

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION

2009-2010

Accessibility Plan



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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	i
Introduction	1
Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements	2
Report on Other Accessibility Commitments	8

Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) sets out the roadmap to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under this act, accessibility standards are being developed and implemented to break down barriers in key areas of everyday life.

These standards will increase accessibility for people with disabilities in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the built environment.

The Government of Ontario is preparing to lead the way towards an accessible province, beginning in January 2010 when the first standard — for customer service — comes into force.

Each year, the government sets the course to prevent, identify and remove barriers through annual accessibility plans mandated under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Building on last year's plan, the 2009-2010 accessibility plans will continue moving the Ministry of Transportation towards the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

A notable achievement includes the purchase of 356 conventional and 64 specialized transit buses for a total of 420 new accessible replacement buses under the Ministry's 2008 Ontario Bus Replacement Program. At the end of 2008, 81.2 per cent of municipal conventional transit buses in Ontario were accessible, up from 38 per cent in 2003.

An [executive summary](#) of all Government of Ontario Ministry Accessibility Plans is available at the Ministry of Community and Social Services website.

Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements

The *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* (ASCS) Regulation came into effect on January 1, 2008, and requires designated public sector organizations, including the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), to meet requirements of the customer service standards by January 1, 2010. The following section describes what was accomplished this year to meet those requirements.

Focus Area: Customer Service - Policies, practices and procedures

Commitment: Completed

Implement provisions of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* Regulation related to policies, practices and procedures.

Results Achieved:

- The OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and OPS Accessibility Guideline developed by the OPS Diversity Office, Ministry of Government Services (MGS) was distributed to staff. This document outlines compliance requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service regulation as well as good practices that go above and beyond regulatory obligations. Staff members were directed to read and adopt the policy as it addresses the eleven requirements of the regulation.
- The public version of the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and other documents required under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (ASCS) were posted on the ministry Internet site in both English and French, as well as alternate formats.
- The public version of the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy was shared and promoted with Serco DES, Inc., the organization that provides driver examination services to the public on behalf of MTO.
- Key MTO customer service related policies, practices and procedures were revised to ensure alignment with the principles of the ASCS regulation. These are listed below:

- The Management Toolkit, an online resource for managers, was reviewed and updated to include accessibility obligations under both the ODA, 2001 and the AODA, 2005 and its regulation.
 - Ministry-specific procurement templates / documents, which potentially affect hundreds of submissions were reviewed and are now consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity. As a result, consultants retained to manage public information centres as well as MTO project managers overseeing these activities will be better prepared to provide accessible customer service to visitors.
 - The MTO Continuity of Operations Plan and the MTO Pandemic Plan integrated an accessibility element as a key component to be considered for both Ministry staff as well as for services provided to the public.
 - Process guidelines, tools and resources on providing accessible services to candidates with various disabilities during the recruitment process were developed for human resources professionals and managers.
 - The process on how to address alternate format requests for MTO publications was reviewed, updated, communicated and posted.
- The remaining customer service related policies, practices and procedures were identified and a plan, including a schedule to review and revise these documents, was prepared.
 - A ministry *Accessibility Governance Framework* was developed to ensure consistent, effective and efficient implementation across the organization. It provides the necessary systematic structures and mechanisms to appropriately monitor compliance progress and reporting obligations.
 - Accessibility considerations were built into various internal processes and initiatives including but not limited to: Results-based Planning, Business Continuity Plans, Corporate Risk Management Plan, MTO annual Audit Plan schedule, and communication products.

Future Planned Action(s):

- Customer Service related policies, procedures and practices that were identified during this reporting period will be reviewed and revised as appropriate as per plan schedule.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2009 to March 2011

Focus area: Customer Service – Training, including how to communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability

Commitment: Completed

Provide appropriate training to employees who interact with the public as well as employees who participate in developing policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

Results Achieved:

Training of staff on various accessibility elements, including mandatory training under the customer service regulation, has been a key strategy to promote and raise awareness of accessibility. The following demonstrates different methods used to increase the knowledge level of employees on different accessibility subjects:

- MTO staff who provide service to the public or other third parties received customer service training that addressed ASCS regulatory requirements.
- MTO staff involved in the development of customer-related policies, procedures and practices also received customer service training that addressed ASCS regulatory requirements.
- Service providers who provide services on our behalf were identified and training requirements were addressed using various methods.
 - Serco DES, Inc., the organization that provides driver examination services to the public on behalf of MTO, committed to train their staff and provide a report listing employees' names and dates of training.
 - Current external consultants who are involved in Public Information Centre (PIC) meetings received information about accessible customer service. Future external consultants who will be retained in connection to these PIC meetings will be required to complete the accessible training requirement as a result of the procurement process. Procurement templates specific to MTO were updated to include accessible customer service training.
 - Twenty-seven Commissionaires located in the Downsview complex completed the ServeAbility online training module which is equivalent to the "May I help you?" e-modules.
- Options of two e-learning products were offered as well as other delivery formats including group sessions. As a result, over 1300 employees have been trained.

- Additional training activities, including information and orientation sessions as well as in-class workshops, were delivered to MTO staff. These additional training sessions and communications are listed below:
 - Six information sessions were delivered to Senior Management Committees which led to the establishment of divisional working groups. Nine additional presentations were also delivered to various management teams seeking their assistance in supporting the accessibility agenda.
 - In the spring of 2009, the Deputy Minister sent a memorandum to his management team providing them with a progress report on the implementation of the customer service regulation as well as asking for their continued support to fulfill our accessibility commitments.
 - Four divisional working groups were established and the 34 staff members in the working groups were provided with a half-day orientation / workshop session on the ASCS regulation and its implementation plan.
 - Three administrative teams totaling approximately 20 staff members received training on how to make widely distributed PDF memoranda accessible to staff using screen reader software.
 - A training package on how to create accessible documents was developed and training sessions were delivered to MTO and OPS staff.
 - Eleven in-class training sessions were delivered across the province where staff was provided with an opportunity to apply what they learned in the “May I help you?” e-learning modules. In total, over 150 staff members received this training.
 - Twenty-four procurement presentations were delivered across the province where accessibility was promoted as a crucial step to include under the procurement process. In total, about 250 MTO staff participants received this training across the province.
 - Five group training sessions of the Serve-Ability e-module were delivered totaling over 190 staff members including 40 senior management employees and 70 supervisors, 31 staff from the Communications Branch and 20 Strategic Human Resources Branch employees. These sessions proved to be very engaging and generated positive group discussions.
 - Under the *Take our Kids to Work Day* initiative in St. Catharines, an interactive presentation was delivered to grade 9 students where they learned about barriers faced by people with various disabilities.
- An evacuation chair was purchased for the St. Catharines building. Twenty fire wardens were trained including the Deputy Evacuation Warden.

- Seven diversity training sessions were delivered to various MTO senior management groups and professionals where 150 employees received training. Given that accessibility is a pillar of diversity, the subject received considerable attention during the course of these training sessions.
- An MTO customer service training strategy was developed, communicated and posted on the Internet and intranet for easy access by staff and members of the public.
- Tip sheets on how to use a Teletypewriter (TTY) device and relay services were widely distributed and posted on the intranet for staff providing front line service to the public.

Future Planned Action(s):

Communicate ASCS training obligations to new staff and monitor compliance. In addition to the “May I help you?” mandatory e-modules, MTO will continue to provide various accessibility-related learning opportunities to staff.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2009 to March 2011

Focus area: Customer Service - Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on, to access or use goods or services, are temporarily disrupted

Commitment: Completed

- In collaboration with various stakeholders, develop and implement a process to inform customers that facilities or services are temporarily unavailable including information on alternative, interim solutions.

Results achieved:

- In collaboration with key program areas, a process and supporting tools to appropriately manage temporary service disruptions was developed, implemented and posted on the intranet during the fall of 2009. As a result, a disruption notice will be posted to let customers know when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access MTO goods or services are temporarily disrupted. The notice will include the reason for the disruption, how long it will take to resolve and alternate service delivery if appropriate.

Future Planned Action(s):

- Monitor and measure implementation performance. Record success and potential process enhancements.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2009 to March 2011

Focus area: Customer Service – Establish a feedback process on how goods or services are provided to people with disabilities

Commitment: Completed

Develop and implement a process for people to provide feedback on how goods or services are provided to people with disabilities, and how the ministry will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. Make the information about the feedback process readily available to the public.

Results achieved:

- In collaboration with various stakeholders, a feedback mechanism was developed, communicated and, implemented during the fall of 2009. The feedback process is readily available to the public as it is posted on both the intranet and Internet.
- Consultation advice on the accessible customer service feedback mechanism used by Serco DES, Inc. was provided during a review of their feedback process. Suggestions for improvements included elements of the ASCS requirements.

Future Planned Action(s):

- Monitor usage and response time. Compile data and prepare bi-annual reports.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2009 to March 2011

Report on Other Accessibility Commitments

In the near future, the ministry will be obligated to comply with four new standards in the areas of employment, information and communications, built environment and transportation. This ministry is very supportive of the accessibility agenda and strives to continuously identify, prevent and remove barriers to support an inclusive society. During this reporting period, MTO made significant progress towards improving accessibility for both employees and members of the public. This section identifies new initiatives and provides a status report on completed or multi-year initiatives for the four accessibility standards currently under development.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Practice / Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Create, in partnership with various stakeholders, an interview centre at the St. Catharines location that is universally accessible to candidates with various disabilities. This Universal Interview Centre (UIC) will include a testing room, an interview room and a waiting area. Once completed, the “blue print” will be offered to other public organizations to assist with the design and construction of similar facilities.

Results Achieved:

- A report named “Program of Requirements – MTO Universal Interview Centre” to assist organizations with similar projects was prepared by Bob Topping, Designable Environments Incorporated, and is available upon request.
- Designs and drawings for this Centre were completed in August 2009.
- A partnership with the OPS Western Recruitment Centre has been established.
- Complementary guidelines which will address systemic barriers have been drafted.

Future Planned Action(s):

- Once construction of the interview room, the testing room and waiting area is completed, the UIC will be officially launched. Pending the opening of the Centre, the Guidelines will be completed and appropriate staff members will be provided with an orientation session and trained on the various assistive devices.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2009 to March 2011

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Practice / Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The Corporate Services Division (CSD) of MTO developed a new intranet site where accessibility requirements were taken into consideration during the various development stages. The CSD Web Committee will continue to assess and improve the accessibility of this site.

Results Achieved:

Regular membership on the CSD Web Committee was extended to staff of the MTO Accessibility Unit. As a result, accessibility of the CSD intranet is now considered as part of the regular process and practices.

Focus Area: Information and Communications / Customer Service

Impact: Program / Policy / Practice / Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Seek and welcome public input and recommendations through various channels including the public e-mail account.

We will continue to provide advice and offer consultation to program areas on a variety of accessibility topics.

Results Achieved:

Various internal and external inquiries, advice and consultations on a variety of topics were sought from the Accessibility Unit in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment and the built environment. Some examples include:

- As part of their review process, a third party service provider inquired about accessible customer service options to be considered in the review of their feedback system.
- Ministry-specific forms undergoing review were vetted through the Unit for input and recommendations.
- The Accessibility Unit received a number of queries about assistive devices and employment accommodations.
- Inquiries regarding what accessibility features need to be taken into consideration for new signage were received.

Future Planned Action(s): Continue to seek feedback and provide advice from/to both internal and external customers through various channels including but not limited to the public e-mail account and the recently implemented feedback process developed under the ASCS.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2009 to March 2011

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Service / Program / Practices

Commitment: Ongoing

Continue to sustain / improve the overall accessibility of the MTO Internet public site.

Results Achieved:

The MTO Internet is compliant with Government of Ontario Information Technology Standard GO-ITS 23.1 and as a result, there is an increased usability of the MTO Internet. Highlights include:

- The web pages have been converted / designed to include accessibility in the layout.
- The web pages are coded as XHTML to meet Priority 1 & 2 of the W3C web accessibility standard.
- The web pages are validated to the W3C standard.
- Ongoing application and implementation of best coding practices to meet accessibility requirements.
- Staff trained in accessibility requirements and adheres to best coding practices.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2009 to March 2011

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program / Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Accessibility requirements will continue to be considered under the modernization of the province-wide Driver Examination Booking System application (Ontario DEBS Project).

Results Achieved: Accessibility Unit members were engaged in discussions during the planning phase of the project. The project considered accessibility provisions and guidelines as a priority.

Implementation Timeframe: Multi-year, inter-ministry project with an anticipated end date of 2014, subject to Road User Safety Modernization project approval by Treasury Board/Management Board of Cabinet in November 2009.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Service

Commitment: Complete / Ongoing

The Facilities and Business Services Branch as well as the Provincial Highway Management Division work closely with the appropriate parties including service

providers, Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) and building management with respect to improving built environment accessibility features.

Results Achieved: The Facilities and Business Services Branch (FBSB) and the Provincial Highway Management Division worked diligently with the appropriate parties including service providers, Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) and building management to remove and prevent built environment barriers. As a result, the following accessibility improvements have been achieved during this reporting period:

Central Region/Head Office/Queen's Park

- Construction of three (400/King Road, Casablanca and Essa Road) commuter parking lots designed in accordance with the *Highway Design Bulletin 2007-002 Carpool Parking Facilities* was completed during this reporting period.
- Two accessible parking spaces have been designated in front of the St. Catharines building on St. Paul Street. FBSB is continuing to work with the City of St. Catharines to obtain additional spots.

Eastern Region

- An accessible pedestrian signal was installed during the construction of a traffic signal in Norwood.
- In May 2009, the MTO Kingston Office in conjunction with ServiceOntario colleagues held an accessibility awareness raising event intended to raise money and draw attention to the annual Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion run, walk and roll scheduled in June. This event received positive media coverage and as a result, a list of suggestions for improving the facility was compiled and shared with ORC.

Western Region

- During the fall of 2009, signage for the London regional complex was updated and replaced to meet criteria suggested by the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat.
- During the fall of 2009, building access and barrier-free washroom facilities were retrofitted to meet specific employment accommodation requirements.

Northeastern Region

- During the fall of 2009, elevators in the Northeastern regional complex have been upgraded and now contain Braille, audio notification and a lower panel.

- In the west wing/garage complex, two sets of double doors have been removed to facilitate easier access to the building for people with disabilities.
- Universal signage for outdoor parking spaces was implemented.

Future Planned Action(s):

MTO will continue to work jointly with building management, ORC and service providers to incorporate accessibility into design construction and alteration projects following ORC's *Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities, December 31, 2006*.

Commuter parking lots are currently at the design stage at 404/Queensville. Accessible / designated parking spaces specifications will be in accordance with the newly revised *Highway Design Bulletin 2007-002 for Carpool Parking Facilities* where all new or expanded ministry carpool parking facilities will be designed and constructed in accordance with the *Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities*.

The construction plan of a patrol yard located at 401/Hurontario has been designed in accordance with barrier-free requirements as per *Ontario Building Code 2006 Compendium*, which includes the following provisions: barrier-free washrooms, building access (entrances and corridors), and accessible parking. The construction of the new building is scheduled for completion in September 2010.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2009 to March 2011

Focus Area: Transportation

Impact: Program / Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Continue to work with Ontario municipalities and Metrolinx to assist in improving and renewing municipal transit systems and GO Transit's inter-regional rail and bus services.

Results Achieved:

MTO's existing municipal transit funding programs, namely the Ontario Bus Replacement Program (OBRP) and the Dedicated Gas Tax Program, require that municipalities acquire fully accessible buses.

The 2008 OBRP program purchased 356 conventional and 64 specialized transit buses for a total of 420 new accessible replacement buses. At the end of 2008, 81.2 per cent of municipal conventional transit buses in Ontario were accessible, up from 38 per cent in 2003.

In 2009, GO Transit officially merged with Metrolinx, the provincial crown agency created to address the need to improve and integrate transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. This merger has enabled a broader, more strategic approach to mobility, including accessibility for travelers with disabilities. Since that merger, Metrolinx has started to explore issues and initiatives to encourage a more coordinated approach to accessibility.

MTO continued to participate on GO Transit's External Advisory Committee to provide advice and expertise on improving access to their bus and rail commuter services. The following are a few highlights outlined in the "Metrolinx/GO Transit Accessibility Plan 2009-2010":

- New accessible rail stations in: Appleby, Clarkson, Malton, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines and Scarborough.
- New accessible bus service from Kitchener-Waterloo to Square One in Mississauga.
- New accessible rail cars.
- Electronic displays showing GO Transit departures and service changes are being added to rail stations across the network to assist commuters with hearing disabilities.
- Increased use of internationally-recognized pictograms, which assist persons with cognitive impairments and those with language difficulties.
- Announcements by rail and bus operators approaching every stop.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2008 to December 2009

Focus Area: Customer Service / Information and Communications / Built Environment / Employment / Transportation

Impact: Act / Regulation / Policy / Program / Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Administer the accessibility agenda including provisions under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and its regulations as well as related corporate initiatives.

Results Achieved:

- In consultation with various parties, including the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, MTO has prepared and successfully implemented six accessibility plans to date.
- Additionally this year, MTO met compliance requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (ASCS) regulation.
- The MTO Accessibility Committee was established in 2003 and is composed of cross-divisional members. This team is knowledgeable and dedicated to advancing the accessibility agenda and responsive to issues brought forward. Their contribution assists with the shaping of the various accessibility standards under development as well as preparing for their implementation once they have been incorporated into regulations.
- In addition to the above committee, divisional working groups were formed to coordinate, implement, monitor and report on application / compliance of the ASCS regulation. Each member of these working groups worked diligently with their respective program areas to ensure that designated offices complied with the eleven provisions of the customer service regulation.
- The MTO Accessibility Unit provided leadership on the accessibility file by supporting and providing direction to the divisional working groups and submitting regular progress reports to senior management.

MTO, in cooperation with MCSS's Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO), established an inter-ministry Working Group to review and refine the Proposed Transportation Standard. We continue to work with the ADO regarding the long term implementation of the Proposed Standard.

MTO also participated on both the MCSS chaired AODA Lead Directors' and Lead Assistant Deputy Ministers' Committees.

- Additionally, MTO is an active participant on the Inter-ministerial Built Environment Committee as well as other inter-ministerial committees and working groups in support of future accessibility standards currently under development.
- MTO is also working towards integrating the common elements of current corporate initiatives, including requirements under the ASCS Regulation, the OPS Service Directive, the French Language Services Act provisions and the OPS diversity strategy. This was done either through training materials or presentations where accessibility was profiled and linked to these other priorities.
- The MTO Accessibility Unit was successful in promoting and communicating their services. As a result, staff knew where to go and who to contact when information, guidance and assistance were needed.

Implementation Timeframe: December 2008 to December 2009 reporting period

For More Information

Questions or comments about the ministry's accessibility plan are always welcome.

Please phone:

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Ministry website address: www.mto.gov.on.ca

Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web portal at: www.mcass.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

Alternate formats of this document are available free upon request from:

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