 1 January to 31 December 2024.

Employees with disabilities and allies were consulted in the preparation of this report, as were the Ombuds; the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Champion; the internal Accessibility Working Group; and senior management.

Feedback process and alternate formats

OAG employees, people and organizations that deal with the OAG, and the general public are invited to provide feedback on

- our accessibility plan or progress report
- the implementation of the plan
- barriers you may encounter when working with us, communicating with us, or accessing our programs and services
- our feedback process

We will acknowledge your feedback within 20 business days, in the same way it was submitted. Please note that for security reasons, we delete messages with file attachments.

Anonymous feedback can be submitted by mail, email, or telephone. If your feedback is left anonymously, we cannot send an acknowledgement.

All feedback will be reviewed by the Accessibility Coordinator. It will be forwarded to relevant divisions when necessary. If the feedback included contact information, any immediate action resulting from the feedback will be communicated to the person who submitted the feedback. All feedback related to accessibility will be captured in a central location for analysis and record keeping. Feedback will be used to help identify, prevent, and remove barriers in a timely manner.

The OAG can provide our accessibility plan, this annual report, and feedback process in alternate formats on request. Requests for documentation in Braille or audio format must be fulfilled within 45 business days of the request. All other requests must be fulfilled within 15 business days.

Our Accessibility Coordinator is responsible for receiving feedback. Our Coordinator will also respond to requests for copies of our plan and feedback process, including in alternate formats.

Alternate formats include large print, Braille, audio, and electronic formats that are compatible with adaptive technologies that assist persons with disabilities.

You can contact the OAG by any of the following methods.

Directly online, by completing the following information request form

www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/web-inquiry.html

By email

accessible@oag-bvg.gc.ca

By telephone

1-888-761-5953

By TTY service (telecommunications device service for the hearing impaired)

613-954-8042

By fax

613-957-0474

By mail

ATTENTION: Accessibility Coordinator
Office of the Auditor General of Canada
240 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G6
Canada

Executive Summary

This report focuses on 7 priority areas for action and on their associated goals:

Employment

Goal: Promote the development of human resource practices that are accessible and inclusive so that all employees, including persons with disabilities, are supported and able to contribute to the OAG.

The built environment

Goal: Ensure barrier-free access and use of the physical environment for OAG employees and visitors.

Information and communication technologies

Goal: Ensure that the tools, software, and documents used by employees to fulfill their responsibilities are accessible by default.

Communication, other than information and communication technologies

Goal: Produce accessible communication products and activities.

The procurement of goods, services, and facilities

Goal: Ensure that accessibility requirements are considered by both business owners and contracting authorities when purchasing goods and services, and that, where applicable, accessibility requirements inform the technical specifications incorporated in procurement documents.

The design and delivery of programs and services

Goal: Ensure that accessibility considerations are integrated into the delivery of audit reports.

Transportation

Goal: Ensure OAG employees and contractors have access to transportation that is accessible and inclusive, allowing individuals to accomplish their work both in the office and while travelling on behalf of the organization.

Progress in the 7 priority areas for action is described in more detail in the [Progress to Date](#) section of this report.

Main Achievements in 2024

Our activities in 2024 built on our accomplishments from the previous year. One of our key accomplishments this year was integrating accessibility into our governance structure through the creation of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Official Languages Committee in March 2024. The committee is an Internal Advisory Committee that supports the People Management Committee through advice and guidance on internal policies, strategies, priorities, and action plans for equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and official languages. The committee has 6 members, including the senior accessibility analyst. As of December 2024, the committee has held 7 meetings. The committee supports the monitoring and reporting of compliance and progress toward an inclusive, diverse, skilled, and engaged workforce that is united in its values, behaviours, and actions. The creation of this committee strengthens internal coordination in advancing diversity and inclusion priorities. In particular, it helps to break down the barrier of unequal access to development opportunities for members of equity groups, including people with disabilities.

We developed a new dashboard that presents data on representation from the employment equity designated groups. This tool supports the timely monitoring of progress toward achieving representation of various groups in the levels and areas of work across the OAG. For example, selection criteria for selection processes for people with disabilities require review to ensure they do not represent barriers. By providing a detailed view of equity group representation, this dashboard promotes the harmonization of pre-selection criteria for people with disabilities, thereby removing this barrier.

We drafted an information and communication technologies accessibility strategy that establishes the process for including accessibility in products and projects, provides guidance on accessibility testing, details reporting measures, and documents updated roles and responsibilities. This project was initiated in response to the identified barrier that information and communication technologies, as well as corporate documentation, do not consistently adhere to accessibility standards or support assistive technologies.

The OAG's official document templates were evaluated in terms of accessibility when used as designed. Testing for compliance with accessibility standards was completed. Training related to the correct use of corporate templates was launched with the deployment of the Markido Engage plug-in. This achievement addressed the identified barrier that highlighted the lack of tools, such as automated validation systems, to support plain language writing.

Progress in the 7 priority areas for action is described in more detail in the next section.

Progress to Date

Employment



Goal—Promote the development of human resource practices that are accessible and inclusive so that all employees, including persons with disabilities, are supported and able to contribute to the OAG.

Objective 1—Develop and support accessible employment practices.

Completed (Year 1)



Modernize the self-identification questionnaire, tools, and data-collection process, and use the data collected to plan the OAG's human resource management to support a diverse and inclusive workforce.

The OAG adopted the self-identification questionnaire developed by the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer. Employees are now able to access the questionnaire directly within our human resource system to view or update their employment equity information. It eliminated the use of non accessible PDFs. Changes were completed in January 2023. The disaggregated data collected increases the OAG's ability to complete more detailed reporting and analysis on the make-up of our workforce and thus address representation gaps, when required.



Examine the new learning management system and ensure that it meets the requirements of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

A new learning management system that meets the guidelines was implemented on 20 September 2023.



Develop an equity, diversity, and inclusion plan.

The Auditor General approved the first OAG Diversity and Inclusion Plan on 30 November 2023. The plan includes actions to increase representation and inclusion of persons with disabilities.



Support the participation of persons with disabilities in leadership development programs and career development services.

OAG employees participated in the Executive Leadership Program and the second cohort of the [Mosaic Leadership Development Program](#) launched by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

Completed (Year 2)



Launch the new Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Official Languages Committee

Created in March 2024, this Tier-3 committee supports the People Management Committee through advice and guidance on internal policies, strategies, priorities, and action plans for equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and official languages. The Senior Accessibility Analyst is an active member of this committee. The committee holds a crucial role in overseeing policy implementation, ensuring adherence and compliance, and providing monitoring and oversight.



Develop a dashboard that supports the timely monitoring of progress toward achieving representation of various groups in the levels and areas of work across the OAG using disaggregated data.

A dashboard, which includes representation of the employment equity designated groups, was launched in November 2024.



Launch an accessible format of the online version of the corporate onboarding program.

The theme of the new onboarding program is “Making the Connections.” It invites new employees to a welcoming, connected team environment while providing one-stop convenience for onboarding.

Ongoing



Consult persons with disabilities in developing employment-related policy instruments and tools.

As part of the employment systems review, focus group sessions with persons with disabilities regarding their lived experience took place in November 2024.



Implement the approved equity, diversity, and inclusion plan.

Objective 2—Improve efficiency in providing adapted equipment and accommodation.

Completed (Year 1)



Implement and support the Government of [Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport](#) for OAG employees and candidates.

The OAG began including information about the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport in each appointment letter of offer since 12 June 2023. We

introduced the tool on 27 June 2023 by email and by publishing information on our Intranet. Information sessions took place on 19 and 21 September 2023 to answer questions about its use. In addition, workshops are offered on a regular basis to managers and employees.



Create a list of accommodations, including assistive-technology options, available to employees in collaboration with accessibility, accommodation, and adaptive computer technology, and educate managers on what accommodations are available.

The list was completed on 20 December 2023.

Ongoing



Provide adapted equipment and accommodations on a timely basis to persons with disabilities.

In the 2023–24 fiscal year, 45 ergonomic assessments were conducted. A portion of these requests came from persons with disabilities. We aim to hold a meeting between an ergonomist and employees within 5 working days after a medical note is provided.

Objective 3—Support persons with disabilities in developing their talent and ensure that people with disabilities are retained as talented employees.

Completed (Year 1)



Hire an accessibility coordinator.

A senior policy analyst responsible for accessibility has been in place since 4 July 2023.

Completed (Year 2)



Roll out the Leadership Blueprint training to all managers to clarify expectations and accountabilities related to managing people. This training incorporates the priorities of equity, inclusion, and diversity. Accessibility is therefore an integral part of the integrated management of change culture.

As of 1 June 2024, the rollout of the Leadership Blueprint to all managers was completed.

In progress



Review employment systems

A contract was awarded, and the employment systems review began in May 2024. The review was completed by November 2024 and the final report is expected in February 2025.

Ongoing



Appoint persons with disabilities to and within the OAG management group through career development and talent management.

During the 2023–24 fiscal year, employees who self-identified as persons with disabilities accounted for 11.9% of promotions at the OAG, which was an increase from 8.0% in 2022–23. Their representation in the managerial group in 2023–24 was 12.6% compared with a 5.0% workforce availability. Their representation in the professional group was 10.7% compared with an 8.9% workforce availability. The office surpassed the workforce availability for persons with disabilities in both the managerial and professional groups. The workforce availability data was from 2016.



Review existing development programs to ensure that persons with disabilities are represented and supported at each stage, from entry to exit.

The ASG/ASG-IT Development Fund primarily supports the OAG's Audit Services Group (ASG) and ASG-IT (Information Technology) employees in their pursuit of advanced academic studies. Persons with disabilities have participated in the ASG/ASG-IT Development Fund (exact numbers cannot be disclosed for privacy considerations).

The built environment



Goal—Ensure barrier-free access and use of the physical environment for OAG employees and visitors.

Objective 1—Build, renovate, or retrofit all physical OAG offices according to the latest accessibility standards, best practices, and information from persons with disabilities.

Completed (Year 2)



Ensure that employees and visitors, including persons with disabilities, know how to provide feedback on the built environment.

Information about the renovations is disseminated through various Microsoft Teams channels and the Intranet and feedback is provided back to the project team via a dedicated email address.



Conduct employee surveys and gather feedback to use as a guide to prioritize future improvements in the physical workspace.

Office-wide surveys were conducted in March and April 2024 to analyze trends regarding preferred equipment and layout among employees.



Explore digital wayfinding applications for mobile devices to help people to find our offices from public transit, taxi stands, and parking areas and to help them to navigate once they are inside the building.

The C.D. Howe building in Ottawa integrates the use of the GoodMaps wayfinding navigation application.

In progress



Review the physical workspace in consultation with persons with disabilities (employees, visitors, and other people who regularly conduct business in the buildings) to identify how it could be configured to be more accessible and inclusive.

Consultation sessions for the offices of Montreal and Vancouver were held with individuals with disabilities and allies on 27 and 28 February 2024 to gather insights on barriers and other accessibility-related concerns. The information collected during these sessions was shared with employees through survey results in September 2024. These results were also provided to our designer at Public Services and Procurement Canada. Since then, we purchased items to alleviate identified barriers. Consultations for the Halifax and Edmonton offices are scheduled for February and March 2025.



Collaborate with landlords and building management to ensure that accessible parking spaces are available for employees and visitors who need them.

Accessible parking spaces are available at or near all OAG offices. We continue to assess needs on a case-by-case basis. Full accessibility is expected when parking at 240 Sparks Street becomes available in 2026.

Ongoing



Consult persons with disabilities on the physical workspace, and prepare or revise the policies, directives, and guidance—such as the re-entry handbooks, reservation system procedures, threat and risk assessments, and health and safety assessments—according to their needs.

In October 2024, adjustments to the reservation system procedures were made following feedback from persons with disabilities through a dedicated email address and information sessions. For example, for an employee or employees requiring emergency assistance in the office, a team of volunteer escorts has been created. In this way, office space is reserved for these people so that they can be placed together.

Since 9 September 2024, coinciding with the increased presence in the office, specialized workspaces have been allocated to persons with disabilities requiring them.



Develop and communicate the process for eliminating and addressing barriers in the physical environment in a timely manner.

The FLEX BVG initiative is a workplace transformation project. The first part of the project involves temporary, modernized workspaces on the 8th and 11th floors of the Ottawa office. The second part of the initiative is the GCworkplace project, a complete overhaul of the 9th and 10th floors to meet modern GCworkplace standards. As we are in the second part, monthly meetings with Public Services Procurement Canada are conducted to review accessibility standards. The aim is to incorporate them in the final floor design; as a result, the OAG is the first department that will have an accessibility component incorporated in its final floor plan.



Collaborate and develop cost-sharing plans with landlords and other Government of Canada lead tenants to improve the buildings' base accessibility features such as digital signage, wayfinding indicators, technological beacons, hands-free door openers, wheelchair-accessible circulation paths, and accessible washroom features.

Discussions with Brookfield Global Integrated Solutions (BGIS) (the property manager for numerous Government of Canada buildings) have been held regarding several accessibility features, including an accessible bike cage and new LED-supported light fixtures.

Objective 2—Ensure that all employees and visitors have a safe environment to work in.

Completed (Year 2)



Consult persons with disabilities to develop, prepare, or revise emergency evacuation plans according to their needs.

Three meetings were held in September and October 2024. Three themes were covered during these meetings:

- employees requiring assistance and their managers
- people volunteering to play the role of escorts in the event of an emergency
- the roles of employees, their managers, and the escorts

A procedure was developed to meet the needs of employees requiring assistance in the event of an office emergency. On 2 October 2024, employees requiring assistance, managers, and volunteers confirmed that they understood and were comfortable with the procedure.

Ongoing



Promote accessibility features within the OAG's workspace and the surrounding building space—such as digital signage, wayfinding indicators, technological beacons, hands-free door openers, wheelchair-accessible circulation paths, and accessible washroom features—to employees and visitors as the features are implemented.

In 2024, to raise awareness of hands-free door openers and wheelchair-accessible paths for employees and visitors, we utilized the television in the lobby of our Ottawa building to display this information. In addition, in September 2024, our organization disseminated the results of the accessibility survey to employees to highlight actions taken in response to identified barriers, such as the additional signage and wayfinding tools.

Information and communication technologies



Goal—Ensure that the tools, software, and documents used by employees to fulfill their responsibilities are accessible by default.

Objective 1—Assess, document, and report on known barriers in existing information and communication technologies.

Completed (Year 2)



Consult information and communication technologies subject experts and employees with disabilities to review existing information and communication technologies barriers and find ways to prevent them.

Individual interviews were held with employees with disabilities to understand information and communication technologies barriers.

Consultations were conducted with information and communication technologies experts to identify training needs, support for removing barriers, and feedback on changes to existing processes.



Create a robust accessibility testing, reporting, and monitoring strategy, and establish governance to support its implementation.

Several teams from the Office of the Chief Information Officer have been involved in developing an accessibility strategy for information and communication technologies, which is being finalized. This strategy sets out the process for including accessibility in information and communication technologies products and projects, provides guidance on accessibility testing, details reporting measures and documents updated roles and responsibilities.

In progress

→ Review the accessibility of existing document templates used for audit methodology and corporate documentation.

Document templates have been catalogued and scheduled for review against accessibility standards.

→ Track information and communication technologies accessibility requests and feedback and assign the tasks to appropriate parties.

Different channels for accepting and tracking feedback on information and communication technologies are currently being explored.

→ Assess internal information and communication technologies accessibility maturity, including assessing existing information and communication technologies against accessibility standards.

The inventory of applications has been evaluated and existing information and communication technologies software will not be addressed at this time in line with the OAG's planned replacement of internal systems. Instead, the focus will be on ensuring the new technologies will be accessible.

A chart is being developed showing the accessibility levels of information and communication technologies.

Objective 2—Ensure that all information and communication technologies meet established accessibility standards, and that accessibility is incorporated across every step of the product life cycle.

Completed (Year 2)

✓ Complete the next phase of the Microsoft 365 rollout to support the implementation of more accessible information and communication technologies.

The Microsoft 365 rollout was completed in January 2024.

✓ Introduce project deliverables that require project teams to document their plans to incorporate accessibility.

New deliverables and processes, as detailed in the information and communication technologies accessibility strategy, have been implemented to document the planned accessibility of newly acquired or created systems. These deliverables include accessibility conformance reports and roadmaps.



Implement accessibility requirement specifications for all software and services, including in the procurement of information and communication technologies.

Requirements for projects, namely adherence to European Accessibility Standards (EN 301 549), have been documented in the information and communication technologies accessibility strategy. Proposed language for procurement documents has been shared with information and communication technologies experts. It was to ensure our accessibility processes are aligned with the procurement partner's needs.

In progress



Create a mechanism to engage employees with disabilities in the user-acceptance-testing phases of the product life cycle.

We defined a new method for including users with disabilities in testing phases of projects in the information and communication technologies accessibility strategy; namely, to collect volunteers through a secure forum and, with consent, share their contact information with project teams on a need-to-know basis.

Communication material to the entire organization is being developed to collect volunteer information.

Objective 3—Ensure that the OAG has the in-house skill set and capacity to create, assess, and maintain accessible documents and software.

Completed (Year 1)



Share information and communication technologies accessibility tips and tricks through office-wide communication channels to increase awareness and knowledge.

Information and communication technologies accessibility tips were provided during the events of the 2023 National Access Ability Week. More than 200 employees attended each event.

Completed (Year 2)



Create a central repository of guidance and resources to help employees develop accessible documents and help information and communication technologies subject matter experts create and assess accessible software.

We collected and organized resources on subjects of interest, such as document accessibility, accessibility testing, and accessibility awareness, into a centralized area in the office-wide document management system. We plan to make these resources better known and more detailed over the coming months.

Communication, other than information and communication technologies



Goal—Produce accessible communication products and activities.

Objective 1—Fully implement the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat standards and guidelines for accessibility to support all internal and external users of OAG communication materials and resources.

Completed (Year 1)



Post information about alternate formats and service standards for providing them.

The website was updated in January 2023.



Make forms and brochures available electronically.

Brochures are no longer being produced. Forms for both internal and external use are available electronically.

Completed (Year 2)



Test the accessibility of documents, such as Microsoft PowerPoint presentations, Microsoft Word documents, Microsoft Excel files, and PDF documents.

Official OAG templates were assessed for accessibility. Testing against accessibility standards is complete. A plan to educate personnel on the proper use of corporate templates has begun with the rollout of the Markido Engage plug-in.



Confirm that websites conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 and resolve any issues.

Reviewed Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 requirements to prepare for future adoption. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA standards are applied to all our HTML pages and are fully integrated into PDF files.



Establish contracts to provide documents in alternative accessible formats, such as Braille.

A Memorandum of Understanding with the Treasury Board allows us to provide Braille on demand.

In progress

- **Assess the accessibility of our communication approaches with the public, including the media, and adjust where necessary.**
- **Test the accessibility of web products with internal and external specialists using the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines requirements.**
Official OAG templates were assessed for accessibility. Testing against accessibility standards is complete. A plan to educate personnel on the proper use of corporate templates is planned.

Objective 2—Increase the ease of use for tools and content.

Completed (Year 2)

- ✓ **Secure contracts for interpretation services.**
The contracts have been in place since January 2024 and will be renewed in January 2025.
- ✓ **Investigate real-time captioning for office-wide meetings held with in-person components.**
Microsoft Teams deployment offers captioning for online and hybrid meetings and events. Microsoft Teams caption feature allows people with certain impairments to get voice and text, which increases their ability to grasp meeting content, thus improving accessibility. Information technology helps, although the captioning itself is not perfect as it depends on the enunciation and pronunciation of the speaker.

In progress (Year 2)

- **Replace the existing TTY solution to better accommodate remote work and ensure reliability.**
The new TTY device has been acquired and installation is pending. The completion date is scheduled for the end of December 2024 or early 2025.

Ongoing

- ↻ **Use sans-serif fonts exclusively.**
Official designers and OAG templates are using sans-serif fonts. An awareness strategy is being designed to encourage employees to use this font in all written communications and products.



Respect the use of contrast and colour in visuals.

Official designers check for this use. A strategy is being planned to inform employees and enforce their use across the office. Our designers are providing advice to clients about accessibility of visual products. The OAG branding guide being developed will contain advice for use across the office.

Objective 3—Ensure that OAG communications meet the diverse needs of its users.

Completed (Year 1)



Acquire the International Organization for Standardization's guide for plain language (International Organization for Standardization ISO/draft international standard DIS 24495-1) once it is available.

The guide was acquired in August 2023 and is now available for use by all employees.

In progress



Expand the current courses on the principles of plain language and clear communication.

The Office is looking at technological solutions.



Train employees to use accessibility features.

Core accessibility features are being rolled out with ongoing technology updates. A training plan will be developed.



Deploy and use secure assistive writing, plain language, and readability assessment tools.

As applications and tools evolve and become available, these features are being included through current and new applications and tools.

The procurement of goods, services, and facilities



Goal—Ensure that accessibility requirements are considered by both business owners and contracting authorities when purchasing goods and services, and that, where applicable, accessibility requirements inform the technical specifications incorporated in procurement documents.

Objective 1—Update internal procurement procedures and tools.

Completed (Year 1)



When accessibility considerations are not applicable or not appropriate, clearly justify a reason for each procurement file. The documented justification will ensure that accessibility is always considered.

Implemented the mandatory use of the accessibility justification form for business owners to justify when accessibility considerations are not applicable or not appropriate to their requirements and ensure that accessibility is always considered.

In progress



An accessible version of current templates is available. However, templates are currently under review as the Government of Canada modernizes its contracting approach and terms and conditions. When available, new Public Services and Procurement Canada templates will need to be evaluated for accessibility.

Objective 2—Develop an accessible procurement tool kit.

In progress



Continue consultations with Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada regarding guidance, tools, and procurement instruments to help acquire assistive items and technologies. Disseminate tool kit internally once available.

The design and delivery of programs and services



Goal—Ensure that accessibility considerations are integrated into the delivery of audit reports.

Objective 1—Include gender, equity, diversity, and inclusion considerations, which include accessibility requirements, into performance audit and special examination reports.

Completed (Year 1)



A Gender, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion expert was hired in December 2022 as an Internal Specialist for the performance audit practice. The basis for this is rooted in our commitment to the [UN Social Development Goals](#), specifically Goal 5, Gender Equality, and Goal 10, Reduced Inequalities.

Ongoing



Provision of gender, equity, diversity, and inclusion expertise to audit teams at all stages of their engagements.

For each engagement, auditing standards require the engagement leader to assess and document his or her expertise in the relevant field, and to carry out similar assessments for members of their team. As part of this self-assessment and team evaluation, the engagement leader is required to consider and undertake training to develop the necessary expertise. Consultations with the internal specialist is mandatory throughout the process.



Develop and support transformation initiatives to use plain language to clarify complex topics for users of OAG products, particularly for audit reports.

A pilot project is underway with select audit reports to introduce more concise and clear content.

Transportation



Goal—Ensure that OAG employees and contractors have access to transportation that is accessible and inclusive, allowing individuals to accomplish their work both in the office and while travelling on behalf of the organization.

Objective 1—Prepare new or amend existing tools and templates to allow employees and contractors to identify accessible transportation and other accessibility needs.

Completed (Year 2)



Internal templates were updated in September to include a means for individuals to identify accessible transportation and other accessibility needs.

In progress



Modify contracts to include an accessibility needs statement for contractors who travel on behalf of the OAG and for contractors who will work onsite in our office.

Objective 2—Develop an accessible transportation awareness session.

Completed (Year 2)



Joint consultation and information sessions were offered in September to all employees to share tools and resources available to persons with disabilities travelling on behalf of the Government of Canada. Links to the resources were shared in the meeting request and in our Microsoft Teams channel.

Objective 3—Make accessible transportation resources available.

In progress



Update the Intranet to include guidance and resources for communicating and obtaining accessible transportation.

Our Additional Actions in 2024

In January 2024, a call went out to all employees to create a pool of diverse candidates for selection boards. This is to facilitate the establishment of selection boards with representatives of at least 1 member of 1 of the following 3 designated groups: racialized employees, Indigenous peoples, or persons with disabilities. This initiative is in progress. Training is being planned for those who have expressed an interest. In addition to the requirements for this role, the content of the training will include concepts designed to avoid unconscious bias in recruitment.

In the OAG's 2024–25 training curriculum, employees are required to take 2 hours of diversity and inclusion training. The OAG recommends a list of 4 Canada School of Public Service training courses related to accessibility.

Throughout the year, the OAG communicated accessibility-related events, training, and workshops to employees through its Diversity and Inclusion Microsoft Teams channel and the OAG's What's New forum. A total of 17 communiqués were published in 2024.

On 3 December 2024, to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we organized a workshop with 2 speakers. Discussions covered accessible communication, and recruiting, retaining, and supporting persons with disabilities in the workplace and neurodivergent employees. We had 200 participants.

Consultations

Those responsible for the accessibility plan's priority areas developed an annual consultation calendar to plan consultations with employees with disabilities and their allies.

During 2024, the Communications branch worked to integrate all internal consultations into an annual planning tool.

Below are the consultations and briefings that took place in 2024 for some of the completed and ongoing actions in the plan. We are pleased to note that we have carried out 2 more consultations than in Year 1.

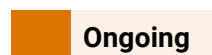
Consultations linked to the Employment priority area

On 24 July 2024, the OAG launched internal consultations on the [Employment Equity Act](#) modernization by inviting employees to complete a survey that focused on 4 themes related to the [Employment Equity Act Review Task Force recommendations](#). Fifty (50) employees completed the survey. The anonymous results were submitted to Employment and Social Development Canada's Labour Program and will assist the OAG with developing its next [Triennial Employment Equity Plan](#).

As part of the OAG's commitment to diversity and inclusion, the Employment Equity, Diversity, Inclusion–Official Languages Human Resources team launched an [Employment Systems Review](#). This initiative aims to identify and address potential barriers within our employment systems. Focus group sessions were used to learn whether policies and practices affected members of employment equity designated groups differently than from non-designated group employees. Two sessions with persons with disabilities took place on 19 November 2024. The objectives of these consultations were to understand experiences of recruitment, selection and hiring; development and training; promotion; and retention and leavers. The objectives were also to obtain views on the OAG's approach to diversity and inclusion, including the working environment, attitudes and culture, and to understand experiences in relation to the Duty to Accommodate policy. Once the Employment Systems Review is complete, a summary report will be developed that outlines recommendations to be considered and integrated into the OAG's existing strategies and action plans to eliminate or reduce the effect of any barriers identified during the review process.

Consultations linked to the Built Environment priority area

On 26 and 27 February 2024, 2 consultation sessions were held with persons with disabilities and their allies: a total of 182 participants attended the sessions. The topic of discussion was the Redesign of the GCworkplace. The Facilities team showcased the conceptual plans for the 9th and 10th floors at 240 Sparks Street in Ottawa.



A dedicated email mailbox is in use to gather feedback and address matters related to our physical workspaces.

Consultations linked to the Information and Communication Technologies priority area

Between May and July 2024, consultations were conducted with persons with disabilities to identify common accessibility barriers. The results of these consultations were analyzed to produce a summary of findings, outlining the barriers and any common themes. The report was shared with various internal teams to raise awareness and reduce barriers.

Consultations linked to the Transportation priority area

In September 2024, 2 joint consultation and information sessions were offered to all employees to share tools and resources available to persons with disabilities travelling on behalf of the Government of Canada.

The aim of these sessions was to obtain information on transportation barriers and to share the tools and resources available for people with disabilities travelling on commercial transportation; about 70 employees participated in the sessions. No barriers were identified during these sessions.

Consultations between the Accessibility Working Group responsible for implementing the plan and employees with disabilities and their allies

8 November 2024—A notice of interest was issued to employees with disabilities and their allies to comment on the draft 2024 annual progress report of the OAG's Accessibility Plan.

20 November 2024—The draft 2024 annual progress report was shared with employees who communicated their interest to review it. Once the comments had been received, they were compiled and forwarded to the Accessibility Working Group for consideration.

Feedback

The OAG encourages feedback on accessibility matters, particularly from persons with disabilities and their allies. Our senior policy analyst acts as our Accessibility Coordinator and receives feedback on an ongoing basis.

Please see [Feedback about Accessibility Process](#) on our website for

- a description of the feedback process
- information on how to submit feedback and how it will be used

Regarding our accessibility feedback, we received 6 emails in 2024. Two came from external sources and were not related to accessibility. The other 4 came from employees:

- One asked for clarification on an upcoming consultation. The requested information has been communicated to the employee.
- One was related to health and safety in a meeting room and was transferred to the appropriate group for resolution.
- One asked about the accessibility features of a piece of software. The request was forwarded to the information and communications technology manager, who followed up with the employee.
- One was a complaint about an internal computer application for online requests. As of December 2024, the complaint is under review. Steps have been taken with interested parties to find solutions. A follow-up will be made with the employee at the appropriate time.

We welcome internal and external feedback related to accessibility within our organization to ensure continuous improvement.

What We Learned From 2024

This second year of implementation has given us the opportunity to make some observations, highlighted below:

- The concerted actions of those responsible for priority areas facilitates the prevention and elimination of barriers. We call on specialists in different fields to help us resolve obstacles to accessibility. Whether it's a question of safety or the layout of premises, or of communication methods and technologies, the monthly meetings of the working group involved in accessibility encourage the search for solutions.
- In addition to its accessibility plan, the OAG has seized several opportunities to integrate accessibility into its governance and operations.
- The more opportunities we create to raise awareness of accessibility among employees and the public, the more progress we make in this area.
- We are aware that several accessibility standards are under development. In the absence of certain standards, we use creativity to best meet the needs of people with disabilities. The key is continuous, constructive dialogue.

In conclusion, after 2 years of implementing our Accessibility Plan, we have made significant strides in identifying and addressing workplace barriers. For example, the selection criteria for selection processes require review to ensure they do not represent barriers. By providing a detailed view of equity group representation, the creation of a new dashboard now supports the harmonization of screening criteria for people with disabilities, addressing this barrier. In addition, the creation of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Official Languages Committee is helping to break down the barrier of unequal access to development opportunities for members of equity groups, including people with disabilities. Accessibility is now embedded in our governance and daily operations. By continuing to raise awareness through information sharing, workshops, and conferences, we will further enrich our collective understanding and skills. We remain dedicated to our commitment of making Canada a barrier-free nation.

Glossary

Accessibility standards—Standards that are used to assess information and communication technologies accessibility compliance and that align with the guidelines indicated by the Government of Canada.

ASG/ASG-IT Development Fund—An initiative that supports Audit Services Group (ASG) and ASG-IT (Information Technology) employees in pursuing advanced academic studies at a recognized institution such as a college or university. Funding commitments are made available to eligible employees on an annual basis. Participants must reapply annually.

Barrier—According to the [Accessible Canada Act](#), means anything—including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice—that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.

Business owner—An individual who is responsible for the business or program area for which the procurement is established. The business owner is responsible for

- defining the required capabilities, intended business outcomes, and benefits of a procurement at its outset
- achieving the business outcomes and benefits following implementation

Contracting authority—A person who has delegated contracting authority to enter into a contract or contractual arrangement on behalf of the OAG.

Disability—According to the [Accessible Canada Act](#), means any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment or a functional limitation—whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not—that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society.

Anyone can identify as a person with a disability if they experience 1 or more of these impairments or functional limitations that, in interaction with a barrier, hinder their full and equal participation in society.

GCworkplace—A modern, efficient, and inclusive workplace that responds to the needs of the public service workforce and supports a flexible way of working.

Real-time captioning (also known as live closed captioning)—Text-based captions used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing to access content delivered by spoken words and sounds. Real-time captions, or Computer Assisted Real-Time Translation, are created as an event takes place.

TTY (Teletypewriter)—A communication device used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have a severe speech impairment.

Workforce availability—Workforce availability is the distribution of people in the designated groups as a percentage of the total Canadian workforce.