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Natural Resources Canada Accessibility Action Plan 2025–2028

Canada 

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Natural Resources Canada Accessibility Action Plan 2025–2028

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Message From the deputy ministers

We are pleased to present the Natural Resources Canada Accessibility Action Plan 2025-2028 (NAAP), a renewed three-year plan that builds on our progress and reaffirms our commitment to accessibility and inclusion across Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), the Energy Supplies Allocation Board (ESAB), and the Northern Pipeline Agency (NPA).

Developed *through* department-wide consultations led by the People and Culture Branch, this plan incorporates the voices as well as the lived- experiences of AccessAbility Network members and employees across the department.

Grounded in collective leadership and inclusion, this plan calls on us to think differently, act boldly, and keep removing barriers. Building on past reviews and employee feedback, it recognizes accessibility as an ongoing journey. We are proud of our progress and invite all employees to help make NRCan a workplace where everyone can thrive.

Michael Vandergrift

Deputy Minister of Natural Resources Canada
Commissioner of the Northern Pipeline Agency
Chair of the Energy Supplies Allocation Board

Jeff Labonté

Associate Deputy Minister

Message From the Champion

As Champion of the AccessAbility Network, I see every day how accessibility shapes a workplace where people feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their best. Accessibility is more than removing barriers - it's about designing our culture, systems, and practices so that everyone has what they need to succeed.

This plan gives us a strong framework to identify and remove barriers, whether physical, digital, communication-based, or attitudinal. Its success depends on all of us. By embedding accessible practices in our daily work, sharing ideas, and taking part in training and awareness activities, we all help drive meaningful progress.

I encourage you to see accessibility as a shared opportunity to learn and support one another. Together, we can go beyond meeting legislative requirements and create a workplace where accessibility is woven into everything we do. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to advancing accessibility across Natural Resources Canada.

Glenn Hargrove,
Champion of the NRCan AccessAbility Network

Executive Summary

The *Accessible Canada Act*, adopted in 2019, aims to achieve a barrier-free Canada by 2040. It requires federal departments and agencies to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that limit the full and equal participation of persons with diverse abilities. As part of this commitment, NRCan publishes an accessibility plan every three years. Unlike the previous stand-alone NRCan plan, the new three-year legislated plan was developed jointly with the ESAB and the NPA. It outlines how we will make our workplaces and services more accessible for employees and the people we serve.

The 2025–2028 NAAP builds on the foundation of the 2022–2025 NAAP and further advances our efforts to remove barriers and promote inclusion, incorporating lessons learned, feedback received, and new priorities moving forward.

This joint 2025-2028 NAAP was developed through consultations with employees, the AccessAbility Network, and subject matter experts across NRCan. It reflects the “Nothing Without Us” principle and responds to feedback from employees with diverse abilities and from survey data.

This version of the plan introduces performance indicators to help NRCan better track progress and identify areas for improvement. These indicators also strengthen accountability across each of the nine priority areas, including:

- Culture Shift
- Accommodation
- Employment
- Work Environment
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Communication, Other Than Information and Communication Technologies
- Design and Delivery of Programs and Services
- Procurement
- Transportation

The plan has also been strengthened through:

- Easier and faster access to accommodations.
- More inclusive hiring, onboarding, and career development.
- Better physical and digital workspaces.
- Clearer and more accessible communications.

We recognize that while progress has been made, barriers remain, and meaningful progress takes time. By making accessibility part of our daily practices, NRCan continues to create a future where people with diverse abilities can thrive at work.

About This Plan

The NAAP applies to NRCan and two portfolios under its responsibility: the Energy Supplies Allocation Board and the Northern Pipeline Agency. As both the ESAB and the NPA rely on NRCan for internal services, their accessibility planning is, with this planning cycle, now integrated into NRCan's broader approach. Each of these organizations will adopt and implement the applicable portions of this plan to guide its operations, service delivery, and public engagement in accordance with the *Accessible Canada Act*. Additional information on both portfolios can be found in the annexes at the end of this plan.

Turning to another key element, language is personal and powerful - it shapes how we connect and influences workplace culture. NRCan's terminology is not meant to exclude or harm. However, we recognize that individuals may embrace or reject terms based on their individual experiences. In collaboration with the AccessAbility Network, we have adopted "diverse ability," "barrier," and "invisible disability," as introduced in the 2022-2025 NAAP. This consistent language reflects our commitment to inclusion and respect.

Consultations

To develop the second version of its accessibility action plan, NRCan continued to uphold the principle of "Nothing Without Us" by focusing on hearing directly from employees.

Key engagement activities included:

- **Accessibility Workshop (February 26, 2025):** The AccessAbility Network organized a workshop facilitated by BDO, an independent external service provider, titled *Together, let's build confidence in accessibility at NRCan*. More than 120 employees took part. Feedback was gathered in multiple accessible

formats to support inclusive participation, and BDO's *Findings and Recommendations Report*, which *outlined several* recommendations. These were taken into consideration and are reflected in several performance indicators throughout this report.

- **TerraCanada Project:** A targeted survey identified barriers in lab spaces. It engaged employees with diverse abilities, accessibility experts, lab managers, and occupational health and safety professionals to support inclusive design.
- **NRCan Employee Accessibility Survey (July 28 through September 23, 2025):** Open to all employees, this voluntary, confidential, and anonymous survey received 72 responses. It assessed accessibility awareness and confidence in fostering an inclusive workplace.
- **Accessibility Consultation Sessions:** Four live consultation sessions were held, two in English and two in French, with sign language interpretation provided. The sessions were open to all NRCan employees, including members of the AccessAbility Network, and a total of 49 employees participated. Session details are as follows:
 - Session 1: September 4, 2025, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM, 8 participants
 - Session 2: September 11, 2025, 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM, 20 participants
 - Session 3: September 12, 2025, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 3 participants
 - Session 4: September 16, 2025, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM, 18 participants
- **Collaboration Regarding the Energy Supplies Allocation Board:** The September 16, 2025, live consultation session mentioned above was co-hosted by NRCan and experts from NRCan's Fuels Sector who presented on the ESAB as part of the broader consultation campaign. In this session, the ESAB mandate was shared with an explanation of how accessibility would be considered if the ESAB was activated. Participants provided several key elements on how NRCan employees supporting the ESAB could ensure accessible services during a national emergency.
- **Northern Pipeline Agency (NPA) Sessions:** The NPA engaged in consultations with their limited staff of two and the only regulated company, Foothills Pipe Lines Ltd., during the summer and fall of 2025. The audience was invited to submit written or verbal comments and feedback, although no comments or feedback were provided or submitted.

These consultations helped us better understand what is working, where gaps remain, and what actions matter most to employees. Their input directly shaped the priorities and actions in this plan.

Our 2025–2028 Commitments by Priority Area

In this section

- [Priority Area: Culture Shift](#)
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For this cycle, the department will continue with the two priorities identified in the previous plan. Building on the significant progress achieved, continued efforts will help continue to advance the following priorities toward an accessible-by-design NRCan.

- Culture Shift
- Accommodation Process

NRCan recognizes that this plan will evolve over time with monitored progress and commitment refinement via growth in feedback, capacity, and organizational maturity. Performance indicators may not reflect every barrier or short-term action in detail. They will be refined throughout implementation and monitoring to stay relevant, meaningful, and responsive to evolving needs.

NRCan uses “work environment” in place of “built environment” to reflect a broader scope beyond architecture. The ESAB is committed to ensuring that, in the event of a national energy emergency, all services and programs are delivered in a manner that is accessible and inclusive to persons with diverse abilities by maximizing NRCan’s accessibility plan within the limitations of the Energy Supplies Emergency Act (ESEA). As discussed during the consultation session, this includes actively leveraging relevant aspects of this joint accessibility plan, such as communication, physical access to digital tools, program delivery and outreach strategies, as required. Similarly, the NPA is committed for all its services and

programs to be delivered in a manner that is accessible and inclusive to persons with diverse abilities by maximizing the NAAP to the extent that it applies.

To achieve this, it is important to recognize the nature and extent of potential accessibility challenges. For example, neurodiverse individuals may process information differently, requiring clear, simple communication formats. Physical limitations and remote locations can similarly make it harder to reach distribution points or access digital tools. Limited internet access and affordability barriers may prevent some people from obtaining information online. Access to energy may need to be prioritized for those with medical conditions.

In addition, offering information in multiple formats, strengthening partnerships with communities, and establishing helplines or help desks to provide direct support may be necessary. A lack of these efforts can leave vulnerable and marginalized groups at a disadvantage in times of crisis, which highlights the importance the 2025-2028 NAAP will play in mitigating risk for communities during events such as national emergencies.

Priority Area: Culture Shift

NRCan is building a workplace where accessibility is second nature, where respect, support, and full participation are part of everyone's experience, and accessibility guides our daily choices and actions.

Desired State

NRCan has a culture where employees are empowered to:

- Identify and remove barriers that affect inclusion and well-being.
- Foster respectful and psychologically safe environments.
- Support diverse needs.
- Communicate openly and celebrate progress together.

Current State

Consultations revealed that workplace culture directly influences how supported and included employees feel. Certain attitudes and practices can create everyday barriers that limit participation and affect overall well-being. These barriers include:

- Microaggressions, harassment, and discrimination.

- Inconsistent communication and lack of centralized, easy-to-access information about accessibility tools and resources.
- Low awareness of accessibility and inclusion training opportunities.
- Limited knowledge of neurodiversity and how it affects employees at work.

Short-term Actions to Achieve the Desired State

Microaggressions, Harassment, and Discrimination:

To foster respectful and psychologically safe environments and identify and remove barriers to inclusion and wellbeing

- **Harassment and Grievance Process Improvements:** NRCan will strengthen trust and transparency in how harassment and violence are addressed by raising awareness of microaggressions, clarifying reporting processes, and offering regular training through the Harassment and Violence Prevention Program. Additionally, the department will launch the annual *Fear of Reprisal* campaign to encourage safe reporting and reinforce a respectful workplace culture.
- **Workplace Risk Assessment and Engagement:** NRCan will identify psychosocial risks associated with harassment and violence as part of the Workplace Risk Assessment, which is required under the *Canada Labour Code*. The department will engage employees with diverse abilities, who are disproportionately impacted across multiple risk areas, to better understand their experiences and gather ideas to make the workplace safer and more inclusive. The goal is to develop targeted, meaningful prevention measures and support that address the lived realities of employees, particularly those from equity-deserving groups, and foster a psychologically safe, respectful, and inclusive workplace.

Communication and Awareness on Accessibility, Inclusion, and Neurodiversity:

To support diverse needs and communicate openly and celebrate progress together

- **Inclusive Hybrid Work Employee Handbook (Handbook):** NRCan will continue to strengthen the Handbook on Inclusive Hybrid Work.
- **Improve Communication on Accessibility:** NRCan will regularly share information about accessibility, including resources, training opportunities, and stories demonstrating how we support inclusion for people with diverse abilities. These updates will be shared with employees to raise awareness and celebrate progress.

- **Support for the AccessAbility Network:** NRCan will strengthen support for the AccessAbility Network by implementing the upcoming Network Framework, aiming to reduce administrative burdens. This will allow the network to focus more fully on advancing initiatives, fostering inclusion, and driving accessibility efforts across the department.
- **Mental Health and Wellness Strategy:** NRCan will continue to promote the Peer-to-Peer Support Program and wellness initiatives, including events, training, and resources. Managers will be equipped with tools and learning paths to foster psychologically safe workplaces, and the department will collaborate with Occupational Health and Safety and employee networks to address psychosocial risks and support mental health across all sectors.
- **Governance Activities:** The department is reviewing its inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) governance structure to better align with current priorities and needs. This includes revisiting the terms of reference, committee mandates, and reporting structures to clarify roles, strengthen accountability, and enhance our ability to identify and remove barriers that affect inclusion and wellbeing.
- **Senior Leadership:** NRCan will strengthen leadership accountability and visibility in advancing accessibility by having senior leaders' model inclusive practices, promote engagement in accessibility-related initiatives, and ensure accessible employee communications. The champions framework and the appointed champions, mainly at the assistant deputy minister levels, will play a key role in supporting this action.

Performance Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in achieving an accessible culture:

Microaggressions, Harassment and Discrimination:

- Percentage of employees with diverse abilities who agree with the statement: "Overall, my department or agency treats me with respect" in the Public Service Employee Survey (PSES).
- Percentage of NRCan employees with diverse abilities who have experienced harassment and discrimination in the PSES.
- Percentage of employees reporting confidence in using conflict resolution mechanisms and feeling safe reporting harassment or discrimination, as reported in the PSES or internal surveys.

- Positive variations in the number of formal and informal complaints or requests for advice submitted through the Harassment and Violence Prevention Program, the Ombuds Office, or related channels.

Communication and Awareness on Accessibility, Inclusion and Neurodiversity:

- Percentage of NRCan employees with diverse abilities who, in the PSES, would recommend NRCan as a great place to work.
- Percentage of employees completing updated conflict resolution and reprisal prevention training and attending information sessions.

Priority Area: Accommodation

NRCan is committed to building a workplace where accommodation is embedded in everyday inclusion and where everyone has what they need to succeed. The department's approach is to have every employee feel safe, respected, and supported when requesting accommodations.

The envisioned future is one where accommodations are a normal part of how people are supported, rather than a process that feels challenging or discouraging.

Desired State

NRCan creates an environment where:

- The accommodation process is clear and easy to follow, with simple steps and plain language.
- Accommodations are implemented promptly and consistently, regardless of where someone works or who their manager is.
- Accommodation is a private and respectful process, with strong protection for personal information.
- Managers respond with empathy and confidence.
- Employees have access to information and training on the accommodation process and their duty to accommodate.

Current State

Consultations revealed that the accommodation process at NRCan often leaves employees feeling frustrated and excluded, with stories of extended delays, unclear processes, and privacy concerns. These barriers include the following:

- There are long wait times for accommodations.
- The process of requesting accommodations and identifying who is responsible is unclear.
- Processes vary by team or region, resulting in inconsistent levels of support.
- Privacy concerns arise when too many people have access to personal medical information.
- Forms and instructions use complicated language, making them difficult to understand.

Short-term Actions to Achieve the Desired State

Accommodation Processes and Timeliness:

To ensure accommodations are clear, implemented promptly and consistently, and employees have access to information on the process

- **Accommodation Optimization:** NRCan is streamlining the workplace accommodation process to make it faster, clearer, and more consistent. Directors General now have approval authority, reducing hierarchy and improving response times. The Accommodation Centre of Expertise (ACE) will implement an automated triage system to prioritize requests and allocate resources efficiently. To support this, the ACE will update its webpage with simplified forms, step-by-step guides, and a manager toolkit. The department is also exploring the use of Assyst as a centralized system for submitting and tracking accommodation requests.
- **Continue the Centralized Funding pilot:** As a long-term goal, NRCan will continue the pilot and increase awareness of the Centralized Accommodation Fund to ensure timely and equitable access to resources.

Clarity, Privacy, and Manager Capacity

To ensure the accommodation process is clear, respectful, and supported by well-trained managers

- **Train Managers:** NRCan's Accommodation Centre of Expertise (ACE) will design and adapt tailored training for managers to equip them with the knowledge and skills to handle accommodation requests with sensitivity, respect, and effectiveness.
- **Digital Passport Adoption:** In fall 2025, NRCan launched the Digital Passport, a tool that provides managers and new employees with quick access to accommodation services. Training sessions will be offered to

ensure all users are familiar with the Digital Passport. The tool will be supported through the TBS Application Portal (TAP) (myAW).

- **Foster Peer Learning for Managers:** NRCan will create a space for managers to connect, share ideas, and learn from each other. This community will offer accessible tools and resources to help managers lead inclusive teams and support accommodations effectively.

Performance Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in creating a more effective and inclusive accommodation process:

Accommodation Processes and Timeliness:

- Average turnaround time from accommodation request submission to agreement.
- Increase in the number of accommodation requests discussed directly with the manager, prior to consultation with the ACE.
- PSES results related to perceptions of workplace inclusion and discrimination prevention efforts.

Clarity, Privacy, and Manager Capacity:

- Number of users of the Digital Accessibility Passport.
- Number and percentage of managers and employees who participated in training and information sessions on accommodation processes and tools.
- Number of awareness sessions conducted annually and qualitative feedback from participants, including knowledge gained and shifts in attitude.
- Percentage of managers who participated in training sessions.
- Number of consultations clicks of new and revamped accommodation tools.

Priority Area: Employment

NRCan strives to provide all employees with fair opportunities to succeed and be recognized, regardless of ability. We are building a workplace where recruitment, onboarding, and career development are inclusive and accessible from the start.

Desired State

NRCan is fostering an inclusive workplace where:

- Employees with diverse abilities have equitable opportunities for hiring, career development, and leadership.
- Employees experience accessible onboarding and offboarding and smooth transitions between teams and roles, without needing to repeatedly renegotiate accommodations.
- Hiring managers and HR staff capable of identifying and removing barriers to recruitment.

Current State

Consultations revealed that employees with diverse abilities continue to face barriers throughout the employment journey. These barriers limit opportunities, create stress, and contribute to feelings of exclusion. These barriers include:

- Underrepresentation of persons with diverse abilities in leadership roles.
- Limited targeted recruitment strategies, making it harder to attract and hire candidates with diverse abilities
- Inaccessible onboarding processes, such as training materials
- Employees with diverse abilities being asked repeatedly to “prove” their needs and provide information and documentation, which can be exhausting and discouraging

Short-term Actions to Achieve the Desired State

Inclusive Hiring and Career Development:

To remove barriers in the recruitment process and create equitable opportunities for career growth, advancement, and leadership for employees with diverse abilities

- **Inclusive Recruitment Practices:** Inclusive recruitment practices will be promoted through accessible materials during staffing processes, diverse bias-free assessment tools, and proactive efforts to encourage applications from underrepresented groups, including persons with diverse abilities. Invitation templates will include clear information about assessment methods to help candidates determine if they need accommodations.
- **Sponsorship and Career Development:** Through the NRCan Sponsorship Program, employees with diverse abilities will receive tailored support for leadership development and networking. Participants will co-create an individual plan to guide their growth over an 18-month period, helping to increase representation in leadership roles.

- **Accessible Language Training Practices:** NRCan will make language training more accessible by expanding the role of the NRCan Language School. The school will help connect learners with suppliers who can meet different needs, including accommodations. NRCan will work with IT, the Accommodation Centre of Expertise, and the Shared Services Canada Adaptive Computer Technology Program, and get feedback from learners and the AccessAbility Network to find ways to improve. Employees at the Language School will receive accessibility training using internal and Canada School of the Public Service resources to help create inclusive learning environments.
- **Language Training System Improvements:** NRCan will strive to improve access to language training by exploring options such as centralizing budgets and contracting authorities, simplifying testing, and exploring accessible AI tools. The NRCan Language School, the Official Languages Program, and the Learning team will lead this work, setting supplier criteria and monitoring progress to ensure learners are supported. This will create a dedicated, accessibility-focused service stream shaped by experts and network input.

Accessible Onboarding, Offboarding, and Transitions:

To remove barriers in onboarding and offboarding processes and ensure that employees do not need to repeatedly renegotiate accommodations when transitioning to new teams and roles

- **Onboarding and Offboarding Improvements:** NRCan will improve onboarding experiences for employees with diverse abilities by developing a guide for managers and working with key stakeholders to ensure training and materials are accessible. Offboarding processes will also be strengthened to gather feedback and support continuous improvement.
- **Digital Passport:** NRCan will advertise the use of the Digital Passport to support smoother transitions between teams and roles, helping employees avoid having to renegotiate accommodation each time they move.

Performance Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in creating a more inclusive and accessible employment experience:

Inclusive Hiring and Career Development:

- Total number of employees who self-identify as having a disability.
- Percentage of job postings that include accessibility statements and accommodation contacts.
- Percentage of exit surveys that provide feedback related to accessibility gaps.
- Percentage of language teachers who have completed accessibility training.

Accessible Onboarding, Offboarding, and Transitions:

- Percentage of employees with diverse abilities who say they intend to leave NRCan, as reported in the PSES.

Measurement Note: NRCan will explore opportunities to develop additional performance indicators related to onboarding, offboarding, and transitions

Priority Area: Work Environment

NRCan's aim is to have all employees work in spaces, both physical and digital, that are safe, accessible, and inclusive. We are working toward a future where accessibility is built into the design of our workplaces, not added as an afterthought.

Desired State

NRCan is a workplace where employees have access to:

- An accessible physical and environmental workplace, with accessible meeting rooms, tools and technologies, including assistive devices and communications in multiple formats, as well as workstations, signage, and all common areas.
- Ongoing improvements to accessibility practices, in all regions, supported by regular training and employee feedback.
- A safe and inclusive work environment, where physical and psychological risks are proactively identified and addressed, and safety practices reflect the diverse needs of all employees

Current State

Consultations highlighted that many NRCan workplaces are not fully accessible, creating physical and environmental barriers that limit inclusion and participation.

These barriers affect how employees navigate their workspaces and can contribute to feelings of exclusion and frustration. These barriers include:

- Inaccessible meeting rooms and workstations that do not support diverse mobility or ergonomic needs.
- Lack of automatic doors or push buttons in some buildings, making entry difficult for people with mobility impairments.
- Poor signage and wayfinding, especially for employees with visual impairments.
- Inconsistent application of accessibility standards across NRCan facilities, leading to unequal experiences depending on location.
- Strong scents in shared workplaces that can trigger health issues

Short-term Actions to Achieve the Desired State

Accessible Physical and Environmental Workplace:

To ensure employees across regions have access to accessible meeting rooms, tools and technologies, including assistive devices and communications in multiple formats, workstations, signage, and all common areas

- **Inclusive Science and Accessible Labs Pilot Project:** NRCan is improving accessibility in its science facilities through a pilot project led by the Office of the Chief Scientist and the Canadian Forest Service. Starting at the Laurentian Forestry Centre and expanding into labs in Devon and Ottawa, the initiative focuses on identifying accessibility needs, retrofitting spaces, and building a culture where accessibility is part of everyday lab operations. It also aims to increase the number of people with different abilities in science roles and share what's learned across NRCan.
- **Accessibility in Federal Science Laboratories Community of Practice:** In partnership with Laboratories Canada, NRCan's Office of the Chief Scientist and Canadian Forest Sector will continue to lead a federal community of practice to promote accessibility in science. This group brings together approximately 80 professionals from across departments, agencies, and universities to share best practices and advance in inclusive science. A recent workshop featured discussions on cultivating a culture of accessibility and supporting neurodiverse scientists.
- **Regional Facility Improvements:** NRCan's regional offices are working to improve physical accessibility by following updated design guidelines from Public Services and Procurement Canada. While most spaces meet the

standards from when they were last renovated, facilities are at different stages of meeting newer guidelines. Some have completed audits and started upgrades, while others are planning improvements based on available funding.

- **TerraCanada National Capital Area Project:** As part of Laboratories Canada's larger initiative, NRCan is helping build inclusive science facilities through the TerraCanada project. These spaces follow universal design standards and include features such as accessible signs, assistive technology, flexible furniture, and inclusive evacuation plans. A bilingual survey was done with future users, employees with lived experience, accessibility experts, lab managers, and health and safety employees. Their feedback helped shape the design and led to recommendations that go beyond current standards for science labs in Canada.

Safe and Inclusive Work Environment

To ensure physical and psychological risks are proactively identified and addressed, and safety practices reflect the diverse needs of all employees

- **Environmental Health and Compliance:** NRCan will update the Directive on Scents in the Workplace to improve awareness and enforcement. A new communication strategy is being developed based on feedback from a working group. Consultations with key stakeholders help shape updates to better support employees with scent sensitivities. Safety protocols aim to eliminate or reduce risks faced by employees working alone or in isolation. NRCan is also creating a new Occupational Health Evaluation Directive to improve health assessments and make sure employees meet job requirements in a safe and inclusive way.
- **Security and Emergency Procedures:** Building Emergency and Evacuation Teams are being established and supported with training, first aid kits, and tailored emergency plans. They are also receiving more assistance in enrolling persons requiring assistance across Canada. Recruitment of floor emergency wardens is ongoing, and regular testing of communication systems, such as voice alerts and fire alarms, is being conducted to improve awareness and response.

Performance Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in creating a more inclusive and accessible employment experience:

Accessible Physical and Environmental Workplace:

- Percentage of employees with diverse abilities who rate the physical work environment as a source of stress to a large or very large extent, as reported in the PSES.
- Number of physical hazard mitigation strategies within the workplace environment (e.g., ergonomic equipment, improved lighting, and safe layout design).

Safe and Inclusive Work Environment:

- Number of reports related to workplace hazards and workplace security risks.
- Number of hazardous occurrences or complaints related to scents in the workplace.
- Updates to the Directive on Scents in the Workplace.

Priority Area: Information and Communication Technologies

NRCan is committed to ensuring that every employee uses digital tools and platforms that are accessible, inclusive, and easy to navigate. We are working toward a future where accessibility is built into every part of our digital environment, not added later.

Desired State

NRCan is a workplace where:

- All digital tools, assistive technologies, systems and platforms are accessible, meeting or exceeding accessibility standards.
- All content, internal and external, is designed and maintained to be accessible to everyone by default.
- Employees apply accessibility best practices in digital communication and content creation.

Current State

Consultations revealed that many digital tools and platforms at NRCan are not fully accessible, creating barriers that limit inclusion and ease of use. These challenges affect how employees access information, complete tasks, and find support,

especially those who rely on assistive technologies or accommodations. These barriers include:

- Difficulty locating accessibility-related resources and tools.
- Inaccessible software platforms and digital tools that do not support assistive technologies.
- Lack of training on accessible information and communication technologies tools and practices.

Short-term Actions to Achieve the Desired State

Designing Accessible Digital Tools and Technologies:

To ensure all digital tools, assistive technologies, systems and platforms are accessible, meeting or exceeding accessibility standards

- **Governance and Accessibility Compliance:** To strengthen digital accessibility, the department will use existing information management and IT governance to monitor tools, enhance data collection through application portfolio management, and make accessibility a standard practice. NRCan will develop a SharePoint Content Style Guide, test PowerShell scripts for regular accessibility checks, and phase out classic SharePoint pages to improve usability.
- **Project Support for NRdocs Accessibility:** NRCan will provide training and guidance to employees managing NRdocs pages to ensure accessibility in both official languages. Clear navigation, consistent naming, and structured page layouts will continue to support screen readers. Employees will also receive a step-by-step job aid to help them check accessibility.
- **Integrating Accessibility Into NRCan's AI Strategy:** NRCan will ensure that all AI tools used under its AI strategy meet accessibility standards and follow Government of Canada guidelines. While some free generative AI tools may not be fully accessible, NRCan will seek to secure accessible alternatives. The department will also collaborate with partners to integrate accessibility into key aspects of the AI strategy, including ethics, change management, and talent development.

Accessible Digital Content and Communication Practices

To ensure all content is designed and maintained to be accessible to everyone by default, and employees apply accessibility best practices in digital communication and content creation

- **Accessible Social Media and Advertising:** NRCan was selected to review the Privy Council Office's new accessible social media guide and will apply its recommendations once the guide is released. While the guide is still in development, NRCan's Social Media Team follows accessibility best practices on third-party platforms. The Marketing and Advertising team also designs inclusive campaigns using alt text, captions, and plain language to reach diverse audiences.
- **Training and Awareness:** NRCan will continue offering practical training sessions such as "Making Documents Accessible" and "Accessible Publishing in SharePoint" to help employees apply accessibility best practices.

Performance Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in creating a more inclusive and accessible information and communications technologies:

Designing Accessible Digital Tools and Technologies:

- Percentage of employees with diverse abilities who state that they have the tools, technology, and equipment to do their job in the PSES.
- Percentage of tickets related to M365 accessibility related issues resolved via Assyst.

Accessible Digital Content and Communication Practices:

- Number of employees who participated in accessibility-related training sessions

Priority Area: Communication, Other Than Information and Communication Technologies

NRCan is committed to ensure all communications are clear, inclusive, and accessible. We are working toward a future where accessibility is embedded into every aspect of our communications, rather than added afterward.

Desired State

NRCan creates a workplace where all communications are:

- Inclusive and barrier-free, with accessibility features such as closed captioning, simultaneous interpretation, and clear contact points for accommodation requests at all live events.
- Consistent and accessible, with documents and publications designed and updated to meet accessibility standards.
- Guided by department-wide standards and supported by qualified interpreters, including those with scientific expertise, to ensure timely and effective communication.
- Designed with accessibility in mind across platforms, including social media, using alt text, captions, and plain language to reach all audiences.

Current State

Feedback from consultations indicated that communication at NRCan is not always clear, inclusive, or accessible. These challenges affect how employees understand information, engage with resources, and feel supported in their preferred official language, particularly in bilingual regions. These barriers include the following:

- Acronyms in English documents are often not spelled out, making translation and comprehension challenging.
- Employees sometimes encounter negative reactions when asking for clarification.
- Key internal resources, such as lengthy guides, are often available only in English, limiting access to French documentation.
- Employees cannot receive services in their official language of choice consistently.

Short-term Actions to Achieve the Desired State

Inclusive and Barrier-free Communication Experiences:

To ensure all communications are inclusive and barrier-free, with accessibility features such as closed captioning, simultaneous interpretation, and clear contact points for accommodation requests at all live events

- **Interpretation at Network Events:** NRCan's People and Culture Branch will continue providing administrative support to employee networks, including securing American Sign Language (ASL) and Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) interpreters for events. This will ensure timely coordination and improve accessibility for participants who use sign language.

- **NRCan Events Playbook:** NRCan will publish an events playbook that will include guidelines on how to host accessible events and meetings.

Consistent and Accessible Formats Across Platforms:

To ensure all formats are consistent and accessible, guided by department-wide standards and supported by qualified interpreters, including those with scientific expertise

- **Standards Training and Quality Assurance:** NRCan will continue building consistency and quality in communications through its new Accessibility and Quality Assurance team. This team provides consultations, training, and outreach to help employees meet accessibility and official languages standards. These efforts support continuous improvement and alignment with Government of Canada requirements.
- **Plain Language Training and Learning:** NRCan's Communications Branch will promote plain language and audience-focused communication through its organizational learning plan. A plain language guide along with recommended training will support communications with employees in creating messages that are clear, inclusive, and easy to understand.
- **Accessible Documents and Formats:** NRCan will continue improving the accessibility of departmental templates and ATIP materials by updating templates based on accessibility criteria, using plain language, and providing alternate formats where possible.

Performance Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in achieving accessible communications:

Inclusive and Barrier-free Communication Experiences:

- Number of events with ASL/LSQ services

Consistent and Accessible Formats Across Platforms:

- Percentage of NRCan employees who participate in sessions related to corporate tools and templates through Assyst.
- Number of activities, number of attendees, and user feedback collected through web analytics (e.g. page views, time on page, bounce rate).
- Number of learning sessions and participants for plain language training.

Priority Area: Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

NRCan is committed to designing and delivering programs that are accessible, inclusive, and barrier-free from the start. We are working toward a future where accessibility is built into every stage of program development.

Desired State

NRCan is a workplace where all programs and services are:

- Designed with accessibility and inclusion at their core, providing equal access to all Canadians.
- Easy to find and navigate, with centralized information and accessible documents that support users with diverse abilities.
- Informed by data with program teams trained to understand and respond to diverse needs.

Current State

Consultations showed that accessibility is not consistently built into how programs are designed and delivered at NRCan. These gaps can make it harder for persons with diverse abilities to access services, participate fully, and provide feedback. These barriers include the following:

- Accessibility considerations are often added late to program design.
- Consultation with persons with diverse abilities is limited during service development.
- Program materials and communications are not always available in accessible formats.
- Few feedback mechanisms exist to improve the accessibility of services.

These issues show that accessibility is not yet a standard part of NRCan's program development process. Addressing these barriers is essential to deliver services that are inclusive, responsive, and accessible to all.

Short-term Actions to Achieve the Desired State

Data Informed Program Development:

To achieve a robust information management system in order to provide accurate and reliable information in a timely manner as per accessibility standards

- **Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+Plus) Data Collection in Programs and Services:** NRCan will continue using GBA Plus to collect disaggregated data on persons with diverse abilities in some programs. This helps identify how different groups experience services and supports targeted accessibility improvements. Training is planned to strengthen how intersectionality is applied in GBA Plus, helping teams better understand overlapping barriers and diverse needs.

Inclusive and Accessible Programs and Services:

To ensure all programs and services are designed with accessibility and inclusion at their core and are easy to find and use

- **Accessibility in Program Design and Policy:** NRCan will continue integrating accessibility into program design through equity-focused frameworks. Many programs are using GBA Plus to identify and address barriers faced by underrepresented groups, including persons with diverse abilities. Key examples are listed below.
- **Greener Homes Initiative:** NRCan will continue improving accessibility in the Canada Greener Homes Initiative, including the Oil to Heat Pump Affordability Program. Applicants are encouraged to request accommodations at any stage, and accessible formats are available for individuals with visual or cognitive disabilities. The program also supports low- to median-income households, helping reduce financial barriers for persons with diverse abilities.
- **Smart Renewables and Electrification Pathways:** NRCan will continue to require funding recipients to meet inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) commitments. Proponents must submit plans or adopt recognized pledges to reduce barriers and promote workforce inclusion. To date, projects supported through these pathways are expected to create over 250 jobs for persons with diverse abilities.
- **Sustainable Jobs Strategy:** NRCan will continue to support the *Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act* and develop its Sustainable Jobs Action Plan by the end of 2025. Accessibility will be a key part of this strategy to ensure inclusive participation in Canada's transition to a net-zero economy.

Performance Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in achieving accessible programs and services:

Inclusive and Accessible Programs and Services:

- Updates on programs are collected, tracked for progress over time, and reported annually through NRCan's accessibility progress reports.

Measurement Note: NRCan will explore opportunities to develop additional performance indicators related to the use of disaggregated data and GBA Plus training, to better assess how program teams are applying inclusive and intersectional approaches to accessibility.

Priority Area: Procurement

NRCan is committed to making accessibility a core part of how goods and services are purchased. We are working toward a future where accessibility is built into every step of the procurement process.

Desired State

NRCan's procurement practices are:

- Inclusive by design, with accessibility embedded in planning, solicitation, evaluation, and contract management.
- Supported by practical tools and guidance that help employees apply accessibility standards and best practices throughout the procurement process.

Current State

Consultations showed that accessibility is not built into NRCan's procurement processes consistently. This creates barriers when buying goods and services that should support inclusion. These barriers include the following:

- Accessibility requirements are not always included in procurement documents.
- Vendors and contractors may not meet accessibility standards.
- Employees lack clear guidance on how to buy accessible goods and services.

Short Term Actions to Achieve Desired State

Procurement Support for Staff:

To ensure employees are supported by practical tools and guidance that help them apply accessibility standards and best practices throughout the procurement process

- **Accessibility Standing Offer:** NRCan's Communications Branch, in collaboration with eProcurement, will develop a departmental standing offer to help employees buy accessible public-facing documents, fillable forms, and other products. This will give teams access to qualified vendors who understand Government of Canada accessibility standards.

Inclusive Procurement Practices:

To ensure accessibility is embedded in planning, solicitation, evaluation, and contract management

- **Accessibility Review and Approval:** NRCan's Communications Branch will continue reviewing statements of work (SOW) for products such as reports, infographics, and videos to ensure accessibility clauses are included. The team also checks final products from vendors to confirm they meet accessibility requirements.

Performance Indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in achieving accessible procurement:

Inclusive Procurement Practices:

- Number of SOWs reviewed, and the number of accessibility validations completed, including time and resources required to meet accessibility standards.

Measurement Note: NRCan will explore opportunities to develop additional performance indicators related to use and awareness of the Accessibility Standing Offer, to better track progress and impact.

Priority Area: Transportation

NRCan is committed to providing transportation options that are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of all employees. We are working toward a future where transportation supports equitable employment, including for those in remote regions and fieldwork settings.

Desired state

NRCan's transportation services are:

- Fully accessible, efficient, and flexible in meeting the diverse needs of employees and visitors.

Current State

Although some fieldwork is inherently inaccessible, there are safe opportunities for persons with diverse abilities to participate, making their inclusion in scientific roles essential.

Consultations identified the following key barrier

- The process of requesting a vehicle through the NRCan fleet requires repeated approvals for the same accessibility need, resulting in unnecessary delays and creating additional stress and frustration for the employee making the request.

This shows that accessibility is not yet a consistent part of how NRCan manages transportation services. Addressing these gaps is essential to ensure that all employees can travel safely.

Short-term Actions to Achieve the Desired State

1. Accessible Transportation Services:

To ensure transportation services are fully accessible, efficient, and flexible, meeting the diverse needs of employees and visitors

- **Government of Canada's New Travel Platform:** On September 18, 2025, NRCan transitioned to the new Government of Canada's Neo travel platform from American Express Global Business Travel (Amex GBT). Employees needing travel assistance can currently contact the Amex GBT Call Centre by email, phone, or teletypewriter. In response to feedback, Public Services and Procurement Canada will request the addition of an accessibility module in the new travel portal, enabling employees to indicate their needs during booking.
- **Understanding Barriers in Fleet Access:** NRCan will examine how accessibility-related vehicle requests are managed, especially where repeated approvals may be causing delays and frustration.

Performance Indicators

Accessible Transportation Services

The following indicators will be used to measure NRCan's progress in developing accessible transportation:

- The percentage of employee requests for accessible transportation accommodations that are approved while on travel status.
- The documented barriers to accessing vehicles, with recommendations for improving the accessibility of the vehicle request process.

Measurement Note:

This performance indicator will become measurable once the Government of Canada's Neo travel platform includes an accessibility module allowing employees to indicate their accommodation needs during the booking process.

Monitoring and Reporting

NRCan is committed to transparent and accountable reporting on accessibility. While the previous accessibility plan did not include specific performance indicators, this three-year plan introduces clear and concrete measurable indicators to better track progress and results. NRCan will monitor and evaluate the progress of each performance indicator and report on their progress annually through the NRCan Accessibility Action Plan Progress Reports.

The Natural Resources Canada Accessibility Council (NAAC) was instrumental in developing the 2022–2025 NAAP, bringing forward feedback from network members and key groups on barriers and opportunities to improve accessibility across the department. As the department continues to strengthen its planning and consultation processes, a governance review is underway to streamline structures, reduce duplication, and ensure continued effectiveness.

Conclusion

With this renewed NAAP, NRCan, the ESAB and the NPA reaffirm their commitment to fostering a workplace that is inclusive, accessible, and equitable. Building on past efforts, the NAAP now includes new performance indicators and enhanced monitoring to ensure measurable and lasting progress.

Accessibility is not a one-time goal but an ongoing responsibility. We will continue to learn from lived experiences, adapt based on feedback, and apply best practices so that accessibility becomes embedded in everything we do.

Our vision is an NRCan where accessibility is second nature, barriers are eliminated before they arise, and people with diverse abilities are celebrated as vital to advancing our work for Canadians.

General

In this section

- [Members of the Public](#)
- [NRCan Employees](#)
- [Feedback by Mail](#)
- [Feedback Processes](#)
- [Designated Person](#)

We invite members of the public who interact with our department and our employees to provide feedback on accessibility barriers. This includes feedback on either the:

- Way we are implementing the Natural Resources Canada Accessibility Action Plan 2025-2028.
- Barriers encountered by our employees or people who interact with NRCan, the ESAB and the NPA.

The NAAP or accompanying feedback can be provided in alternate formats, including print, large print, Braille, audio, and electronic. Use the following contact information to request an alternate format. We will respond to these requests within the timelines outlined by the Accessible Canada Act.

Members of the Public

- For telephone feedback: 1-855-525-9293 (toll-free in Canada) or 343-292-6096
- For electronic feedback: Email ee-diversity-diversite-ee@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca
- For the online [electronic form](#): If you are submitting feedback by using the electronic form, select the Other/Departmental option from the drop-down menu.

NRCan Employees

- For telephone feedback: 1-866-943-4141 (toll-free) or 613-943-4141
- For electronic feedback: Email ee-diversity-diversite-ee@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca
- For the online [electronic form](#): If you are submitting feedback by using the electronic form, select the Other/Departmental option from the drop-down menu. Then select Accessibility Feedback. Note that your feedback can be submitted anonymously by leaving the contact information fields blank.

Feedback by Mail

Natural Resources Canada
Corporate Management Services Sector
People and Culture Branch

Partnership, Accessibility, Community and Equity team
580 Booth Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0E4

We invite NRCan employees to use internal mail delivery, as described in their internal mail procedures.

Members of the media may use the standard NRCan [contact information for Media Relations](#) for any of the portfolios covered under this plan.

Feedback Processes

We will confirm receipt of all feedback that includes identifying information, aiming to do so within three to five business days in line with our standards. Acknowledgements will be sent through the same channel as the feedback was received.

All feedback, whether anonymous or identified, will be given equal consideration and included in progress reports and regular internal updates. Note, however, that we are unable to provide direct responses to anonymous feedback.

Designated Person

Karine McNeely

Natural Resources Canada

Manager, Partnership, Accessibility, Community and Equity team

People & Culture Branch, Corporate Management Services Sector

Glossary

ACE

Accommodation Centre of Expertise – an internal NRCan service to managers and employees of that serves as a one-stop-shop for all accommodation questions.

ASL

American Sign Language

Barrier

Anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of people with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation. This includes anything physical, environmental, architectural, technological or attitudinal that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of a policy or a practice.

Disability

Any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation – whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.

Duty to accommodate

Duty to accommodate is the obligation to take steps to eliminate disadvantages to employees and prospective employees. The duty applies to disadvantages that result from a directive, rule, practice or physical barrier that has or may have an adverse impact on certain individuals or groups. The relevant individuals or groups are those protected under the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and identified as a designated group under the *Employment Equity Act*

ESAB

Energy Supplies Allocation Board

Future of Work

Future of Work planning is a departmental priority that considers how the workforce is undergoing transformative changes that are different from our past and present.

Digital Passport

A voluntary tool that facilitates accommodation by placing the employee at the centre of the accommodation process and promotes dialogue and collaboration between employees and managers. It is a flagship initiative under the Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada.

LSQ

Langue des signes québécoise

NAAC

NRCan Accessibility Advisory Council – Through collaboration, the NAAC recommends strategies to improve accessibility across the department.

NAAP

Natural Resources Canada Accessibility Action Plan.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity refers to how thought patterns and behavioural traits vary in humans. “Neurodivergent” can describe persons on the autism spectrum and anyone who experiences neurologically different patterns of thought or behaviour. “Neurotypical” individuals do not generally have autistic or other atypical neurological thought patterns or behaviours. Workplaces that optimize neurotypical tasks may not meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Neurotypical individuals may assume that their experience of the world is the only one or the only correct one.

NPA

Northern Pipeline Agency

NRCan

Natural Resources Canada

PSES

Public Service Employee Survey – an anonymous government-wide annual survey that assesses various areas of work life.

Annex A. Guiding Principles

- Collective leadership – The management and success of the NAAP will depend primarily on the individual and group leadership exercised throughout the department. We encourage all NRCan and its stakeholders and partners to challenge the status quo, innovate and take calculated risks, which can have meaningful impacts.
 - Inclusive and accessible by design – We need to integrate user experience in the design and implementation of policies, programs and practices.
 - Employee engagement – We need to engage with employees with diverse abilities, regardless of network membership (affiliation), through collaboration and consultation on policies, programs, practices and service delivery. This engagement policy is in line with the strategy's principle of Nothing Without Us.
-

Annex B. NRCan at a Glance

NRCan is a science-based department of about 4,800 employees, many in specialized scientific and technical roles supporting the sustainable management of Canada's natural resources. Nearly half of our workforce operates outside the National Capital Region, including in remote and field-based locations. This broad presence offers opportunities, but also unique accessibility challenges related to workplaces, transportation, and fieldwork.

Since the first NAAP (2022–2025), NRCan has improved accessibility by refining accommodation processes, piloting centralized funding, and increasing awareness. Yet, attitudinal barriers and systemic gaps continue to limit full inclusion.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated hybrid work, digital investments, and a “flexibility by default” approach, highlighting the importance of accessibility in both physical and virtual environments. It also exposed ongoing challenges in inclusion, communication, knowledge transfer, accessible design, and mental health supports.

NRCan recognizes that inclusion requires continuous effort. Strengthening leadership accountability, building accessibility knowledge, and embedding inclusive practices remain essential to creating a barrier-free, supportive, and psychologically safe workplace.

The renewal of the Natural Resources Canada Accessibility Action Plan reaffirms our commitment to removing barriers and advancing accessibility in collaboration with persons with diverse abilities. It is both a reflection on our progress and a step toward the Government of Canada’s goal of a barrier-free public service by 2040.

Annex C. Energy Supplies Allocation Board at a Glance

The *Energy Supplies Emergency Act* (ESEA) was enacted in 1979 to support federal action response to a global oil supply shock. The purpose of the ESEA is to provide a means to conserve the supplies of energy within Canada during periods of national emergency caused by shortages or market disturbances affecting the national security and welfare and the economic stability of Canada

The ESEA has a provision to set up an Energy Supply Allocation Board (ESAB) to manage fuel supply programs when the ESEA is activated. If the federal Cabinet declared an emergency and the legislation were deployed, the ESAB could put measures in place such as gasoline rationing or oil allocation, amongst other measures, to manage the fuel emergency.

The ESEA contains a provision for the creation of the Energy Supplies Allocation Board (ESAB). The ESAB would be chaired by the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources Canada and have up to six additional members appointed by the Governor-in-Council.

The ESEA has never been triggered because of global supply disruptions since it was established. The ESEA has not met its activation threshold rendering the ESAB

dormant. Although the ESAB remains dormant with no other board members or supporting subject matter experts/NRCan employees, its inclusion in this plan ensures that any future emergency measures would be delivered in an accessible and inclusive manner.

Annex D. Northern Pipeline Agency at a Glance

The Northern Pipeline Agency (NPA) was created with the proclamation of the *Northern Pipeline Act* in April 1978 to oversee the planning and construction of the Canadian portion of the Alaska Highway Natural Gas Pipeline Project by the Foothills Group of Companies. Since 2003, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources has been responsible for the *Northern Pipeline Act* and for the management and direction of the NPA.

The Deputy Minister of Natural Resources Canada serves as the Commissioner and Deputy Head of the NPA. Since 2013, the NPA has been in a ramped-down condition with annual operating expenditures well under \$400,000 for the past five years, which are cost-recovered. The NPA is resourced through arrangements with NRCan and the Canada Energy Regulator, and these resources are embedded within the headquarters of these two organizations.

The NPA has a twofold mandate. First, it carries out the Government of Canada's responsibilities in relation to the pipeline project and facilitates the efficient and expeditious planning and construction of the pipeline, considering local and regional interests, particularly those of Indigenous Peoples. Second, it maximizes the social and economic benefits from the construction and operation of the pipeline while at the same time minimizing any adverse effect on the social and environmental conditions of the areas most directly affected by the pipeline.

Should the need to ramp up arise from the re-commencement of the Alaska Highway Natural Gas Pipeline Project, the NPA will re-examine, within three months, its accessibility plan considering the requirements of the current legislation and regulations.