



Canadian Grain
Commission

Commission canadienne
des grains

Canadian Grain Commission Accessibility Plan

Progress Report 2024

This publication reports on the implementation of the Canadian Grain Commission's Accessibility Plan in 2024. It discusses policies, programs, practices and services in relation to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility.

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General

Introduction

The Canadian Grain Commission regulates grain handling in Canada and establishes and maintains science-based standards of quality for Canadian grain. We have approximately 450 employees working in a variety of occupational groups including technical, scientific and administrative. We have a presence in 7 provinces, with our head office in Winnipeg, regional offices in Montreal and Vancouver and 10 service centres. Our employees work in several types of environments, including third party terminal elevators at waterfront sites, scientific laboratories and offices.

The [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA) aims to create a barrier-free Canada by 2040 through the identification, removal and prevention of barriers. Our first accessibility plan, published in December 2022, identified barriers to accessibility in our policies, practices, programs and services based on consultations with all our employees, employees who self-identified as having a disability, divisional managers and subject matter experts. It also documented our goals for removing and preventing barriers. Our 2023 progress report described the progress we made in achieving our accessibility goals. This 2024 progress report details our continued progress in achieving accessibility. Our accessibility plan and subsequent progress reports considered workplace culture and the 7 areas outlined in Section 5 of the ACA:

- Employment
- Built environment
- Information and communication technologies

- Communication, other than information and communication technologies
- Procurement of goods, services, and facilities
- Design and delivery of programs and services
- Transportation

How to provide feedback

Employees, clients and members of the public can provide feedback to us on barriers they have encountered and the implementation of our accessibility plan. Your comments and questions can be sent to Scott Hazlitt, the Canadian Grain Commission's accessibility officer, using any of the following methods:

- Email: accessibility-accessibilite@grainscanada.gc.ca
- Telephone: 431-336-3479
- Mail: Canadian Grain Commission
303 Main Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3G8

You can also provide feedback anonymously on any matter related to accessibility through our [Accessibility Feedback form](#). Details on our [accessibility feedback processes](#) are available on our website.

Contact our accessibility officer to request a copy of our accessibility plan, progress reports or a description of our feedback process in print, large print, Braille, audio format or an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that is intended to assist persons with disabilities.

Culture

Consultations for our 2022 accessibility plan and subsequent feedback identified a lack of awareness among employees about the meaning of disability and a lack of tools and training on how the Canadian Grain Commission can meet the needs of employees with disabilities as barriers to having a culture of inclusion. In addition, results from the 2022 Public Service Employee Survey (PSES) showed that 16% fewer employees with disabilities responded positively to whether their agency did a good job of raising awareness of mental health in the workplace compared to 2020.

Progress made in 2024 in removing and preventing barriers

The National Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (NEEDIC) is a consultative forum at the Canadian Grain Commission that supports open dialogue and sharing of information between the employer and employee representatives, including union, employees representing designated groups and other equity deserving groups. In 2024, NEEDIC continued to provide information, advice and educational opportunities within the Canadian Grain Commission to address employment equity, diversity and inclusion concerns. Specific activities to help create and maintain a culture of inclusion for employees with disabilities included:

- A message promoting National AccessAbility Week was distributed to all staff in May 2024. Employees were encouraged to explore learning opportunities through the Canada School of Public Service and were made aware of other accessibility resources and tools.

- An organization-wide event was held in October 2024 as part of our diversity and inclusion speaker series. At this event an employee shared their lived experiences related to invisible disabilities and mental health.
- Four issues of our Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) Newsletter were distributed to all employees. These newsletters contained information on accessibility and accommodation initiatives, training opportunities and resources available to employees.
- A NEEDIC orientation course was developed to provide employees with information about equity, diversity and inclusion at the Canadian Grain Commission. New employees are now automatically enrolled in the course and the course is also available to current employees.

Additional work to remove barriers to a culture of inclusion included:

- Members of our Accessibility Working Group attended two manager's forums to discuss accessibility and required training related to accessibility.

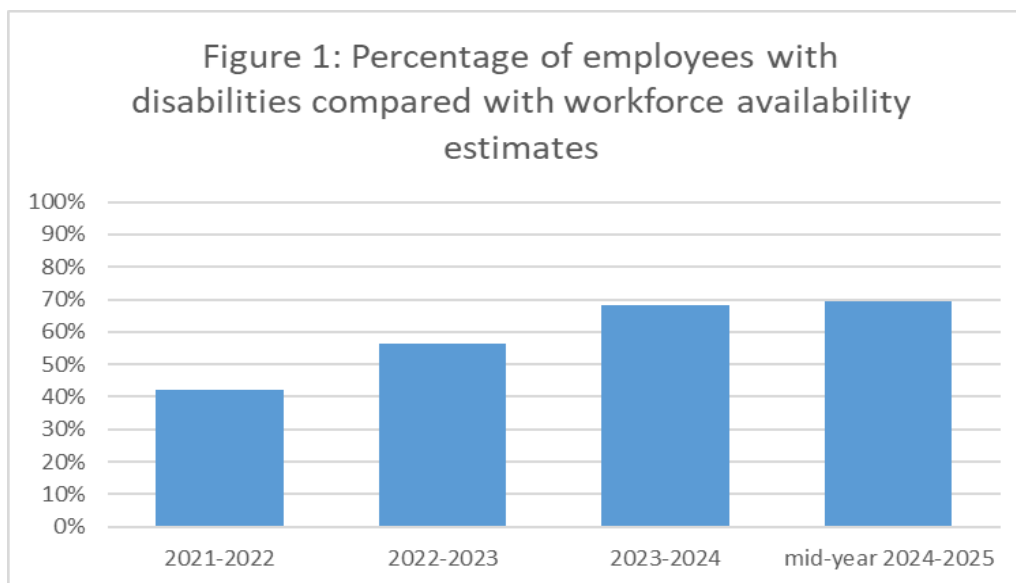
Employment

Consultations for our 2022 accessibility plan and subsequent feedback identified a lack of understanding among managers on the accommodation process and a lack of information on accommodations available during the appointment process as barriers to giving persons with disabilities full access to employment opportunities. In the 2022 Public Service Employee Survey (PSES), significantly fewer employees with disabilities indicated that they were satisfied with the workplace accommodation measures that were implemented than employees who do not have a disability.

Progress made in 2024 in removing and preventing barriers

Considerable effort was placed in this area resulting in the following achievements:

- Tools have been developed and provided to assessment boards to assist members and hiring managers in the evaluation of biases and barriers in all steps of the assessment process.
- Our workforce representation gap for persons with a disability is steadily decreasing year over year, with additional progress made in 2024 (Figure 1).



- An interdisciplinary duty to accommodate working group continues to work collaboratively through complex accommodations in an expedient manner. A process to track and monitor workplace accommodation requests was recently implemented with the aim of future information being available to inform practices and procedures.
- An internal order was created as a means to track money spent on workplace accommodations and was implemented in summer 2024. As of late October 2024, no purchases have been reported on the internal order.
- A commitment to providing a barrier free work environment and information on accommodations during the assessment process continue to be included in job advertisements. As of October 2024, these were included in all internal and external job postings.
- The importance of self-identification was promoted in the November issue of the Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) newsletter and further awareness of self-identification is planned to coincide with the expected release of the modernized form and application from the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) in late 2024.
- We are anticipating a full roll-out of the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport to our employees in late 2024 or early 2025 to coincide with the launch of the TBS digital Accessibility Passport application. In the interim, the current passport is promoted as a tool to support employee and manager conversations on accommodations. Information on the current passport is also shared in each edition of the EEDI newsletter and is available on our internal website.
- Information about accessibility has been included in the New Employee Orientation Guide.
- In August 2024, Canada School of Public Service courses on disability and workplace accommodations were made a requirement for all employees and managers. The courses were promoted in an all-staff message and at monthly departmental managers meetings. Further discussions and/or training with managers have started and will continue be held within the Canadian Grain Commission.
 - 45% of managers completed their required training in the first three months after the training launch. 41% of employees completed their required training within this same time frame. Follow-up on outstanding training will be conducted as part of our year-end activities.

Built environment

Consultations for our 2022 accessibility plan and subsequent feedback identified a lack of knowledge on the current state of accessibility, a lack of awareness on how to document barriers for use in future planning, the challenge of specialized work places such as research laboratories and terminal elevators, and a lack of awareness of evacuation plans for persons with disabilities as barriers to all employees having barrier free workplaces at the Canadian Grain Commission.

Progress made in 2024 in removing and preventing barriers

- Work has begun on replacing toilets in washrooms identified as accessible in the headquarters building to ensure that they meet current accessibility standards.
- Two regular audits of automatic door buttons to ensure that they are functioning properly are now conducted annually at our headquarters building location. An audit of buttons in facility spaces managed externally by BGIS is done in January and an audit of buttons for which the Canadian Grain Commission is responsible is completed in June. If any issues are found by staff outside of these audits, employees are encouraged to report them to the National Service Call Centre or our accessibility officer.
- Automatic door buttons have been added to 4 doors at the headquarters building where they were previously not available, and several existing buttons were moved for better access.
- The need for 5 height adjustable grading benches was identified this fiscal year and procurement is working on a long-term proactive solution for purchasing grading benches across all regions.
- Ergonomic stools were purchased for one of our work sites in Vancouver.

Information and communication technologies

Consultations for our 2022 accessibility plan and subsequent feedback identified a lack of awareness about the availability of adaptive equipment, insufficient support from managers in obtaining adaptive equipment, a lack of awareness about how equipment accommodations move with an employee and concerns about the feasibility of using adaptive equipment in waterfront locations as barriers to accessible information and communications technologies.

Progress made in 2024 in removing and preventing barriers

- Training and resources available through the [Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology \(AAACT\) program](#) were promoted to all employees 3 times in 2024 using the internal social engagement platform Viva Engage.
- The AAAC program worked with us on accommodations requiring adaptive technology. Knowledge gained on how to best expedite these processes will be incorporated into future accommodation requests.

Communication, other than information and communication technologies

Consultations for our 2022 accessibility plan and subsequent feedback identified background noises during large in-person meetings, insufficient closed captioning for meetings and training material and a lack of well-defined procedures for employees and clients to submit feedback on communications and events as barriers to accessible communications and events.

Progress made in 2024 in removing and preventing barriers

- All emails promoting Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) speaker series events include information on closed captioning.
- Post speaker series event questionnaires now include a question to determine the accessibility of events and to seek feedback on any barriers experienced.
- Our standard template for PowerPoint slides used for presentations to employees and external clients has been updated to improve accessibility through increased colour contrast, larger font size and a lower limit on the number of words per slide.
- Information on how to provide [feedback on accessibility](#) was posted on our external and internal websites and is included in each of our quarterly EEDI newsletters.
- Instructions for creating accessible emails was shared with employees on our accessibility community Viva Engage page.
- The [Digital Accessibility Toolkit's](#) learning materials and resources for creating accessible digital projects and meetings were shared with employees through our EEDI newsletter.
- The Accessibility Hub's [how-to guides](#) available to federal public servants were shared in the November issue of the EEDI newsletter to help employees make their documents more accessible.

Procurement of goods, services and facilities

Consultations for our 2022 accessibility plan and subsequent feedback identified no barriers related to procurement in our policies, practices, programs and services. We will keep monitoring feedback to ensure that the identification, removal and prevention of barriers continues in this area.

Design and delivery of programs and services

Consultations for our 2022 accessibility plan and subsequent feedback identified no specific barriers to related to the accessibility of our programs and services but we continued to work on their design and delivery to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Progress made in 2024 in removing and preventing barriers

- Text on our internal and external websites is reviewed using the principles of plain language before posting.
- The formatting of tables in the reports and articles from our Grain Research Laboratory that are posted to our external website has been updated to avoid merged cells, empty cells, rotated text direction and poor colour contrast between text and cell backgrounds.
- Charts in all reports and articles from our Grain Research Laboratory that are posted to our external website now include drop-down tables containing the data used to create the charts.
- Alt text descriptions are being added to figures on our external website.

Transportation

Consultations for our 2022 accessibility plan and subsequent feedback identified no barriers related to transportation have been identified in our policies, practices, programs and services. We will keep monitoring feedback to ensure that the identification, removal and prevention of barriers continues in this area.

Consultations

Consultations for the 2024 accessibility progress report were conducted in several ways.

Employees and managers

Among the employees and managers we spoke to, some had disabilities, and some did not, but it was important for us to hear diverse perspectives on accessibility in the workplace. Members of our accessibility working group attended two hybrid manager's forums to discuss accessibility, where comments and questions could be asked orally or in writing.

Accessibility working group

The accessibility working group was established at the Canadian Grain Commission to ensure the implementation of our accessibility plan. Members include persons with disabilities, a union representative and the Canadian Grain Commission's accessibility officer. In 2024 they met 4 times to discuss feedback on accessibility. Members also reviewed and provided comments on the draft 2024 progress report prior to it being finalized for publication.

National Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (NEEDIC)

NEEDIC met 11 times in 2024 and accessibility is an agenda item at each meeting. Feedback and information from these meetings are shared with our human resources department. At NEEDIC's in-person meeting in February, our accessibility officer led a larger discussion on accessibility at the Canadian Grain Commission.

Feedback

In 2024 we received feedback through the [accessibility feedback form](#) our internal and external websites and the accessibility email inbox. These methods for providing feedback were frequently promoted to all employees during the past year. We also received feedback through conversations and during consultations with employees with disabilities.

The following feedback was received:

- An employee identified accessibility buttons that were absent from various doors in the basement of the building.
- An employee identified barriers to easily opening doors on the main floor at the headquarters office. This included the distance of the card reader for access from the automatic door button. In addition, the employee reported an absence of automatic door buttons on one of the boardroom doors.
- A manager reported difficulties in ascertaining equipment for a workplace accommodation when working with the Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Computer Technology (AAACT) program due to the current procedures.

Feedback on accessibility was also sought following our Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) speaker series events and no suggestions to improve accessibility were made.

All communications related to the feedback received is stored in a confidential manner, and will be for the next seven years as mandated in section 19 of the *Accessible Canada Regulations*.

Feedback gaps

We will continue to promote accessibility awareness and our feedback mechanisms as there are still areas in our accessibility plan where no feedback has been received.