

2023-2025 Accessibility Plan

December 31, 2022

Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.

Easy Read Summary

Introduction

Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) manages Canada's nuclear energy program. AECL's vision is to support innovations in nuclear science while managing nuclear and industrial waste in Canada. We also help to ensure that nuclear energy in Canada is safe. We help create policies about Canada's use of nuclear energy. Accessibility for people with disabilities is a priority to us at AECL. This plan will outline the activities we plan to do to become more accessible for people with disabilities in the next three years.

Feedback

- We want to hear from you! Submit your feedback on accessibility at AECL:
- Attention to: Accessibility Contact
- Email: accessibility@aecl.ca
- Phone Number: 1-888-220-2465
- Mailing Address: 286 Plant Rd, Stn 508A, Chalk River, ON K0J 1J0

Different Formats of This Plan

We provide different formats of this plan to serve accessibility needs. We can share this plan in the following formats:

- Large Print (The words will be bigger and easier to read)
- Braille (Dots on paper that a person who is blind can feel instead of seeing words)
- Audio (A voice will read the text out loud)

If you require a copy of this plan in a different format, please contact our accessibility mailbox - accessibility@aecl.ca or by phone 1-888-220-2465.

Our Accessibility Plan

Atomic Energy of Canada Limited's Accessibility Plan will span 2023-2025, our goals include making physical spaces at AECL more accessible as well as providing more training to employees.

Over the next three years, AECL has committed to:

- Move our Chalk River office into a new office which will be more accessible for employees with disabilities.
- Establish a plan for how to help people with disabilities if there is an emergency in our offices.
- Make plans to improve accessibility at all AECL offices except for the offices we plan to close down soon.
- Provide training to all employees on disability inclusion and accessibility.
- Review our hiring process to make it accessible.
- Create accommodation guidelines for employees with disabilities.
- Begin to offer accommodations to new job applicants. Review of our website and update to remove accessibility barriers.
- Create a text-only version of our website to make information easier to read.
- Ensure that documents on our website are accessible.
- Ensure that alternative formats are available upon request. Alternative formats include; braille, large print, or audio.
- Ensure that all the pictures we post on our website and social media have a description of the image for people who cannot see the picture.
- Make sure that we think about accessibility whenever we buy new products and services.

We developed this plan in collaboration with people with disabilities. We talked to our employees with disabilities and a group of Canadians with disabilities. The information they gave us helped inform us on what we put in this plan.

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1. General

1.1 Statement of Commitment

At Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (AECL), we are dedicated to being accessible and welcoming to everyone, including people with disabilities. We want to make sure that our organization is accessible for all employees and ensure that the information we produce is accessible to all Canadians. We are committed to removing accessibility barriers at AECL. This Accessibility Plan reflects that commitment.

1.2 Description of AECL

AECL is a federal Crown corporation. AECL's role is to act as an agent of the Government, to support Governmental nuclear policy and oversee the development of our sites under Canadian Nuclear Laboratories. We use nuclear science and technology to benefit Canadians. An example of this benefit is removing nuclear waste from past projects in Canada. AECL reports to the Minister of Natural Resources. We also provide information about Canada's Nuclear Energy to all Canadians.

1.3 Contact Information & Feedback Process

You can provide feedback on this plan or accessibility in general. Any feedback provided will be kept on file for seven years. You do not need to provide your name and contact information when submitting your feedback. We will use the feedback that we get to help us improve accessibility at AECL. Your feedback will also inform the next accessibility plan and subsequent progress reports.

To give us feedback about this plan or accessibility at AECL, you can contact:

- Attention to: Accessibility Contact

- Email: accessibility@aecl.ca
- Phone Number: 1-888-220-2465
- Mailing Address: 286 Plant Rd, Stn 508A, Chalk River, ON K0J 1J0

1.4 Alternative Formats

If you require this plan in a different format, we can provide the following alternative formats upon request through e-mailing accessibility@aecl.ca or phone 1-888-220-2465.

- **Large Print:** We can provide a large font printed copy of this plan. We can provide this within 15 days of when you make the request.
- **Braille:** We can provide a braille copy of the plan within 45 days of your request.
- **Audio:** We can provide an audio copy (an audio file with a person's voice reading the text) of this plan within 45 days of when you make the request.

1.5 Definitions

This plan uses the following definitions:

- **Disability:** An impairment or difference in physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, or communication ability. Disabilities can be permanent, temporary, or can change over time.
- **Barrier:** A barrier is anything that might prevent people with disabilities from full and equal participation. Barriers can be based on attitudes, the built environment, technology, how information is communicated, or the result of a policy or procedure.
- **Accessibility:** The design of products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies, and rules in a way that allows all people, including people with a variety of disabilities, to access them as independently as the person wishes.

2. Areas Described under Section 5 of the ACA

2.1 Built Environment

Overview

AECL has main offices in Chalk River, Ontario, Ottawa, Ontario, and in Pinawa , Manitoba. Members of the public rarely visit these office spaces as they are secure sites. Our Pinawa and Ottawa offices have a small number of staff. The office in Chalk River is the corporate head office where we do most of our field oversight. In the next few years, we plan to move our Chalk River employees to a new office space. We are committed to making this new office space as accessible as possible.

Accessibility Goals

- By the end of March 2025, AECL's main operations will move to a new office space that has been designed and planned with accessibility in mind. This new office space will have barrier free access to all common areas.
- We will work with CNL (who operate the site) to develop, publish, and circulate emergency evacuation plans for people with disabilities at the Chalk River office.
- By March 2026, we will decide if we will keep our Ottawa office space. If we decide to keep using these office spaces, we will develop plans to improve their accessibility. If we decide to close them and relocate, we will consider the level of accessibility of any new office spaces.

2.2 Employment

Overview

AECL has a workforce of about 50 employees. Most of our employees are based in Chalk River or Ottawa. Since 2020 many employees have worked from home on a hybrid or full-

time basis. The goals outlined below will help us to improve accessibility for our current and future employees with disabilities.

Accessibility Goals

- By March 2024, AECL will train all employees on accessibility and disability awareness. This training will also include basic principles of digital and communications accessibility.
- By March 2024, AECL will review our hiring and recruitment process to find and remove accessibility barriers for job applicants.
- By March 2024, AECL will develop, publish and share guidelines on how employees with disabilities can request and receive accommodations.
- By March 2024, AECL will include information about how job applicants can request and receive accommodations during the hiring process, in our job postings. We will also remind job applicants that they can request accommodations when we contact them for an interview.

2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Overview

Our public website (www.aecl.ca) is the main technology that members of the public interact with. Our public website has some accessibility features, but we are aware that some barriers remain. We are dedicated to removing barriers to accessibility on our public website and in our internal technology systems.

Accessibility Goals

- By the end of 2024, AECL will address and remove the accessibility barriers that were found through our consultations with people with disabilities. These changes include:

- Improving color contrast and text size
- Making sure the format and layout of our web pages are consistent
- Improvements to help make sure that people who are using screen readers can read the information on our website. A screen reader is technology where a voice reads the text from a website.
- AECL has already begun a review of our main website to remove barriers to accessibility. We will determine whether our website meets Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) guidelines. WCAG are a set of international standards that can help us determine how accessible a website is.
- By the end of 2024, AECL will have in place a process to complete regular reviews of our website to make sure that it is accessible to people with disabilities. We will ensure that people with disabilities who use adaptive technologies are part of these reviews.
- By the end of 2025, AECL will publish a text-only version of our website to ensure that the information we publish is fully accessible for everyone.
- Starting in March 2024, AECL will ensure that all of the documents we publish for the general public are in an accessible format.
- By the end of March 2024, AECL will ensure that all priority documents that were previously published on our website are available in an accessible format.

2.4 Communication, other than ICT

Overview

We are committed providing accessible communications with people with a variety of disabilities. Our employees communicate with one another regularly through phone, e-mail, and in person. We communicate with the public through our main website, social media platforms, and the publications of reports and other documents. The following goals will help us to improve the accessibility of our communications.

Accessibility Goals

- By March 2024, AECL will have a process to meet requests for alternative formats of the documents on our website. Once this process is in place, we will provide documents in large print, braille, or audio formats, upon request.
- By March 2025, AECL will ensure all images posted to our social media accounts and websites have alternative text descriptions, (the short-written description of an image that helps people who cannot see the image to understand what the image is).

2.5 Procurement

Overview

AECL buys various products and services that support our work and our employees. We use a system of rules and guidelines to ensure what we buy products and services that are competitively priced and best value for money. We are dedicated to making sure that the products and services we buy are as accessible as possible. The following goals will ensure accessibility is considered when we make a new purchase.

Accessibility Goals

- By March 2024, AECL will include accessibility considerations in our procurement policy, procurement checklists, and procurement templates (where appropriate).
- By the end of 2024, AECL will make sure that employees who work on procurement receive training and information about how to include accessibility requirements in procurement activities.
- By March of 2025, accessibility will be explicitly considered in all procurement by either documenting the decision to not incorporate accessibility requirements or by including accessibility requirements.

2.6 Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Overview

AECL's main activities are ensuring Canada's nuclear energy is safe and supporting research and policy activities related to nuclear energy. We do not regularly interact with the public as we are a secure site. We do a few face to face programs for the public that are not online or on the website.

The main service we provide to the public is information about Canada's nuclear energy. This information is shared on our public website and social media accounts. Members of the public can also contact us to ask questions. Because the main service that we provide is related to communication, the goals that we have listed in the "Communication, other than ICT" section of this plan will help improve the accessibility of this service.

2.7 Transportation

Overview

AECL does not run or operate any passenger transportation services; therefore, we have not developed any goals in this area.

3. Consultations

AECL is committed to listening to the experiences and feedback from people with disabilities. We are dedicated to making AECL a more accessible place that is attractive to all potential employees. We want all employees and visitors of AECL to feel reassured that their accessibility needs will be met. Throughout the creation of this plan, we consulted with employees and members of the public who have disabilities.

We sent a survey to all our employees to ask for feedback about accessibility. Many of our employees gave feedback about the accessibility of our current office space and provided some suggestions for what should be included in our new office space. Employees also shared feedback about the open-plan nature of the office space and how that can sometimes be a distracting work environment.

We also held a focus group with 9 Canadians who have a variety of disabilities. This focus group helped us understand how members of the public might experience barriers when interacting with us. We asked this group to look at our website, social media accounts, and job application process. The focus group gave us feedback about some barriers they encountered when looking at our various platforms. They also shared experiences of when they encountered barriers during the hiring process and in regard to employment in general. We used the feedback from people with disabilities to help build this plan. We will continue to consult with people who have disabilities as we work to improve accessibility at AECL.

4. Conclusion

AECL is committed to making sure that our operations, services and activities are accessible for all people, including people with disabilities. As a small organization we recognize that we will need support for our accessibility initiatives from consultants and experts with disabilities. Those experts will support us to implement our plans, conduct consultations with people who have disabilities, and make sure that we are being responsive to the feedback we receive from people with disabilities. We plan to hold yearly focus groups with people who have disabilities so that they can review and provide feedback on our progress reports and the activities we have completed so far.