

Canadian Radio-television and  
Telecommunications  
Commission

2022–23

**REPORT ON ACCESSIBILITY**

The Honourable Pascale St-Onge, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Canadian Heritage

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## From the Minister

The organizations within the Canadian Heritage Portfolio have, once again, delivered a year of fulfilled mandates and important accomplishments that have continued to serve Canadians. Among these organizations is the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). In 2022–23, the CRTC continued to make advancements to improve the accessibility of services to persons with disabilities.



The [\*Accessible Canada Act\*](#) came into force in July 2019 and declared that all persons, regardless of their disabilities, are entitled to full and equal participation in society and that laws, policies, programs, services, and structures are to take into account the disabilities of persons. As a result, the CRTC is required to report annually on specific accessibility indicators about the industries it regulates.

The CRTC has implemented changes to improve the accessibility of communications services for Canadians. For instance, in February 2023, the CRTC required cellphone providers to take specific action to improve their cellphone plans to meet the needs of Canadians with various disabilities.

As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I am pleased to present the CRTC's Report on Accessibility for 2022–23. I invite you to consult and read more about the substantial efforts the Commission has made toward achieving accessibility and inclusion for all Canadians.

The Honourable Pascale St-Onge

## Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer's message

I am pleased to submit the CRTC's Report on Accessibility for 2022-23. Over the past year, we continued to identify, prevent and remove barriers in concrete ways.

For example, we required regulated broadcasting companies and telecommunications service providers to publish their accessibility plans and progress reports on their websites.

We imposed new requirements on cellphone companies to ensure that their cellphone plans meet the needs of Canadians with various disabilities.

We increased the accessibility of our proceedings and public hearings by introducing live streaming with closed captioning in both official languages.

We are also reviewing Video Relay Services (VRS), which enable people with hearing or speech disabilities who use sign language to communicate with voice telephone users.

We look forward to continuing to work toward a fully accessible and barrier-free communications system.



Vicky Eatrides

## Introduction

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has been working since the 1980s to enhance the interactions of persons with disabilities with their communications companies.

The [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA) took effect in July 2019. It amended the [CRTC Act](#) to increase accountability and transparency through an annual reporting requirement. The CRTC keeps the public up to date on the specific accessibility measures it has taken for the industries it regulates. What follows are the results for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

## Results

### ***Broadcasting Act***

Measure	Number of Incidences
Proceedings related to identifying, preventing and removing barriers <sup>1</sup>	nil
Proceedings related to accessibility reporting requirements <sup>2</sup>	2
Orders related to identifying, preventing and removing barriers <sup>3</sup>	nil
Orders related to accessibility reporting requirements <sup>4</sup>	nil

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<sup>1</sup> Inquiries conducted under [subsection 12\(1\) of the \*Broadcasting Act\*](#)

<sup>2</sup> Inquiries conducted under [subsection 12\(1\) of the \*Broadcasting Act\*](#) in relation to [sections 42 to 44 of the \*Accessible Canada Act\*](#)

<sup>3</sup> Orders made under [subsection 12\(2\) of the \*Broadcasting Act\*](#)

<sup>4</sup> Orders made under [subsection 12\(2\) of the \*Broadcasting Act\*](#) in relation to [sections 42 to 44 of the \*Accessible Canada Act\*](#)

## ***Telecommunications Act***

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Number of Incidences</b>
Inspections to ensure compliance with requirements related to identifying, preventing and removing barriers <sup>5</sup>	nil
Inspections related to accessibility reporting requirements <sup>6</sup>	nil
Orders related to identifying, preventing and removing barriers <sup>7</sup>	nil
Orders related to accessibility reporting requirements <sup>8</sup>	nil
Notices issued for violating requirements related to identifying, preventing and removing barriers <sup>9</sup>	nil
Notices issued for violating accessibility reporting requirements <sup>10</sup>	nil
Proceedings related to identifying, preventing and removing barriers <sup>11</sup>	2
Proceedings related to accessibility reporting requirements <sup>12</sup>	2

<sup>5</sup> Inspections conducted under [section 71 of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#)

<sup>6</sup> Inspections conducted under [section 71 of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#) in relation to [sections 51 to 53 of the \*Accessible Canada Act\*](#)

<sup>7</sup> Orders made under [section 51 of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#)

<sup>8</sup> Orders made under [section 51 of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#) in relation to [sections 51 to 53 of the \*Accessible Canada Act\*](#)

<sup>9</sup> Notices of violation issued under [section 72.005 of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#)

<sup>10</sup> Notices of violation issued under [section 72.005 of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#) in relation to any of [subsections 51\(1\) to \(4\) and \(7\), 52\(1\) to \(3\) and 53\(1\) to \(3\) and \(6\) of the \*Accessible Canada Act\*](#)

<sup>11</sup> Inquiries conducted under [subsection 48\(1\) of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#)

<sup>12</sup> Inquiries conducted under [subsection 48\(1.1\) of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#) in relation to [sections 51 to 53 of the \*Accessible Canada Act\*](#)

## ***Broadcasting Act and Telecommunications Act***

### **Guidance for submitting attestations and for notifying the CRTC about the publication of feedback process descriptions, accessibility plans and progress reports<sup>13</sup>**

In May 2022, the CRTC published guidance for communications companies submitting attestations under the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Accessibility Reporting Regulations*. For more information, see [Telecom and Broadcasting Information Bulletin CRTC 2022-117](#).

The CRTC also published guidance for regulated communications companies on how to notify the CRTC when they publish feedback process descriptions, accessibility plans, and progress reports prepared under the *Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Accessibility Reporting Regulations*. For more information, see [Telecom and Broadcasting Information Bulletin CRTC 2022-227](#).

## ***Telecommunications Act***

### **Cellphone plans that meet the needs of Canadians with various disabilities<sup>14</sup>**

In February 2023, the CRTC concluded that cellphone companies must improve their cellphone plans to meet the diverse needs of Canadians with disabilities. To make these improvements, cellphone companies must work with persons with disabilities to identify barriers and solutions. The CRTC imposed this new consultation requirement on cellphone companies. They must also report to the CRTC annually on their efforts. This new reporting requirement is separate from the annual *Accessible Canada Act* reporting requirements. For more information, see [Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2023-41](#).

### **Review of Video Relay Service<sup>15</sup>**

The CRTC continues its review of Video Relay Service (VRS). VRS is a basic telecommunications service that enables people with hearing or speech disabilities who use sign language to communicate with voice telephone users. In January 2023, the CRTC held virtual discussion sessions between VRS users and CRTC Commissioners. These discussions allowed VRS users to communicate directly with Commissioners about their VRS needs, whether the service is meeting those needs, and how the service can be improved. The discussions were held in English and American Sign Language (ASL), as well as in French and Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ). A live, word-for-word transcription of speech to text was also provided. The record of this

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<sup>13</sup> Inquiries conducted under [subsection 12\(1\) of the \*Broadcasting Act\*](#) and [subsection 48\(1.1\) of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#)

<sup>14</sup> Proceeding under [subsection 48\(1\) of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#)

<sup>15</sup> Proceeding under [subsection 48\(1\) of the \*Telecommunications Act\*](#)



proceeding is expected to close by the end of 2023. For more information, see [Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2021-102](#).

## **Observations**

The proceeding that led to *Mobile wireless service plans that meet the needs of Canadians with various disabilities* ([Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2023-41](#)) allowed the CRTC to update its policies on accessible cellphone plans to better meet the needs of Canadians with disabilities. The proceeding identified specific barriers that cellphone companies must work on resolving through regular consultations with persons with disabilities. These companies must also report on the outcomes and findings of these consultations annually.