



Progress Report – Year 1

January-December 2023



Canadian Space
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January-December 2023

A. GENERAL

SUMMARY

The following Progress Report covers the period from January 2023 to November 2023, and anticipated progress for December 2023.

To ensure consistency during the implementation of the Canadian Space Agency's Accessibility Plan 2023-2025, the same individuals who helped develop the Plan were involved in preparing the Progress Report, such as the members of the Accessibility Plan Working Group, the Champion for Persons with Disabilities, the Accessibility Network, and CSA employees who took part in a survey and focus group discussions. In addition, an Accessibility Tracker was created to monitor the Plan's implementation and bi-monthly meetings were held with the Accessibility Working Group, as well as one-on-one discussions with subject matter experts, to help guide, track and measure the progress of Year 1 actions.

Overall, the CSA has made great strides towards implementing its Year 1 actions, with many actions being implemented as envisioned. Other actions were amended to adjust to changing requirements or opportunities and a few actions were deferred to Year 2 due to workload issues. It should be noted that the federal government's new Directive on Common Hybrid Work, which came into effect on April 1, 2023, has raised concerns about accommodation issues for employees with disabilities and has highlighted the need for new ways of working in a hybrid workplace to ensure accessibility. The issues raised by the new Directive will need to be taken into consideration when implementing Year 2 and 3 actions.

The CSA is fortunate to have the support of the Executive Team and the very active participation of the Champion and the Accessibility Network who do a tremendous job of giving voice to the needs of the accessibility community. For instance, they participated in the Human Resources (HR) Team's co-creation exercise to develop a three-year Recruitment Strategy and took part in consultations on the Employment Equity Act Review, Career Management Services and GBA+. In addition, the Champion and Accessibility Network organized several well-attended events in the past year to increase visibility and awareness of accessibility issues (see the Communications Area of Focus for more details).

A focus group participant observed that they had never worked for a department or Agency that focused on accessibility and diversity and inclusion with as much visibility and transparency as the Canadian Space Agency. That is a testament to the collaborative efforts of many individuals who are deeply committed to making the workplace accessible for employees with disabilities, and for everyone.

DESIGNATED OFFICIAL

Lynne Laramée, Executive Director, Human Resources

CONTACT INFORMATION

The following contact information may be used to:

- Request copies of the CSA's accessibility plan, progress reports, and feedback process descriptions in certain alternate format.
- Submit feedback about barriers you have encountered when dealing with the CSA.
- Submit feedback on the CSA's implementation of the accessibility plan.

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B. AREAS OF FOCUS

1. EMPLOYMENT

Status of Goal

The CSA has made some progress towards its goals of increasing access to employment and promotional opportunities for employees and job seekers with disabilities so that they can contribute to their full potential, and of being regarded as an employer of choice.

Identified Barriers

A few new barriers have been identified. First, feedback collected over the past year suggests that the federal public service's Directive on Common Hybrid Work has created various barriers related to employment opportunities and accommodations (see Feedback section). For instance, some people may not feel comfortable voicing their accessibility needs, requesting an exemption or asking for accommodations. It can be a stressful process to explain and advocate for their accessibility needs and potentially be denied their request. Another new barrier related to the need for enhanced onboarding for employees with disabilities.

In terms of previously identified barriers, PSES 2022 results indicate that employment and/or career progression barriers still remain (see Feedback section below.) Feedback also highlighted ongoing inconsistencies and other issues in addressing accommodation requests. In terms of the HR Team's level of knowledge and understanding of the needs of people with

disabilities, there have been increased discussions and sharing of knowledge as the team works collaboratively to implement the Accessibility Plan's actions. In addition, the HR Team's PE Professional Development Apprenticeship Program offers various accessibility-related modules.

Feedback taken into consideration during consultations

Public Service Employee Survey

Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) 2022 results show that employees with disabilities continue to face barriers that they feel negatively impact their career progression in greater numbers than non disabled employees, such as:

- **Conflict between their work obligations and family and personal obligations:** 34% (same as in 2020), compared to 23% of non disabled employees.
- **Access to learning opportunities:** 31% (same as in 2020), compared to 17% of non disabled employees.
- **Discrimination:** 26% (compared to 23% in 2022) compared to 9% of non disabled employees.
- **Accessibility or accommodation issues:** 21% (same as in 2020) compared to 2% of non disabled employees.

Internal Survey and Focus Group Feedback

In this year's internal survey (2023) on accessibility, 16% of respondents (employees with disabilities) said they experienced barriers during a staffing process, an increase from last year's results (11%). In terms of their overall satisfaction with how accommodation requests were handled in the past year, 34% were very satisfied, and 50% were somewhat satisfied, a decrease from last year's results (43% were very satisfied and 57% were somewhat satisfied).

A significant number of comments pertained to the Directive on Common Hybrid Work. Some were concerned that the government-wide approach of mandating days in-office would limit the ability of employees with disabilities to perform their jobs while managing their disabilities. Others flagged mental health impacts for individuals with mental health disabilities. Some employees with mental health disabilities feel uncomfortable discussing their disabilities with their managers and others find themselves unable to go to work in person and are afraid of not complying with their telework agreement. Other comments focused on the struggle to concentrate while working in person due to sounds and movement, and the impacts on overall performance and the level of anxiety that creates.

A few comments were shared regarding staffing, such as Statements of Merit Criteria that include criteria such as "ability to work effectively under pressure," which could unintentionally exclude applicants who have a mental health disability.

Feedback was also provided on accommodation measures. Some comments flagged the need for more easily accessible information or resources to support employees with disabilities, as well as better response time when requesting advice from the HR Team. Other feedback was raised regarding obtaining written documentation to confirm accommodation measures,

experiencing roadblocks and lengthy delays leading some to circumventing the standard process, having previously approved accommodation measures withdrawn for a recognized and documented disability and the challenges in securing accommodations despite there being no operational constraints. Some offered suggestions such as extending the timeframe for lengthy training (to 12 months instead of within the first 6 months) for persons with disabilities as it can be an added stressor to complete it during a shorter timeframe. Finally, it was suggested that it would be beneficial to increase education for managers on how to work with employees with disabilities on their accommodation requests.

Other comments related to systemic barriers such as heavy workloads, which can negatively impact employees and leaders, and especially those with mental health disabilities and cognitive disabilities like ADHD. It was also suggested that more support and resources be allocated to ensure new employees with disabilities have access to all the information they need to onboard more easily and effectively.

Status of Year 1 Actions (January – December 2023)

Present the HR Team’s annual plan to the Accessibility Network for information and feedback and provide an annual progress report.

The HR Team presented an update on the implementation of Year 1 to the Accessibility Network in October 2023.

Continue working towards adopting the new GoC Workplace Accessibility Passport and ensure consultations take place with CSA’s Accessibility Network.

This action has been deferred to Year 2. The Labour Relations Team, which is involved in the process of adopting the Passport, has faced an enormous workload this past year with the implementation of the Directive on common hybrid work and managing the strike situation. Steps will commence in Year 2 to map out the CSA’s current accommodation process to help facilitate the transition to the Passport.

Develop a transition plan to support employees with disabilities and managers in adapting to the GoC Workplace Accessibility Passport.

This action is also deferred to Year 2 since it is connected to the previously mentioned action.

Research learning content for accessibility module(s) for future “LearnHR” sessions for managers.

A template presentation has been created for “LearnHR” sessions for managers, which HR subject matter experts will use to develop their learning content. The “DID YOU KNOW” series will be leveraged (see Accessible Communications section for more information) to develop a general accessibility module and research has begun on more specific accessibility-related topics for additional modules.

Implement Year 1 of 3-Year Recruitment Strategy. Present mid-year update to Accessibility Network.

The HR Team will present a mid-year update to the Accessibility Network by December 2023 and provide an overview of the concrete actions taken to implement Year 1 of the Recruitment Strategy and support the hiring and career progression of persons with disabilities. For example, the team:

- Launched a number of targeted processes for employment equity groups and participated in an interdepartmental BI-02 process for employees with disabilities.
- Promoted the use of the PSC's pools for employees with disabilities.
- Encouraged hiring students with disabilities (see action below for more details) and created a new student interview guide to aid managers remove bias and barriers in interviews for equity-seeking students.
- Ensured employment equity groups were included for consideration in midyear succession planning discussions to identify internal candidates ready for stretch assignments, as part of the Talent Management Program.
- As part of the midyear succession planning exercise, hold mid-year succession planning discussions to identified internal candidates ready for stretch assignments as part of the Talent Management Program's midyear succession planning discussions, which includes a dedicated focus on employment equity groups.
- Promoted the use of ability merit criteria (instead of experience criteria) to allow candidates to show they can do the work when they may not have experience.
- Advocated that criterion not required for the candidate to be successful on Day One not be added in the Statement of Merit Criteria. The same applies for experience and knowledge criteria that can be easily learned on the job.
- Promoted the openness of experience, such as allowing it to be acquired through various streams like volunteering.
- Made improvements to job advertisements, such as limiting the amount of information on advertisements, simplifying language, and avoiding expressions that can only be understood by those who already work in the sector.
- Ensured that closed captions are used in all CSA recruitment videos and test posters and applications uploaded in Vidcruiter for readability when using screen readers.
- Held discussions with CNIB, Auticon and LiveWorkPlay to explore how to partner with these organizations to improve the sourcing of talent as well as retention.

Fully leverage the guidance documents prepared by the Public Service Commission (PSC) on accessible staffing practices as well as staffing flexibility available to hiring managers.

In terms of guidance documents prepared by the PSC, the HR Team leverages various resources such as the GCintranet's *Resources for hiring persons with disabilities* toolbox as well as the PSC's *Public service hiring guides*. Staffing flexibility available to hiring managers, such as defining employment equity as a merit criterion, restricting the area of selection to employment equity groups, or using a non-advertised appointment process, are increasingly understood and more integrated in staffing actions.

Include more diverse board members for selection processes, especially for EX positions.

The HR Team ensures diverse board members for selection processes for EX positions, including the development of the statement of merit criteria and evaluation tools for selection processes. A list of diverse board members is provided to the hiring managers for staffing of non-EX positions. The HR Team's HR Tracker will soon include a section to track whether a selection process has a diverse board.

Conduct research on best practices for improving HR practices and procedures to better identify and resolve barriers, based on the results of the HR employment systems review.

The HR Team is in the final stages of an extensive review of policies and directives to find systemic barriers for all employment equity groups. The team is currently developing tools (e.g., checklists) to ensure potential barriers and biases are considered in all assessment materials. Staffing file reviews will follow in Year 2 and 3. In addition, online, self-paced training to delegated managers on the amendments to the Public Service Employment Act was promoted in Summer 2023.

Update HR procedures to better track data at all stages of the employment cycle from recruitment to retention and promotion.

The HR Team tracks this data and uses it to complete the CSA's demographic profile. Dashboards are currently in development and will be published twice a year starting in Year 2.

Establish a mechanism to track the hiring of students through the Employment Opportunity for Students with Disabilities programs or employees from the Federal Internship Program for Canadians with Disabilities at the Public Service Commission.

Managers are responsible for the student hiring process and the HR Team supports their efforts by raising awareness of the various programs available to hire students with disabilities (e.g., call-out letters and reminders, information on the intranet) and by providing tools to enable inclusive and bias-free interviews (e.g., interview guide). The HR Team also tracks which programs the students have been hired through and whether they have self-declared as a student with a disability.

Work with Ombuds to update employees stay/exit interviews questionnaire to better identify workplace retention barriers and gaps for employees with disabilities.

Discussions were held with the Ombuds office, and it was determined that they use a discussion guide for conversations with employees. They will be revising the discussion guide and have been asked to factor in accessibility considerations. The Ombuds prepares a report that covers the topics raised in a broad manner to protect confidentiality. This report is presented to senior management, which uses that information to enhance workplace wellbeing and address issues. Specific issues may be raised, confidentially, with the Executive Director of HR during their regular meetings.

Review onboarding practices for accessibility to help new employees feel supported.

This action has been deferred to Year 2. Work will start in 2024 to develop a new onboarding program and will be informed by accessibility requirements.

Research awareness and training options on accessibility and incorporate into the HR Team's learning plan to increase knowledge and capacity to provide guidance.

The HR Team has a comprehensive PE Professional Development Apprenticeship Program which includes numerous accessibility-related courses offered by the Canada School of Public Service, such as *Addressing Disability Inclusion and Barriers to Accessibility* (CSPS – INC115), *Inclusive Hiring Practices for a Diverse Workforce* (CSPS – COR120), *Adopting an Inclusive Mindset at Work* (CSPS – INC122), to name a few. These courses will also be promoted in the monthly HR Team newsletter to encourage non-PE team members to also sign up for these courses. In addition, a plan has been developed to offer training on creating accessible documents to various internal teams (including the HR Team), which will be rolled out in 2024 (see Area of Focus on Communications for further details).

Status of Targets

The CSA has met its Workforce Availability Target in all but one employment category (Scientific and Professional classifications). In terms of PSES results pertaining to career progression, results remain consistent for three indicators: conflict between work obligations and family and personal obligations, lack of access to learning opportunities and accessibility or accommodation issues. The remaining indicator, discrimination, saw a slight decline in satisfaction. (23% in 2020 vs. 26% in 2022).

2. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Status of Goal

Ongoing efforts are underway to enhance the CSA's built environment to ensure employees and visitors have barrier-free access.

Identified Barriers

A number of new barriers were identified during the feedback process that the CSA's Real Property Management Team will take into consideration. For instance, it was observed that electronic doors do not work during power outages and are difficult to open. It was also felt that there are minimal lights or visual cues to alert employees with hearing disabilities of emergencies. Other new barriers relate to open, flexible workspaces, which are outlined in the feedback section below. Previously identified barriers are being addressed through the Real Property Management Team's action plan. In addition, measures are underway to ensure staff increase awareness of accessibility-related issues (see Status of Year 1 Actions).

Feedback taken into consideration during consultations

Public Service Employee Survey

PSES 2022 survey results, 88% of respondents with disabilities felt that their physical environment was suitable for their job requirements, a substantial increase from 2020 results of 48%, and a similar result to that of respondents without a disability (89%). The PSES also asked to what extent the physical work environment causes stress at work. In 2022, 2% of

employees with disabilities felt that the physical work environment causes stress at work, a decrease from 2020 (6%).

Internal Survey and Focus Group Feedback

In this year's internal survey (2023) on accessibility, 88% of respondents (employees with disabilities) indicated that they were very satisfied/satisfied with the ergonomic and/or adaptive equipment they have been provided to do their work, an increase from last year's results (81%). Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents (employees with disabilities), felt that the accessibility of their office building, based on their own needs, was very accessible/completely accessible (compared to 85% in 2022), a slight decrease.

Some respondents provided comments highlighting issues, such as difficulties with open, flexible workspaces (e.g., noise/movement affecting ability to concentrate and be productive; lighting triggering migraines; limited personalized ergonomic set-ups; and no lockers to store personalized equipment), issues with corridors, doors and bathrooms (e.g., lack of visual cues to help orient people; the carpet is sometimes irregular and can affect wheelchair access; certain corridors are narrow and limit mobility for some; operations room doors do not open automatically; and certain restrooms do not have automatic doors and don not have enough space for wheelchairs). Focus group feedback echoed concerns raised regarding noise in open, flexible workspaces and regarding the need for more automatic doors.

Status of Year 1 Actions (January – December 2023)

Prioritize the existing plan's actions into yearly milestones.

The plan's milestones for Year 1 (2023) have been established to implement the actions stemming from a 2018 report for the John H. Chapman Space Centre. However, recently issued code changes require additional planning to take place to establish milestones for Year 2 and Year 3 as some of the conclusions of the 2018 report may be out of date. The team is currently determining its approach, which may involve the need for a new study of the JHCSC. The results of the DFL study have taken into account the code update and will be included in yearly milestones. Accessibility recommendations from the 2018 JHCSC report which overlap with the scope of the Civil Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project have been incorporated into the design and will be rectified over the course of the project.

Present the CSA's Built Environment Action Plan to the Accessibility Network for information and feedback and provide an annual progress report.

The team will provide a general update to the Accessibility Network in November 2023 and will commence presentations of annual action plans in 2024.

Complete an accessibility study at the David Florida Laboratory (DFL) in compliance with TBS/ PSPC standards for real property.

The team is working with the Champion for persons with disabilities, the Accessibility Network and others to gather feedback on accessibility needs during the study phase. PSPC completed the physical assessment study and is currently drafting the report. The report is expected to be delivered this calendar year.

Research awareness and training options on workplace accessibility and incorporate them into the Real Property Management Team’s learning plan.

The Real Property Management Team will assign two staff members to become a “Centre of Expertise” within the real property planning team. These staff members will enroll in at least one Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) accessibility course in Year 1. Additional training will follow in Year 2 and Year 3 based on research findings of awareness and training options. These staff members, located in Ottawa and St Hubert respectively, will be the subject matter experts on accessibility-related matters and will incorporate accessibility into our projects and activities.

Status of Targets

Tasks/milestones for Year 1 have been established. Year 2 and Year 3 tasks are to be determined pending a review of the new codes, the results of the DFL study and other factors such as aligning work with approved investment plans.

3. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Status of Goal

Work is underway to incorporate and prioritize accessibility in IT projects and processes to ensure greater access to electronic and software tools needed to do their work while also adhering to security requirements.

Identified Barriers

A few additional technological barriers have been identified in the internal survey, particularly with regards to virtual/hybrid meetings (see Feedback section below). In terms of previously identified barriers, the IM/IT team is in regular contact with the AACT to discuss technological solutions to ensure greater accessibility while also respecting the CSA’s security considerations. In addition, the CSA regularly uses the CART services during all-staff gatherings to increase accessibility for employees with hearing disabilities. As well, a catalogue of training options for IM/IT staff is being developed and will include a section on accessibility.

Feedback taken into consideration during consultations

Public Service Employee Survey

PSES 2022 results show that CSA employees with disabilities have a level of satisfaction of 89% with the tools, technology, and equipment they need to do their work, a significant increase compared to 2020 results (66%). In comparison, employees without a disability responded 91% in 2022 and 86% in 2020. When asked whether they felt that the quality of their work suffers because of unreliable technology, 57% of employees with disabilities answered never/almost never and rarely, compared to 41% in 2020. In comparison, employees without a disability responded 63% in 2022 and 50% in 2020.

Internal Survey and Focus Group Feedback

An internal survey conducted in fall 2023 indicates that 88% of respondents (employees with disabilities) felt very satisfied/satisfied with the IT ergonomic and/or IT adaptive equipment, compared to 84% last year. As well, 12% were not very satisfied/very unsatisfied, compared to 16% last year. In terms of the level of satisfaction with the support provided by IT specialists when there are questions or concerns regarding accessible software and technologies they are using, 97% of participants were very satisfied/somewhat satisfied, compared to 93% last year. Some participants provided comments regarding technological barriers such as employees with hearing disabilities experiencing challenges acquiring the technology or tools required to help them adapt to either in-person or virtual work settings or issues with employees who work remotely having to manage issues. A few suggestions were provided, such as enabling auto-generated transcripts after Teams calls to increase accessibility for those who need help taking notes during meetings, and changing the default for all meetings to 25 minutes or 55 minutes to allow for a pause between meetings.

In the same internal survey, 85% of respondents (all employees) were very satisfied (compared to 88% last year) that virtual meetings and events are fully accessible to them, and 13% were somewhat satisfied (compared to 11% last year). However, while some comments recognized the progress to date, other feedback highlighted challenges with hybrid meetings (e.g., meeting room set-up is not standardized, challenges and inconsistencies with videoconferencing systems, and some microphones do not work properly). There were also concerns raised regarding an increasing number of meetings with no virtual options or with limited virtual participation (e.g., ability to ask questions or provide comments in real time). In addition, issues were flagged with the subtitles generated by Teams, particularly during bilingual meetings, making it difficult for some employees to follow the conversation.

Status of Year 1 Actions (January – December 2023)

Research IM/IT accessibility best practices and new trends in both technology and service delivery to inform the annual update of IM/IT 3-year strategy.

A new Digital Transformation Team, responsible for project management and change management, has been created and will be responsible for accessibility matters. Ongoing discussions regarding the security implications of adaptive technological solutions are held with SSC's AACT team.

Present the CSA's IM/IT 3-year strategy to the Accessible Network for information and feedback and provide an annual progress report.

The Team presented a general overview to the Accessibility Network in November 2023 and will commence its annual progress report in Year 2.

Prepare inventory of systems, software, and equipment to assess the level of accessibility.

The IM/IT Team completed an inventory of the systems in Year 1 and will complete an analysis of the level of accessibility of each system. The inventory of software and equipment is in progress and is anticipated to be complete in Year 2.

Develop a plan to ensure compliance with new TBS Web Accessibility Standards (Phase 1), which are expected by the end of fiscal year 2022-2023.

The CSA complies with the latest TBS Web Accessibility Standards.

Develop service standards for responding to accessibility accommodation requests.

It is anticipated that work on developing service standards will commence in Year 2.

Research options to overcome technological limits that hinder accessibility.

The Team has researched options based on clients' requests in Year 1 and will research additional options to overcome technological limits that hinder accessibility starting in Year 2.

Develop a mechanism to collect, track and analyze accessibility-related ICT feedback.

For the moment, the Team uses an internal IT Service Management system to track all requests.

Establish mechanisms to ensure that the integrated architecture team can support project teams in building in accessibility from the start, either by setting up a committee or by involving another existing committee.

The Enterprise Architecture Team supports clients with projects of a digital nature, which takes accessibility matters into consideration. In addition, the DARB (Departmental Architecture Review Board) was created in June 2023 and is responsible for giving the "green light" on projects with a digital component on different aspects of enterprise architecture. This committee also considers accessibility requirements.

Research awareness and training sessions on accessible ICT and incorporate into the IM/IT Team's learning plan to ensure all aspects of IM/IT are considered.

The IM/IT Team is working on an inventory of training which includes a section on accessibility.

Status of Targets

The number of accessible systems and software have improved with the adoption of M365. There have been no changes to hardware in Year 1. PSES 2022 results demonstrate a significant increase in the level of satisfaction of CSA employees with disabilities with regard to the tools, technology, and equipment they need to do their work. Internal survey results 2023 indicate an increase in the satisfaction rate for both IT ergonomic and/or IT adaptive equipment and the support provided by IT specialists.

4. COMMUNICATION (OTHER THAN ICT)

Status of Goal

The CSA's communications tools, services, products, and events are increasingly accessible, with the use of CART at all-staff sessions and the addition of an interim Accessibility Hub on the intranet. Upcoming efforts in Year 2 and Year 3 will help increase employee and leader awareness of accessible communication best practices.

Identified Barriers

New communications barriers have identified regarding virtual/hybrid meetings (see previous section on Information and Communications Technology). While the current intranet is still a barrier, work is well underway to revamp the intranet by the end of 2024 and make it fully accessible. In the meantime, an Accessibility Hub has been created to share information and tools on various accessibility-related topics (see Status of Year 1 Actions).

Feedback taken into consideration during consultations

Internal Survey and Focus Group Feedback

In this year's internal survey, participants (all employees) were asked about their current level of knowledge or ability to make documents more accessible, respondents answered as follows: high (31% vs. 10% in 2022), medium (36% vs. 42%), low (25% vs. 36%) and no current knowledge or ability (11% vs. 12%). In terms of plain language, 69% of respondents felt that the CSA's communications are written in plain language (compared to 74% in 2022) and 23% responded sometimes (compared to 22% in 2022). In terms of feedback, the intranet's outdated or incorrect links and pages are seen as a barrier for obtaining important information on accessibility-related issues, like accommodations. Similarly, it was suggested that resources are needed to ensure new employees with disabilities have access to information they need.

Status of Year 1 Actions (January – December 2023)

Develop a 3-year communications strategy to promote the CSA's Accessibility Plan and raise awareness of accessibility requirements and resources. Implement Year 1.

The Accessibility Network took part in a brainstorming session on the three-year communications strategy, with members reviewing the draft strategy before it was finalized. Year 1 actions included three events organized by the Network during National Accessibility Week: 1) workshop on organizing inclusive meetings and leveraging M365 accessibility, 2) hosted a booth with the [AAACT](#) team who demonstrated assistive technologies, and 3) panel discussion with three CSA employees who shared their lived experiences with hearing loss and ADHD. Each event garnered on average 117 participants.

Work with the Human Resources Directorate to develop and promote an annual "Top 5 Accessibility Tips" campaign. Year 1 will focus on accessible communication tips.

The Accessibility Network took part in an interactive session to brainstorm accessibility tips, which evolved into the "DID YOU KNOW" series (replacing "Top 5 Accessibility Tips"). This series covers topics such as the new disability definition, self-identification and self-declaration, accessibility mindsets and tips to improve workplace accessibility for everyone, including accessible communications tips, and more. Each DID YOU KNOW will be featured on the internal screens at the CSA's three work locations and will also be posted prominently on the intranet. The HR Team intends to leverage the content to develop training sessions for managers and internal services teams who deliver services to employees with disabilities in Year 2.

**Include accessibility as part of the upcoming user experience assessment of the intranet.
Initiate intranet revamp based on user experience assessment findings.**

An open call was sent to all employees to invite them to take part in a card sorting exercise to help ensure a seamless user experience. Accessibility Network members were encouraged to participate to bring additional accessibility perspectives. In addition, the Communications Team is working to secure a resource to prepare the intranet for its revamp from a technical standpoint. The intranet will be fully revamped and accessible by the end of 2024.

Design a new Accessibility Hub on the intranet to offer a one-stop shop for all accessibility-related information, including accessible communications guidance.

An interim Accessibility Hub was created with input from members of the Accessibility Network. The full Accessibility Hub will be launched as part of the revamped intranet by the end of 2024.

Assess training options for creating accessible documents and develop a plan for delivering training to internal teams.

The HR Team assessed training options and will leverage existing resources offered by the [\(AAACT\) Program](#) and the Canada School of Public Service, such as [Making Documents Accessible \(INC1-V46\)](#). A series of co-learning “viewing parties” will be organized with internal services teams to watch the online workshop as a group, followed by a facilitated discussion to integrate the learning and gather questions. In addition, the HR Team will post written guides on document accessibility on the intranet’s Accessibility Hub.

Assess measures needed to meet remaining [Guidelines for Making Communications Products and Activities Accessible](#).

After consultation, it was deemed that ASL/LSQ are not needed at this time since hearing impaired employees prefer CART. As of December 2022, every All-Staff has included the CART Service. The Accessibility Network decided to alternate official languages each month to facilitate the use of MS Team’s existing transcription service and reduce costs associated with CART.

Actively participate in the Community of Practice (COP) for Accessible Communications to stay well informed of the latest information and share best practices.

The internal communications team has been in contact with the COP for Accessible Communications to join future sessions.

Status of Targets

There has been a substantial increase in the number of respondents with a high level of knowledge or ability to make documents more accessible. There is currently insufficient data to determine the success of the interim Accessibility Hub. Data tracking and analysis will be part of the new intranet in 2024.

5. PROCUREMENT

Status of Goal

The Procurement Team has been able to meet parts of the goal to weave accessibility requirements into various aspects of procurement by implementing a new tracking mechanism in its procurement internal planning tools that includes accessibility considerations.

Identified Barriers

No new barriers have been identified. The level of accessibility of procurement tools and templates remains unknown.

Feedback taken into consideration during consultations

The CSA does not currently have a mechanism in place to regularly seek input or feedback from persons with disabilities such as an advisory committee or stakeholder networks that can provide advice, direction, or guidance on procurement's accessibility.

Status of Year 1 Actions (January – December 2023)

Create an inventory of procurement tools and templates for internal clients. Conduct an accessibility assessment of this inventory to 1) determine the level of accessibility of the tools and templates and 2) to ensure accessibility is included as a requirement and/or consideration in procurements.

Due to a team restructuring and staff turnover, there has been a lack of resources to create an inventory of procurement tools and templates and to conduct an accessibility assessment in Year 1. However, Procurement agents are aware of the importance of accessibility and, where appropriate, help guide the conversations with internal clients on a case-by-case basis. Work is currently underway to lay the groundwork for the inventory, with the Procurement Team receiving guidance on some areas and seeking further information on other aspects, such as information and communications technologies.

Conduct research on best practices for making complex procurement documents accessible (e.g., large documents containing multiple tables) for potential bidders.

The Procurement Team has reviewed the text of templates to ensure they are screen-reader friendly. Given the complexity of making multiple tables accessible, the team hasn't yet expanded into tables.

Actively participate in the Agents of Change for Accessible Procurement group to stay well informed of the latest information and share best practices.

Procurement staff regularly attend Agents of Change for Accessible Procurement sessions to establish connections and collect information on best practices.

Status of Targets

Though some tools are from PSPC, CSA will continue to work towards making other internal tools and templates accessible, where required, by Year 3.

6. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Status of Goal

The CSA is working towards its goal of enhancing the accessibility of its programs and services through increased awareness and knowledge of accessible and inclusive design and delivery.

Identified Barriers

No new barriers have been identified and previously identified barriers remain.

Feedback taken into consideration during consultations

The CSA does not currently have a mechanism in place to regularly seek input or feedback from persons with disabilities such as an advisory committee or stakeholder networks that can provide advice, direction, or guidance on the accessibility of our programs and services. The CSA has not yet developed data on client satisfaction from the perspective of persons with disabilities.

Status of Year 1 Actions (January – December 2023)

Continue identifying external and interdepartmental services, monitor service standards according to different delivery modes and harmonize reporting exercises. Accessibility considerations will be included in Service Review checklists and other documents.

The Service Management and Experimentation Team is collaborating with the Audit and Evaluation Team to align service reviews with the CSA's program evaluation process. Client-centric elements, including accessibility considerations, will be part of the service review scope. The first service reviews will begin in winter 2024, as part of the Data Utilization and Application Development Evaluation.

Explore opportunities to research best practices for assessing G&C service and program design to identify and remove potential barriers and biases and for designing and delivering accessible and inclusive programs and services.

The G&C Team has connected with counterparts in other government departments to obtain various tools and resources on how to foster greater accessibility in G&C service and program design to potentially adapt to CSA's context.

Research best practices to 1) develop data on G&C client satisfaction from the perspective of persons with disabilities and 2) to consult persons with disabilities to identify and remove barriers.

The G&C Team is working with the Programs and Integrated Planning Team to include a question regarding G&Cs and accessibility in a survey sent to external stakeholders, issued each January, to help establish baseline data.

Develop mechanisms to monitor the proportion of G&C recipients who have individuals who self-identify as persons with disabilities within their organizations.

The G&C Team will review the tools and resources provided by its GoC counterparts to determine next steps for monitoring the proportion of G&C recipients who have individuals who self-identify as persons with disabilities within their organizations.

Status of Targets

There is currently no consistent data to establish proposed indicators. Based on this plan, by Year 3, the Centre of Expertise for Grants and Contributions will be in a position to begin collecting data and establish a baseline for future accessibility plans.

7. TRANSPORTATION

The Canadian Human Rights Commission defined the “Transportation” Area of Focus as follows:

This includes travel between provinces or outside of Canada by plane, train, bus, or ferry. It also includes vehicles used by organizations that are regulated by the federal government (examples: Canada Post, television stations). Here are examples of barriers in this area:

- *Planes and trains are not wheelchair accessible*
- *Airports that do not have braille signs*

Given this definition, the CSA deemed this Area of Focus not applicable.

8. ACCESSIBILITY CONFIDENCE

Status of Goal

The CSA is continuing to make strides towards creating greater awareness and understanding among CSA leaders and employees on why it matters and a more accessible and inclusive workplace.

Identified Barriers

New barriers identified. While some progress has been made, there is an ongoing need to raise awareness and understanding on the part of managers and colleagues about accessibility needs and requirements and how they can help reduce systemic and attitudinal barriers for people with disabilities.

Feedback taken into consideration during consultations

Public Service Employee Survey

- 79% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that they receive **meaningful recognition for work well done** (compared to 67% in 2020 and compared to 78% for employees without disabilities in 2022).

- 78% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that they have **opportunities to provide input into decisions** that affect their work (compared to 68% in 2020 and compared to 82% for employees without disabilities in 2022).
- 53% of employees with a disability can complete **their assigned workload during their regular working hours** always/almost always/often (compared to 44% in 2020 and compared to 65% for employees without disabilities in 2022).
- 72% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that they are satisfied with **how interpersonal issues are resolved in their work unit** (compared to 63% in 2020 and compared to 72% for employees without disabilities in 2022).
- 88% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that, in their work unit, **every individual is accepted as an equal member of the team** (compared to 77% in 2020 and compared to 87% for employees without disabilities in 2022).
- 94% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that, in their work unit, **individuals behave in a respectful manner** (compared to 78% in 2020 and compared to 91% for employees without disabilities in 2022)
- 79% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that they have **confidence in the senior management** of their department or agency (compared to 66% in 2020 and compared to 75% for employees without disabilities in 2022).
- 80% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that their department or agency **respects individual differences** (e.g., culture, work styles, ideas, abilities) (compared to 68% in 2020 and compared to 82% for employees without disabilities in 2022).
- 73% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that their department or agency **implements activities and practices that support a diverse workforce** (compared to 72% in 2020 and compared to 84% for employees without disabilities in 2022)
- 87% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that they are **satisfied with the quality of the supervision they receive** (compared 92% in 2020 and 85% for employees without disabilities in 2022).
- 67% of employees with a disability strongly agree/somewhat agree that **change is managed well in their department or agency** (compared to 80% in 2020 and 59% for employees without disabilities in 2022).

Internal Survey and Focus Group Feedback

Feedback received acknowledged the efforts to help with barriers and limitations for persons with disabilities, and cautioned that there is no “one-size-fits all” approach to relieve all barriers and that flexibility is needed to address various types of disabilities and needs.

Other comments received suggest that individuals with invisible disabilities (e.g., neurodiversity, chronic pain, environmental sensitivities) face particular challenges where other team members may perceive their accommodation measures as unfair. It was suggested that

more needs to be done to “raise awareness of what accessibility means and why it is important to ensure everyone understands and is perceived as fair”.

Some employees with disabilities are experiencing attitudinal barriers, such as an insensitive comment masked as a joke (e.g., “Everyone has ADHD”) or being told they are using their diagnostic as a justification for their “attitude” or stress level. Other comments raised the importance of tapping into the strength of people, ensuring they have the right tasks and providing support to be productive in their roles, if needed.

Status of Year 1 Actions (January – December 2023)

Create an Accessibility Tracker to monitor the implementation of actions included in the Accessibility Plan and keep track of feedback received from persons with disabilities on barriers and the plan’s progress. An annual implementation update will be provided to the Accessibility Network as part of the consultations for the progress report.

The Accessibility Tracker has been created and helped guide the development of the Progress Report 2023. The draft Progress Report, which provides an overview of the Plan’s implementation to date, was shared with the members of the Accessibility Network for feedback.

Integrate diversity, inclusion and accessibility into the CSA’s new Integrated Leadership Framework and its various components.

Accessibility has been integrated in the Integrated Leadership Framework as a core component of the Framework, alongside Diversity and Inclusion, Values and Ethics and Culture and Belonging. Work is underway to align all HR functions to the Integrated Leadership Framework and its components.

Include accessibility in the learning strategy for leaders and all employees, which stems from the Integrated Leadership Framework.

This action is deferred to Year 2 due to re-prioritization of operational workload.

Directly link to employee engagement strategy, to be co-created with the Employee Engagement Committee, to engage and equip employees and leaders on accessibility. Implement Year 1.

This action is deferred to Year 2 due to re-prioritization of operational workload.

Directly link the Accessibility Plan to the CSA’s Mental Health Strategy and identify opportunities for collaboration between the Accessibility Champion and the Mental Health Champion.

The Accessibility Plan has been linked directly to the CSA’s Mental Health Strategy, which was launched in Year 1. One of the Mental Health Strategy’s desired outcomes is: “CSA employees feel supported and see their employer as supporting the removal or prevention of barriers to accessibility for people with mental health disabilities”. The Accessibility Champion and Mental Health Champion have committed to collaborating on a joint event in Year 2.

In partnership with Communications, develop and promote an annual “Top 5 Accessibility Tips Campaign”.

This action is on track. Please refer to the Communications Area of Focus for additional information.

Launch “OneHR” monthly newsletter with a dedicated section on accessibility to help raise organization-wide awareness of disability-related issues and guidance.

The “OneHR” monthly newsletter will be aligned with the new HR service model and People Strategy (in development) and will be launched in late 2023 or early 2024.

Status of Targets

The CSA has not yet received Ombuds reports or taken part in check-ins pertaining to accessibility issues. With regards to PSES results, of the eleven questions tracked (see Feedback section), all results except for two questions (quality of supervision and how change is managed) demonstrate an increase in satisfaction on the part of employees with disabilities. When comparing the results of employees with disabilities and employees without disabilities, employees with disabilities indicated a higher level of satisfaction than employees without disabilities in seven of the eleven questions tracked.

C. CONSULTATIONS

An internal survey was launched in early September to gather feedback on accessibility issues at the CSA. The survey, which garnered a total of 190 responses, had two separate streams, one for employees with disabilities (56 respondents) and the other for employees without disabilities (134 respondents). The survey covered a variety of topics ranging from employment-related issues to information and communications technology and built environment. Three virtual focus groups were held in mid-September with individuals who self-declared as employees with disabilities. A total of 7 participants took part in the focus groups and answered the following questions:

- What is working well at the Agency in terms of accessibility and accommodation? Have you noticed any changes?
- What barriers have you or your colleagues experienced in your day-to-day work in the past year? Any physical, communications, technological, systemic or attitudinal barriers?
 - o Have you noticed any changes?
 - o If not, what has room for improvement?
 - o What would help remove or prevent these barriers?
- What feedback would you offer to various teams (e.g., HR, IMIT, Facilities) offering support to employees with disabilities?

The results of both the survey and the focus group discussions are outlined in the Feedback sections of each Area of Focus. The feedback received helped to identify new barriers and track the CSA's progress in addressing existing barriers. In addition, the feedback will help inform the implementation of the CSA's Accessibility Year 2 actions.

D. FEEDBACK

The CSA received two feedback emails through its website feedback form regarding the federal public service's Directive on Common Hybrid Work, which came into effect on April 1, 2023. One comment raised concerns that the new directive would limit employment opportunities for employees with disabilities, stating that *"we are reducing critical opportunities for skilled individuals who may have difficulty working in a traditional office environment due to disabilities, health issues (such as immune disorders), or neurodivergence, who may otherwise excel in a 100% telework job"* and that *"mandatory hybrid or full-time in the office policies are detrimental to the accessibility of the public service"*. The second comment also focused on the Directive on Common Hybrid Work and raised concerns that *"it forces people to have an exception made, to explain themselves and put themselves in the open for criticism in order to find the right balance between working from home or from the office"*. The feedback received has been incorporated into the Employment Area of Focus as a new barrier to take into consideration when implementing Year 2 actions. The CSA did not receive feedback on any other Areas of Focus through its feedback mechanisms.

The CSA also received feedback through one of its social media accounts after the President posted a link to the Accessibility Plan on X (formerly Twitter) once it was launched and received a very positive comment from a former CSA employee who works in Canada's space sector. This individual self-identified as a person with neurological disabilities who said *"Getting into the space sector was not easy. Challenges persist in my day-to-day life. I'm thrilled to see the Canadian Space Agency publish its inaugural Accessibility Plan. We need EVERYONE to enable transformative change. It identifies barriers, outlines a multi-year, impact-driven strategy that emphasizes empathy, continuous knowledge uptake and the necessary steps to enable an inclusive workforce where people with disabilities can thrive. Great to see this championed as a meaningful commitment by @lisacampbellasc and the @csa-asc team at large"*.