

Moving Ahead

Fall 2004

CANADIAN TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

In 2004, the Canadian Transportation Agency marks 100 years of service to Canadians in motion. I believe, as this history of transportation regulation chronicles, that the Agency and its predecessors reflect nothing less than the evolution of Canada itself, its economic development and its changing place in the world.

On February 1, 1904, the Board of Railway Commissioners, with its authority over railways, was established as the Canadian government's first independent regulatory body.

Through a series of amalgamations and evolution, the Agency's jurisdiction has grown from rail matters alone to include air and marine modes, along with responsibility for removing undue obstacles in transportation for people with disabilities. The Agency's evolution has coincided with technological advances, shifting demands of the economy and other changing dynamics of Canada's transportation industry.

In the early 1980s, Canada embraced the international trend toward deregulation. The most notable development during that period was the *Staggers Act*,



AVAILABLE IN MULTIPLE FORMATS



Canadian
Transportation
Agency

Office des
transports du
Canada

Canada



which deregulated railways in the United States. Deregulation of airlines followed. The move to deregulation in Canada was more gradual and balanced.

That trend toward less-intrusive regulation has continued with the Canadian Transportation Agency in 1996 and its regime is certainly the least-regulated in our country's history. Competition and market forces are now the drivers, as opposed to strict rules. Railways and airlines are mainly free of regulations respecting rates and entry to and exit from the market. Airlines are still regulated under the terms of international agreements but, domestically, they can operate with relatively little intrusion by government.

Today, the Agency deals much differently with its clients and constituents than in the past. Whereas its predecessors maintained a distance from their clients, the Agency today reflects how the world has changed to become more user-friendly, more citizen-focused. Still mindful that we are a court and must maintain independence and impartiality, we at the Agency feel strongly that we have a

100 YEARS at the HEART of TRANSPORTATION

responsibility to the public, carriers and consumers to ensure they are fully aware of their rights and obligations under the Agency's governing legislation.

Our emphasis now is on communication and outreach. At the same time, we strive to keep up with developments in the transportation industry, to be informed and tuned in.

We have shifted away from regulatory means whenever possible to finding solutions through voluntary approaches. This is especially true in the area of accessible transportation for persons with disabilities. The mid-1990s saw two significant sets of regulations developed, the Terms and Conditions of Carriage for Persons with Disabilities and the Training Regulations for Personnel Dealing with Persons with Disabilities. In the years since these initiatives were introduced, we have increasingly sought voluntary compliance through codes of practice, rather than by formal regulation.

These codes of practice were hammered out by the Agency, the community of persons with disabilities and the carriers; of course, they involved lots of consultation, listening

and refinement. But we were successful in putting the codes in place and in setting target dates for their implementation; with service standards for all modes of transportation – rail, air and marine. That has been quite a significant shift in our regulatory approach – from enforcement to voluntary compliance and monitoring.

The position of Air Travel Complaints Commissioner, established in 2000, represents another method of resolving complaints through facilitation and persuasion, rather than through a regulatory process. The Commissioner reports to the Transport Minister and to Parliament twice a year and uses public awareness to encourage carriers to treat customers fairly.

In the past few years, the Agency has been offering a new service to clients to resolve disputes through mediation. Our experience to date indicates a 95% success rate in helping the parties find their own solutions, quickly and inexpensively. We intend to continue to provide mediation as an alternative dispute resolution process.

The role of transportation regulation has always been to balance the interests of shippers and consumers against the interests of carriers. There is a natural tension between users and providers of transportation. Users always want better service and lower costs while providers want more business and more revenue.

Balancing those interests was the challenge presented to the Board of Railway Commissioners when it first met on a snowy February day 100 years ago. Since then, the one constant has been the need for a regulatory body committed to balancing these diverging interests in a fair and transparent manner. That will remain the Agency's goal as it continues to adapt to the changing landscape of transportation in Canada. ♦

Marian L. Robson
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer



Accessible Transportation Milestones

A good place to begin a retrospective of the Agency's accessible transportation program is with some background on the program.

The Agency's first accessible transportation decision preceded the legislation by eight years. In 1980, the case of Clariss Kelly was decided by one of the Agency's predecessor's, the Canadian Transport Commission (which was known as the CTC).

In that case the Rail Transport Committee of the CTC used the provisions of the *Railway Act* to determine whether VIA's policy of requiring self-reliant persons with disabilities to be accompanied at all times by an attendant was a tariff term that was prejudicial to the public interest. Up until that point in time, that provision of the *Railway Act* had never been used by persons with disabilities to advance their need for accessible transportation. However, the CTC rose to the occasion and issued a decision which found that the tariff provision was, in fact, prejudicial to the public interest. It required VIA to accept a person's own assessment of their needs in

travel including whether they require an attendant.

What followed the release of this decision constitutes important elements of the Agency's history:

- In 1981, the "Obstacles" report was tabled by the House of Commons Special Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped which included specific recommendations for the removal of obstacles encountered by persons with disabilities when travelling.
- In 1983 Transport Canada adopted a national policy on the transportation of persons with disabilities.
- There was also Transport Canada's formation of the Implementation Committee for the Transportation of Disabled Persons and its recommendation that the federal government should regulate accessibility standards in transportation through means other than traditional human rights legislation.

As a result, accessibility provisions were brought under the scope of the National Transportation Agency's jurisdiction in 1988, with the introduction of amendments to the *National Transportation Act*, 1987. These gave the Agency the power to remove "undue obstacles" from Canada's federally regulated transportation network.

In 1996 this legislation became the *Canada Transportation Act* in which the concept of undue obstacle was retained. The Agency's jurisdiction in accessible transportation was expanded to include all modes of transportation under federal jurisdiction, not just those modes already regulated by the Agency. However, the new legislation also removed the Agency's power to inquire on its own motion.

In a recent decision, the Canadian Transportation Agency set out some of the long-standing principles of accessibility that it and its predecessors have recognized:

- Persons with disabilities have the same rights as others to full participation in all aspects of society. Equal access to transportation is critical to the ability of persons with disabilities to exercise that right. Insofar as transportation service providers are aware of the needs of persons with disabilities and are prepared to accommodate those needs, it can be said that persons with disabilities may have equivalent access to the network.
- Implicit in the term "equivalent access" is the notion that transportation service providers may have to provide different access – more or different services, different facilities or features, all designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities to ensure that they, too, can access the network.



- Equivalent access to the transportation network involves the ability of persons with disabilities to have as much independence as possible. To safeguard independence for persons with disabilities, it is necessary to recognize the importance of a person's own mobility aid to his or her independence, dignity, safety and comfort.
 - Where there are features and amenities specifically designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities who wish to remain in their own wheelchairs, it is essential that these features provide adequate dimensions and appropriate design so as to not lessen the level of independence of persons with disabilities.
 - Where there are features specifically designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities who wish to remain in their own wheelchairs, it is essential that persons with disabilities have safe and easy access to those features.
- Another important concept is reasonable accommodation which, in the context of the Agency's mandate, refers to the responsibility of the transportation service provider to meet the needs of persons with disabilities "as far as is practicable". Where a service provider can justify providing something less than equivalent access, then it can be said that it has provided a reasonable accommodation and the Agency would not find an undue obstacle in the accommodation. However, if the Agency finds that the accommodation provided is not reasonable or falls short of what is practicable in the circumstances, then the Agency may find an undue obstacle and may require corrective measures to eliminate that undue obstacle.

Accessible Transportation Milestones

On the occasion of the Agency's centennial, it is timely to look at how the Agency continues to refine the principles of accessible transportation service delivery while, at the same time keeping in mind achievements to date as summarized in the milestones.

Accessible Transportation Milestones (cont'd)

YEAR	ACTION		
1981	"Obstacles" report of the special parliamentary committee on the disabled.	1988	<i>National Transportation Act</i> , 1987 amended to give the National Transportation Agency (NTA) new power to make regulations and to resolve complaints with respect to the removal of undue obstacles within Canada's federally regulated transportation network.
1981	Report of the Inquiry Respecting Intercity Bus Service to the Disabled in Newfoundland, Canadian Transport Commission.		
1986	Special Air Fare Policy for the Attendants of Disabled Passengers and for Additional Seats for Disabled and Obese Passengers Report, Air Transport Committee, Canadian Transport Commission.	1991	The Road to Accessibility: An Inquiry into Canadian Motor Coach Services.
1987	Challenge: Putting Our House in Order. Report of the Parliamentary Committee on the Status of Disabled Persons.	1992	The Omnibus Bill, amended the <i>National Transportation Act</i> by adding the words "accessible" and "persons with disabilities" to the Act's declaratory clause stating the National Transportation Policy of Canada.
		1992	Report of the Inquiry into Level of Accessibility of Ferry Services in Canada.



Accessible Transportation Milestones (cont'd)

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|------|---|------|--|
| 1993 | Proposed amendment to the Air Transportation Regulations respecting Air Fares for Attendants of Persons with Disabilities prepublished in Part I of the Canada Gazette. | 1995 | Principal Provisions of the Personnel Training for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities Regulations came into effect January 26, 1995. |
| 1993 | Getting Back on the Road Again: Passenger Transportation And Persons with Disabilities, Report of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Rights and the Status of Disabled Persons. | 1996 | <i>Canada Transportation Act, 1996</i> , changed the National Transportation Agency of Canada to the Canadian Transportation Agency, which retained the existing powers to regulate the carriage of persons with disabilities and to resolve complaints. |
| 1994 | Report of An Inquiry into the Accessibility of Ground Transportation Services at Canadian Airports. | 1996 | Code of Practice – Aircraft Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities published. |
| 1994 | Principal Provisions of Part VII of the Air Transportation Regulations Terms and Conditions of Carriage of Persons with Disabilities came into effect January 1, 1994. | 1996 | Accessibility Complaint Guide published. |
| | | 1997 | Moving Ahead Accessible Transportation (Newsletter) introduced. |
| | | 1997 | Communication Barriers: A Look at Barriers to Communication Facing Persons with Disabilities who Travel by Air. |

Accessible Transportation Milestones (cont'd)

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|------|--|------|--|
| 1998 | Code of Practice – Passenger Rail Car Accessibility and Terms and Conditions of Carriage by Rail of Persons with Disabilities published. | 2002 | Agency Decision on the jurisdictional question of whether an allergy is a disability for the purposes of Part V of the <i>Canada Transportation Act</i> . |
| 1998 | Taking Charge of the Air Travel Experience: A Guide for Persons with Disabilities published. | 2002 | Mediation pilot project providing an alternate method of resolving disputes when accessible transportation complaints are filed with the Agency was initiated. |
| 1999 | Code of Practice Ferry Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities published. | 2003 | Agency Decisions regarding the level of accessibility of VIA Rail's Renaissance Passenger Rail Cars. |
| 1999 | International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO Circular 274 AT/114) "Access to Air Transport by Persons with Disabilities" published. | 2004 | Code of Practice: Removing Communication Barriers for Travellers with Disabilities and companion Guide published. |
| 2000 | Air Travel Accessibility Survey conducted. | 2004 | National Transportation Week, for the first time, adopts accessible transportation as its theme for the event. ♦ |
| 2001 | Reservation Checklist – Air Travel published. | | |
| 2001 | Agency Decision on the jurisdictional question of whether obesity is a disability for the purposes of Part V of the <i>Canada Transportation Act</i> . | | |



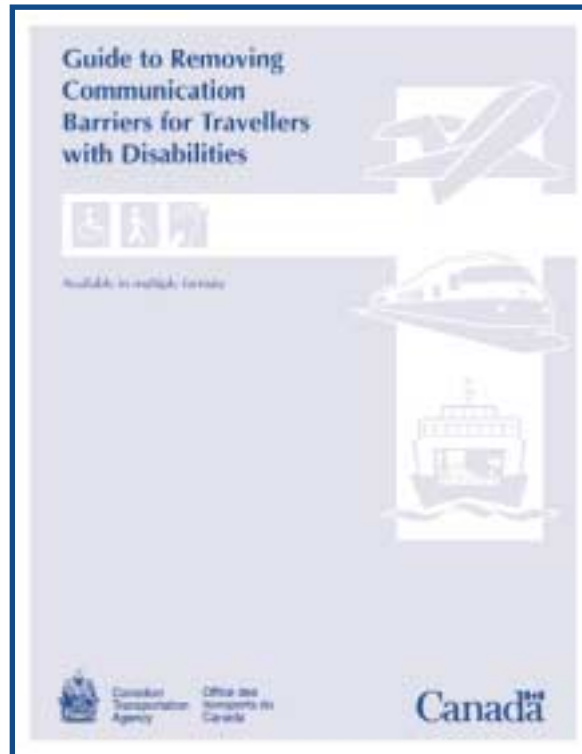
Removing Communication Barriers for Travellers with Disabilities

by Lyne Giroux

This June, the Canadian Transportation Agency released two innovative products for air, rail and ferry terminal operators and carriers designed to improve access to information for persons with disabilities who travel:

- the Code of Practice Removing Communication Barriers for Travellers with Disabilities (the Communication Code); and
- the Guide to Removing Communication Barriers for Travellers with Disabilities (the Guide).

The new Communication Code is a blueprint for improving access to print, telephone, and Web-based



information, as well as improved signage and announcements in terminals. Representing minimum voluntary standards that transportation service providers are expected to meet, it was developed in close consultation with the industry, and individuals and

organizations representing persons with disabilities.

The Code applies to airports in the national airport system and to air carriers that operate aircraft with 30 or more passenger seats. Rail carriers and ferry operators under federal jurisdiction are covered by the Code, as well as rail and ferry terminals where 10,000 or more passengers embark and disembark annually.

"The Communication Code will improve the ability of persons with disabilities to travel independently," said Marian Robson, Chairman of the Canadian Transportation Agency. "Obstacles to the mobility of persons with disabilities are often the result of poor communication or access to information. They are not always physical barriers, such as the absence of a ramp for a wheelchair."

The Agency also created a companion document entitled the Guide to Removing Communication Barriers for Travellers with Disabilities. This Guide is a work tool that provides useful and practical information to transportation service providers to help them meet the provisions of the new Communication Code. For example, the Guide offers technical specifications, names of manufacturers of accessible equipment, organization and government contacts that can provide expertise on accessibility and website addresses for more information. The information enhancements contained in the Guide will also benefit other service providers who wish to improve the communication of information with all their clients.

The Communication Code and companion Guide were released on the occasion of National Transportation Week and following a panel discussion on "The Future of the Transportation Business in an Accessible World" (see related article page 12). This Agency-led panel discussion brought together industry leaders and users to discuss best practices in accessibility within the federally-regulated transportation network.

"Complementing and supporting existing Codes of Practice, the Communication Code is another important step towards a transportation network which is more accessible and responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities," Mrs. Robson added.

More than 50 Agency decisions have been issued pertaining to communication barriers highlighting the problems persons with disabilities may encounter when trying to access travel-related information (i.e. signage, telecommunication systems, public announcements). In many of these decisions, the Agency found undue obstacles to the mobility of persons with disabilities. The Agency believes that obstacles



caused by communication barriers can best be dealt with on a systemic basis, which is the goal of the Code.

The Agency will conduct periodic surveys to monitor terminal operators' and carriers' progress in implementing the provisions of the Code. The Agency will also continue to exercise its authority to deal with individual complaints that raise communication issues to determine whether there are undue obstacles to the mobility of persons with disabilities.

Copies of the Communication Code and the Guide are available on the Agency's Web site at www.cta.gc.ca or refer to the section "How to Contact Us" on page 28. These publications are available in multiple formats upon request.

Lyne Giroux is a Senior Communications Adviser at the Agency. ♦

National Transportation Week: Panel discussion on accessible transportation incites meaningful dialogue

by Lyne Giroux

On June 3, 2004, the Congress Centre in the Nation's Capital was abuzz with lively and informative dialogue about accessible transportation. More than 100 people came to listen and ask questions at "The Future of the Transportation Business in an



Accessible World", a panel discussion on best practices in accessibility for persons with disabilities.

The Canadian Transportation Agency, in conjunction with National Transportation Week (NTW), kicked off



“The Future of the Transportation Business in an Accessible World” panel members.

this year’s celebrations with this event. As the Canadian population ages, more and more persons will require accessible modes of transportation whether for business or pleasure. In today’s competitive transportation market, accessible services play an important role in attracting customers, a role that will take on increasing importance. This panel discussion was an opportunity to report on the latest experiences and trends in travel, both positive and negative, for people with disabilities and to learn about cost-effective, new and profitable methods and services to address the needs of persons with disabilities.

The panel members were (from left to right):

1. Stuart Coventry, Director of On-Board Guest Services for Rocky Mountaineer Railtours, who focused on accessible tourism;
2. Lorraine Card, Greyhound Canada’s Director of Safety and Driver Development, who provided a perspective from the intercity bus sector;
3. Dale Tinevez, Director, Airports, WestJet, who spoke on what the company has been doing to better meet the needs of passengers with disabilities;



4. Marian Robson, Agency Chairman moderator of the panel discussion;
5. Pierre Lanoix, Vice-President, Operations, of the Ottawa Airport Authority, who spoke on the importance of accessibility considerations in the construction and refurbishment of transportation facilities; and
6. Sally Thomas, member of Canada's national paralympic power lifting team, who discussed her experiences as a person with a disability travelling around the world representing her country.

Participation in NTW events this year was particularly significant for the Agency given that it is celebrating its centennial year and, for the first time, the scope of NTW was expanded to include accessible transportation in Canada.

In line with this year's NTW's theme, "Transportation innovation and accessibility," the Agency-led panel discussion was one of the highlights of this year's NTW celebrations. Each year, Canadians observe NTW to recognize the hundreds of thousands of men and women who keep Canada moving safely, efficiently and reliably.

All sectors of the transportation industry come together in events across the country in the first week of June. These promote understanding of the vital importance of the transportation system in Canada's economic and social development. As well, it's a once-a-year opportunity to recognize the efforts of special achievers from among the many thousands that work in the transportation industry and its related fields. This year, five individuals received these prestigious awards for their outstanding contribution in the area of accessible transportation (see related article, page 15).

The broad participation in the panel discussion demonstrated the importance of an accessible transportation network and the impact that accessibility for persons with disabilities has on the future of the transportation business in Canada.

The panel discussion was but one way the Agency has worked, and will continue to work actively with industry and persons with disabilities at sharing information and obtaining the views of a wide variety of people to raise awareness of the problems experienced by travellers with disabilities.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION WEEK NATIONAL AWARDS

Five honoured for outstanding achievements in accessible transportation

During National Transportation Week, a select number of representatives from the transportation industry, nominated by their peers, receive special recognition for their outstanding contributions. This year, ten awards were given. In line with this year's NTW theme, "Transportation innovation and accessibility", five individuals listed below, received these prestigious awards for their work in accessible transportation. They were presented at the NTW Annual dinner, held this year in Ottawa at the Congress Center.

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Chris Batty, Greyhound Canada, Transportation Corporation

- As Director of Labour and Management Relations for Greyhound Canada, he plays a leading role in making inter-city bus transportation accessible to all Canadians.
- He works to make his company's accessible program a key component of Greyhound's overall activities. Today, the mobility needs of persons with disabilities are an essential part of the customer service objectives for Greyhound's passenger operations.
- Under his direction, Greyhound staff have been motivated to acquire a greater understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities, and uses this information to improve buses, terminals and employee training.
- Instead of seeing accessibility strictly in equipment-related terms, Mr. Batty focused his efforts on the "service expectations" of passengers with disabilities. As such, he aims to offer convenient and comfortable travel in a dignified manner. Particular attention is also paid to the transport of the various types of aids available to persons with disabilities.
- Mr. Batty is an active member of Alberta's provincial Advisory Committee on Barrier-Free Transportation.



Wanda Harbin and Neil Paterson, Marine Atlantic

- Under the leadership of Wanda Harbin and Neil Paterson, Marine Atlantic has in recent years made a significant contribution to Atlantic Canada's accessible transportation.



Wanda Harbin of Marine Atlantic

- Together, they are the driving force behind the company's inclusive and integrated approach to client service, particularly with respect to independent access to most on-board services and amenities for persons with disabilities.
- Thanks to their work, Marine Atlantic received a number of accessibility awards, including the Canadian Transportation Agency's 2003 Accessible Transportation Award.
- Wanda Harbin is Marine Atlantic's ombudsman and training officer. She established, and is the co-chair of, Marine Atlantic's accessibility advisory committee.
- She showed tremendous leadership in the area of customer service, promoting Marine Atlantic as an accessible service provider and by regularly conducting sensitivity training to ensure that staff is equipped to service persons with disabilities.

- Neil Paterson serves as Marine Atlantic's manager of hospitality services and is responsible for ensuring that the ferry operator's terminals and vessels meet the needs of passengers with disabilities.
- He is behind the company's corporate goal of 100% compliance with the Canadian Transportation Agency's Code of Practice on Ferry Accessibility. As result of his enthusiasm and results focused approach, Marine Atlantic made several accessibility-related improvements to its ferries.
- Examples include sonic and visual alarms, closed-caption television, accessible cabins, shipboard relieving areas for service animals, wheelchair ramps and washroom access and lowered countertops in dining areas.

AWARD OF ACHIEVEMENT

André Leclerc, Kéroul

- André Leclerc, a Montrealer who uses a wheelchair as a mobility aid, founded Kéroul in 1979. His goal was to increase awareness of accessibility issues among providers of travel-related services, and to encourage persons with disabilities to travel more frequently. He and Kéroul have helped open up a whole world of accessible travel opportunities for persons with disabilities.



André Leclerc, founder of Keroul

- Today, Kéroul is recognized as a world leader in making travel accessible. Its expertise was recognized by APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), which



hired the Montreal-based organization to develop best practices in accessible tourism. Kéroul has organized and taken part in numerous national and international conferences and has most notably worked with the Canadian Automobile Association, Tourisme Québec and Air Canada on accessible transportation issues.

- Among its many activities, Kéroul promotes accessible travel through a newsletter (Le Baladeur), the Québec accessible tourist guide, specialized travel packages and a databank of accessible travel resources.
- Over the years, Mr. Leclerc has been honoured by numerous organizations, including the U.S.-based Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality, which presented him with its prestigious Murray Award in 2001. He has also been named person of the year by the Grands Prix du tourisme québécois (2001) and received Canada's 125th anniversary commemorative medal (1992). In 1996, he received the Prix des droits et libertés de la personne, a Government of Quebec Human Rights Award.

*Marian Robson,
Canadian Transportation Agency*

- Marian Robson has more than 30 years' experience in the transportation field in both the private and public sector. Mrs. Robson has been Chairman of the Canadian Transportation Agency since its inception in 1996 and served as a Member of the National Transportation Agency, the Agency's predecessor. She began her career as a Special Assistant to Transport Minister Otto Lang and held senior positions with the Vancouver Port Authority, CN Rail, BC Rail and the Canada Ports Corporation.



*Marian Robson, Chairman of the
Canadian Transportation Agency
since 1996*

- Over the past eight years Mrs. Robson has presided over the Agency's operations, the organization has continued in its role as a quasi-judicial tribunal and economic regulator. In addition to its role in removing undue obstacles to the mobility of travellers with disabilities, the Agency is also responsible for the licensing of air carriers and railways, resolving disputes over certain air, rail and marine transportation service and rate matters, and the determination of the annual maximum rate scale for Western grain movements.
- During her tenure as Chairman, the Agency has played an enhanced role in the removal of undue obstacles. In addition to the development of codes of practice and regulations on accessible transportation, recent years have also seen the Agency make important decisions with respect to obesity as a disability for the purposes of the application of the *Canada Transportation Act* and on the accessibility of new passenger cars purchased by VIA Rail.
- Each year, Mrs. Robson attends the meetings of the Agency's Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee which is comprised of representatives of the community of persons with disabilities and the transportation industry. These meetings have been useful in improving communication and collaboration between the parties involved in the transportation of persons with disabilities.
- One of the key accomplishments of Mrs. Robson has been the introduction of mediation as a means to resolve disputes. Mediation has proven to be an effective tool in assisting clients resolve their disputes quickly and effectively. The philosophy of resolving disputes through informal means is also used by the Agency's Air Travel Complaints Commissioner who has been resolving complaints from air travellers since 2000. ♦



TRANSED 2007

www.tc.gc.ca/transed2007



Canada is proud to host the 11th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (TRANSED), to be held June 18-21, 2007, at the Palais des Congrès in Montréal under the theme Benchmarking, Evaluation and Vision for the Future. The conference will review advances in research, evoke international break throughs and explore perspectives for technological innovations in order to respond to the mobility challenges of an aging population and of persons with disabilities, as part of an inclusive society.

The conferences are held triennially under the auspices of the U.S. Transportation Research Board, and are extremely important in the field of accessible transportation, attracting researchers, policy-makers and other specialists to share innovation and best practices.

The conference will offer an exhibition where participants will have an overview of the deployment of innovation in the field of accessible transportation. The conference will include plenary and parallel sessions that may take a variety of forms, including roundtables, panels and tutorials. The structure will be based on the number of contributed papers and symposia accepted.

Canada is delighted to host the 11th edition of TRANSED and welcomes you to attend! ♦

Avoid Falls While Travelling

by Marie Brine

Reprinted by permission from Voice for Island Seniors

One in three seniors fall. It could happen to you or someone you love. Here are some tips for safe travel:

Accommodations

- Use luggage on wheels and avoid carrying heavy luggage. Use the services of bellhops, porters, or your travel group, if you are on a tour.
- Ask for a room with a bathroom that is equipped with grab bars and non-slip bath mats, to help prevent slips and falls in the bathroom.
- Bring a nightlight with you; moving around in the dark in an unfamiliar place may result in a fall. If you do not have a night-light, leave a small light on in the room.
- If you have to use stairs, use the handrail.
- Report any hazards to building management.

Travelling by Bus

- Make sure you plant your foot firmly in the centre of the stair and use the handrail for support. Take the hand offered by the driver or tour director; they are offering safety!
- If you feel unsafe getting off the bus, ask for help.
- Remain in your seat while the bus is moving. If you have to move, ask for assistance.
- In the washroom, make sure you have your feet firmly planted on the floor when sitting or standing. Use the grab bar while moving between sitting and standing position.



Clothing and Carry Bags

- Wear sunglasses to reduce glare on sunny days.
- Wear sturdy, comfortable walking shoes.
- Avoid slip-on shoes and strapless sandals. If you buy new shoes, “wear them in” before you leave. Blisters and sore feet will affect your balance.
- Avoid carrying a purse or shoulder bag to keep your hands free. Free hands will help you to maintain your balance. Instead, consider using a:
 - Waist bag for your wallet and valuables.
 - Knapsack for carrying your extra sweater, hat, and purchases. Be sure to wear your knapsack properly, over both shoulders, so that the weight you are carrying is close to your body and better balanced.

Be Aware and Prepared

- Look for uneven ground, rocks or other obstructions that could cause you to trip when you are walking.
- If you have problems keeping your balance, use assistive devices like canes, walking sticks or walkers. For your safety, be sure that your assistive devices fit properly.
- If you are unable to walk long distances, it may be possible to rent a wheelchair or power scooter at your destination. Call ahead or ask your travel agent to check for you.
- Try not to let yourself get too tired. Physical exhaustion can lead to slips and falls.

Enjoy your trip! ♦

Language and the Way in which Words are Used

by Kristen Spring

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Language and the way in which words are used are important. Words that label persons with disabilities as “victims” imply that having a disability is a negative thing. When persons with disabilities are referred to as “the disabled”, it is implied that persons with disabilities are a group that are non-gendered, possibly non-human and certainly not individual, while “handicapped” implies that it is the disability that somehow impedes persons with disabilities from being able to participate fully in society.

In an attempt to educate, it is very important that society understand that I am a person and a woman who happens to have a disability. My disability is not all that I am and it does not necessarily mean that I see my disability as a handicap.

Often, what makes disability a handicap for persons with disabilities is not the disability but the inabilities of society to allow complete access to persons who have a disability.

If cost is the main reason why universities, businesses, colleges or communities do not provide full access to persons with disabilities, then what kind of message is society giving to persons with disabilities? Are persons with disabilities not as valuable as other humans? Is it really my disability that makes me handicapped or is it the attitude that society has often held, an attitude that says persons with disabilities are not as valuable as everyone else?

Education is, I believe, one of the most important ways in which society can, and will, change the widely held perception that persons with disabilities are “less than”, “the other”, and unable to function fully in society. Unfortunately, it appears that, too often, persons with disabilities are forced to educate on a daily basis. As a guide dog user, I am often expected to explain that it is against the law for a business or taxi to deny access to me. No matter where I go, it is not unusual for people to walk



up to me in a restaurant while I am eating with a friend, or approach me in a store or a mall, and ask questions about my dog or my disability.

Because my blindness was the result of a brain injury, my eyes show no signs of difference. It is not unusual for people to tell me that “you look normal”, “you don’t look blind”, and “you do so well”. These statements are meant to be compliments, but if you really think about what is being said, you will understand how these statements only show ignorance and are, in fact, insults to other persons who have a disability. The words imply that having a disability means one is not “normal” (whatever normal is), or that being blind is some kind of negative thing, or that persons who are blind usually don’t do very well.

It is really hard having to educate people on a daily basis. I, too, have errands to run and am sometimes limited in the amount of time I have to finish my errands. It’s hard having to answer a lot of questions and it’s sometimes rather invasive.

I do a lot of education about disabilities through public speaking. I don’t mind questions some of the time, but please understand that I, too, have a busy life, and it is so much better if I can educate when it is convenient for us both.

Last, but not least, please educate yourself about guide dogs. If you pet, talk to or stare at a guide dog, you are distracting the dog. The dog has been taught that when its harness is on, it is only to pay attention to its user. If you distract the dog in any way, it will begin to look for attention from the public and no longer focus on its work. This can be dangerous for both the dog and its user. It also means that the dog gets reprimanded far more often than it might because the dog now easily gets distracted.

I love my guide dog and she gets plenty of time to play and romp just like any pet dog. She gets loads of pets and hugs. I want people to understand that the best gift they can give to themselves is the gift of knowledge about all disabilities because it is the right thing to do. ♦

"By your side"

by Bethany A. Lee, Greater Toronto Airports Authority

www.gtaa.com



Photo courtesy of the Greater Toronto Airports Authority

Currently, 10 to 15% of passengers require the assistance of airport personnel in the form of a wheelchair attendant, a porter or surrey, when travelling. In response to this, the Greater Toronto Airports

Authority has introduced a new program, the Airport Customer Assistance Program (ACAP) in the new Terminal 1 at Toronto Pearson International Airport.



The implementation of the ACAP program fulfills the airport's goal for a high-level, seamless, point-to-point transportation and assistance program for persons with classified disabilities, as well as other passengers who may require some manner of assistance. Designed to be a unified service for disabled persons, ACAP will offer wheelchair, electric-vehicle surrey and baggage assistance to physically disadvantaged passengers. These services will be available curbside, in the parking garage, within the terminals and will also facilitate interterminal transfers.

The implementation of ACAP fulfills the airport's mission to maintain and improve customer service. ACAP will continue as a permanent addition to the entire Greater Toronto Airport Authority customer service experience.

Wheelchair Service

Wheelchair service is offered to those who require mobility assistance or have a disability. Passengers who request the service will be met by the wheelchair attendant in the parking garage or curbside, and taken to the check-in counter.

Surrey Service

The surrey service consists of the operation of electric vehicles that carry passengers throughout the terminals. The service will be available to any passenger who requires assistance when walking long distances, but who does not necessarily require a wheelchair.

Porter Service

Baggage assistance, or porter service, is available to passengers using the ACAP services who are physically disadvantaged. The porters are responsible for meeting and greeting designated passengers (at a pre-requested point), providing assistance in carrying their baggage and escorting them to the check-in counter of the passenger's chosen airline.

To pre-arrange services through ACAP, call 416-776-ACAP (2227), or request them in person at the airport by picking up any info phone. ♦

WEB RESOURCES

Persons with Disabilities Online

improves the quality of life of persons with disabilities by facilitating access to information such as employment options, tax credits, and how to adapt a home to accommodate a wheelchair. Audience: persons with disabilities and their families, caregivers, employers, and anyone with whom they interact. www.pwd-online.ca

Seniors Canada Online offers the same level of information as the pwd-online site, with the information focussed on the interests of seniors. www.seniors.gc.ca

Government of Canada site is a gateway to federal organizations, policies, and legislation offering information to domestic and international individuals and businesses. www.canada.ca

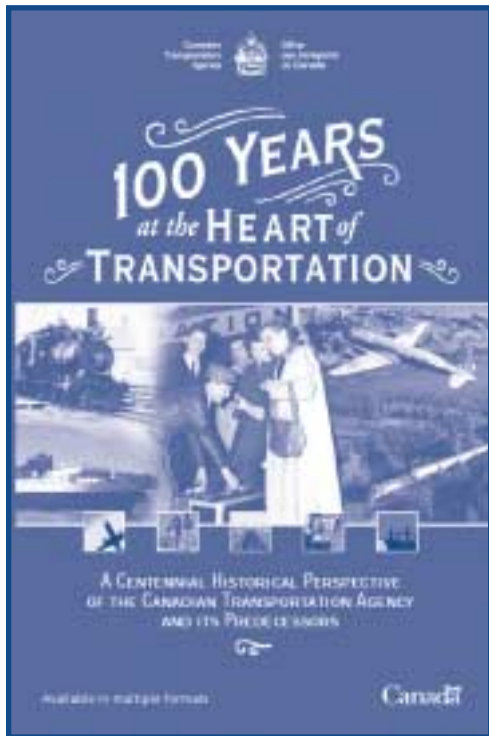
“Guide to Planning Inclusive Meetings and Conferences”

www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/tb_852/gpimc-gprc1_e.asp

This guide will provide meeting and conference organizers with practical tips and advice to ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities.

“Go for It”, A Guide to choosing and using assistive devices
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/pubs/injury_prevention/go_for_it/goforit_toc_e.htm

This guide focuses on assistive devices. It covers the many issues seniors, veterans, individuals with a disability and their caregivers need to consider before starting the process of obtaining assistive devices. Having this information empowers you in finding the right solutions.



"100 Years at the Heart of Transportation"

The Canadian Transportation Agency marked 100 years of service to Canadians in the field of transportation regulation. On February 17, 2004, the Agency launched "100 Years at the Heart of Transportation", a chronicle of its history in the making. Copies of the centennial's historical perspective is available on the Agency's Web site at www.cta.gc.ca or telephone 1-888-222-2592, TTY: 1-800-669-5575, E-mail: cta.comment@cta-otc.gc.ca

Available in multiple formats on request.

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