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**FAIRNESS FOR
ALL CANADIANS**

Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office 2008 – 2009 Accessibility Plan

Introduction

Ontario is making progress toward building an accessible province by 2025. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) has laid the foundation to meet this goal. Under the act, Ontario is developing standards that will remove the barriers faced by people with disabilities.

On January 1, 2008, the first accessibility standard under the act came into force. Through the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, people of all abilities will be able to get the service they need. Public sector organizations, including the Ontario government, will need to comply with this standard by 2010. Private sector and non-profit organizations will need to comply by 2012.

Next year, more standards will be released in other important areas, including:

- Information and communications
- Transportation
- Employment
- The built environment

The Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office's sixth annual accessibility plan highlights achievements made in the previous year (2007 – 08) to break down barriers for people with disabilities. It also outlines this ministry's commitments in the coming year to make programs, policies and services more accessible for all Ontarians. This plan incorporates commitments and results from the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat, which were integrated with Cabinet Office as of April 1, 2008.

In this year's accessibility plan, the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office outline a number of commitments to meet the provisions of the newly implemented Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Cabinet Office policy staff actively supported the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in bringing forward the policy framework and regulation for the new standard. Ongoing support will be provided for inter-ministerial initiatives related to the implementation of accessibility standards.

Progress has also been made on existing multi-year initiatives. For example, planning has proceeded on schedule for the installation of an exterior entrance ramp to the Whitney Block, a historically significant building that houses the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office. The project was initiated and championed by Cabinet Office in collaboration with other building tenants. Under the overall coordination of the Ontario Realty Corporation, ramp design is in progress and construction is expected to be completed by summer of 2009.

In addition, a new Cabinet Office Human Resources Plan is being developed that will provide a framework for employee accommodation and inclusive, barrier-free working conditions.

The 2008 – 09 accessibility plan reflects the beginning of the transition to the AODA from the Ontarians with



Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). The ODA applies to the Ontario government and all broader public sector organizations. Under the ODA, the ministry develops annual accessibility plans to make its policies, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities.

Through the ODA, accessibility planning has laid a strong foundation for the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office to continue to help make Ontario more accessible for people with disabilities and a more inclusive society for all Ontarians.

An executive summary of all Government of Ontario Ministry Accessibility Plans is available at:

http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/planning/ministries_acplans09.htm

Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements

The new Accessibility Standards for Customer Service came into effect on January 1, 2008. All OPS ministries must comply with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service by January 1, 2010. This section highlights the customer service initiatives of the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office, and includes initiatives of the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat, which were integrated with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008.

Focus Area: Customer Service, Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: New

Cabinet Office will ensure that the delivery of its correspondence services is consistent with the provisions of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O.Reg. 429/07).

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office Communications will review the full range of its correspondence functions to identify the products and services that are provided externally to the public. Policies and procedures in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service will be developed for external correspondence services.

Implementation Timeframe: 2008 – 2009

Results Achieved:

To be reported in the 2009 – 2010 Accessibility Plan.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Impact: Policy, Program, Service

Commitment: New

Cabinet Office's policy and delivery processes will be reviewed to determine the impacts of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O.Reg. 429/07). The intent is to align policy and delivery activities with the provisions of the standard, where applicable.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will undertake an examination of its policy and delivery functions to identify activities that may fall under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (e.g., public consultations, release of public documents). Existing policies and practices relating to these externally-directed activities will be reviewed. Any gaps with respect to the standard, as well as measures to address them, will be identified.

Implementation Timeframe: 2008 – 2009

Results Achieved:

To be reported in the 2009 – 2010 Accessibility Plan.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: New

Cabinet Office will support their employees to gain a full understanding of their responsibilities for the delivery of accessible customer service under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O.Reg. 429/07).

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will work with the OPS Diversity Office, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, and ministry partners to identify and facilitate appropriate training for their employees on the new customer service standard.

Implementation Timeframe: 2008 – 2009

Results Achieved:

To be reported in the 2009 – 2010 Accessibility Plan.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Impact: Act, Regulation

Commitment: Completed

Cabinet Office staff will provide active support to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in bringing forward service standard regulations for approval under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Implementation Timeframe: 2007 – 2008

Results Achieved:

Cabinet Office policy staff actively supported the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in bringing forward a number of initiatives to support implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, including: a policy framework and regulation for the Customer Service Standard in spring 2007; the first accessibility annual report in March 2008; and a compliance framework in May 2008.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Completed

The value and relevance of good customer service practices to the work of the Premier's Office, Cabinet Office, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) was reinforced for all staff through the promotion of the e-learning module "May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities" offered by the Ministry of Government Services' Centre for Leadership and Learning through the OPS Intranet site MyOPS.

Implementation Timeframe: 2007 – 2008

Results Achieved:

Using various communications tools (e.g. corporate services newsletters, staff meetings, awareness sessions, etc.), employees of the Premier's Office, Cabinet Office, the former MIA and the former DRS were encouraged to take the Ministry of Government Services' Centre for Leadership and Learning e-course "May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities" to improve their understanding of accessible customer service in the workplace.

Report on Other Accessibility Commitments**Accessibility Improvement Initiatives to Identify, Remove or Prevent Barriers in Preparation for AODA Standards Currently Under Development**

In the future, the OPS will be obligated to comply with four new standards in the areas of transportation, information and communications, employment and the built environment. This section identifies new initiatives and provides a status report on completed or multi-year initiatives that are currently underway in those focus areas. This section also includes accessibility planning activities of the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat, which were integrated with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**WEBSITES**

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Public Internet websites maintained by Cabinet Office, including the Premier's website, will continue to be fully accessible, in accordance with the accessibility guidelines developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) through its Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) also committed to ensuring the accessibility of their Internet websites.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will verify annually the accessibility of the Internet websites that it manages.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Public Internet websites managed by Cabinet Office were tested for accessibility, based on the W3C web content accessibility guidelines on August 18, 2008, and found to be fully accessible. The Premier's website also

continues to be fully accessible. The former MIA Communications Branch tested all new content on the MIA Internet website for accessibility up until March 31, 2008. Similarly, the former DRS website continued to reflect accessibility principles during the past year. On April 1, 2008, the former MIA and the former DRS integrated with Cabinet Office. MIA and DRS website information was transferred to the Cabinet Office Intranet site and there are no longer separate MIA or DRS Internet websites.

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The Premier's ONzone website for youth will continue to be fully accessible, in accordance with the accessibility guidelines developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) through its Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

The Premier's ONzone website was tested for accessibility based on the W3C web content accessibility guidelines and found to be fully accessible. In addition to meeting all guidelines:

- Visitors to the website who wish to contact the Premier have the option to call a TTY/Teletypewriter number
- All Flash components on ONzone have HTML/text versions
- ALT-text is used for images even on Flash components
- Tabbed browsing is consistent – Flash / HTML

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Internal Intranet sites maintained by Cabinet Office will continue to be fully accessible, in accordance with the accessibility guidelines developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) through its Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will verify annually the accessibility of the Intranet sites that it manages.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Cabinet Office Intranet sites were tested for accessibility based on the W3C web content accessibility guidelines on August 18, 2008, and found to be fully accessible.

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Completed

The Cabinet Office Intranet revitalization project will produce an Intranet site that is fully accessible, in accordance with the accessibility guidelines developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) through its Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).

In addition, the accessibility planning section of the Cabinet Office Intranet site will be reviewed and expanded to cover a comprehensive range of accessibility topics through additional articles, tips and helpful links. Efforts will aim to increase awareness of less well-known and less obvious obstacles to accessibility, such as attitudinal barriers.

Prior to integration, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) had also committed to a new Intranet site (part of a planned re-design and re-build of its old Intranet site) to be built to meet the standards of the ministry's accessible external Internet website.

Implementation Timeframe: 2007 – 2008

Results Achieved:

The Cabinet Office Intranet site was re-launched in April 2008, with updated information, a new, easier-to-use format, and accessibility features in accordance with World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) guidelines. The revitalized Intranet site also features a new Employee Portal – an internal website within the main Intranet site – designed as a one-window entry point for Premier's Office and Cabinet Office personnel to access a wide range of useful workplace resources, including information on accessibility.

The accessibility web section was re-organized for easier reference and expanded to provide access to a greater number of helpful resources, such as guidelines and checklists to organizing and running accessible events, tips on preparing accessible documents, information on barrier-free design, a lexicon of accessibility terms, etc.

Prior to integration, the MIA Intranet site met the commitments outlined in its accessibility plan. On April 1, 2008, the former MIA and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) integrated with Cabinet Office, and MIA and DRS website information was transferred to the Cabinet Office Intranet site. The old MIA Intranet site was taken off-line.

PUBLICATIONS

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Cabinet Office, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) committed to making publications available in alternate formats, if requested, in accordance with provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former MIA communications staff assisted in reviewing and responding to requests for publications in accessible formats. Existing procedures for responding to accessible document requests were reviewed and updated as necessary. Procedures were included in the former MIA communications procedures manual, posted on the ministry's Intranet site, and hard copies were provided to administrative/front-line staff.

The former DRS worked in cooperation with Publications Ontario to ensure that alternate formats of Citizens' Assembly Secretariat documents were available, including Braille versions. In addition, the former DRS Accessibility Planning Team continued to ensure that its documents supported the government's accessibility requirements.

Cabinet Office Communications produced limited print copies of the 2007 Progress Report and 2007 Throne Speech for the media and government staff. Both of these documents are available on the Premier's website, which continues to be fully accessible.

Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of overall Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: New

The Premier's outgoing correspondence, including general responses, messages and congratulatory certificates, will continue to be made available in alternate formats, if requested, in compliance with provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office's Correspondence Services Unit will continue to work with the appropriate organizations/offices to produce responses and other documents in alternative format, as required:

- Braille – in collaboration with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Accessible Text Service
- Sound files – in collaboration with Creative Services and New Media, Cabinet Office

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

To be reported in the 2009 – 2010 Accessibility Plan.

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Completed

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) committed to reviewing all new print and electronic communications and removal of any potential barriers to people with disabilities before the materials are published or posted. The former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) had made a similar commitment with respect to its printed materials.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2006 – March 2008

Results Achieved:

Prior to publication or posting, the MIA Communications Branch regularly reviewed all print and electronic

Printed materials were reviewed on an ongoing basis by the former DRS ODA Lead and alternatives were provided where appropriate.

TELETYPEWRITER

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The main reception desk for Cabinet Office is equipped with a TTY line in order to facilitate communications with callers who are unable to communicate verbally using regular telephones. In addition, a dedicated TTY line will continue to be maintained to receive telephone inquiries to the Correspondence Services Unit from people with hearing loss or without speech. This TTY number is published on the Premier's website and on all other correspondence-related public forms. Staff will receive appropriate training to operate the TTY equipment. Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) had also made commitments to maintain and ensure the adequacy of the TTY lines in their workplaces.

Planned Action(s):

Usage of the Cabinet Office TTY lines will be monitored to ensure that the capacity of the system is adequate for the needs of callers with hearing loss and/or without speech. Training will be provided to all new Cabinet Office reception staff, with refresher training being provided as required. TTY inquiries will receive the same high level of service as regular telephone calls.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Training for new reception staff on the use of TTY equipment is scheduled for November 2008. Refresher training was available to staff throughout the year, as required.

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former MIA had access to a functioning TTY line at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT). An informal MIA survey was conducted to assess whether or not the TTY line was sufficient to meet caller needs. The survey results indicated that the best course of action was to continue to use the existing TTY line at the MEDT. If the volume of external calls had increased, the installation of additional TTY lines would have been considered.

Similarly, the former DRS maintained two functioning TTY lines for the use of callers with speech/hearing disabilities.

Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of overall Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Information technology services used by the Premier's Office and Cabinet Office will continue to be monitored for possible accessibility issues and timely solutions will be provided where practicable.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will continue to work with Information Technology Systems and Services (Central Agencies Information & Information Technology Cluster) to monitor accessibility issues relating to information technology products and services, and look for future opportunities to leverage cluster resources to ensure that Cabinet Office is made aware of any new technologies, and that appropriate IT solutions are provided, as required.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Any accessibility issues arising from the wide range of information technology products and services used by staff in the Premier's Office and Cabinet Office were monitored through the IT Helpdesk. Timely support and effective resolution was provided to staff, as required.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

NEW

Focus Area: Built Environment**Impact:** Program, Service**Commitment:** New

Cabinet Office's accommodations planning process will include a specific implementation strategy to provide for barrier-free design for new and existing staff, and measures to eliminate identified accessibility issues.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will ensure that future accommodations planning activities include a specific strategy to identify and address any barrier-free design issues for new and existing staff. The Ontario Realty Corporation's (ORC) Master Plan for the Whitney Block will include accessibility considerations. In addition, the ORC is undertaking a review of select Ontario government buildings for accessibility compliance. Upon its completion, Cabinet Office will collaborate with the ORC and other tenant ministries as applicable, to champion activities resulting from the outcome of the review.

Implementation Timeframe: 2008 – 2009**Results Achieved:**

To be reported in the 2009 – 2010 Accessibility Plan.

*ONGOING***Focus Area:** Built Environment**Impact:** Program, Service**Commitment:** Ongoing

Cabinet Office, working with the Whitney Block Users' Committee and in cooperation with property management and the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC), will continue to champion the implementation of any feasible infrastructure improvements to address accessibility issues.

Planned Action(s):

Final design of an accessible entrance ramp for the Whitney Block is currently in progress and is expected to be completed in 2008. Ramp construction is targeted for completion in summer of 2009.

Implementation Timeframe: 2006 to Summer 2009**Results Achieved:****ENTRANCE RAMP**

Environmental assessment for the proposed entrance ramp has been completed. Ramp design is in progress. The project is progressing on schedule.

Previous activities: As reported in the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office Accessibility Plan 2006 – 2007, the Whitney Block Users' Committee had initiated a request for facilities management and the ORC to investigate the feasibility of installing an entrance ramp for the Whitney Block. Preliminary site analysis and initial design options were prepared by a consultant. In spring 2007, the ORC confirmed its intent to proceed with the development of the final ramp design, and the initiation of the required environmental assessment in 2007 – 2008.

VISUAL/AUDIBLE ALARMS

Installation of visual/audible evacuation alarms within the Whitney Block was completed in 2008.

Focus Area: Built Environment**Impact:** Program, Service**Commitment:** Ongoing

As part of its multi-year facilities/accommodations strategy, Cabinet Office will continue to work with the Ontario Realty Corporation to remove physical barriers from entryways by replacing existing round doorknobs with lever-style doorknobs throughout Premier's Office and Cabinet Office locations. Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) had also made commitments to remove physical barriers in their workspaces.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will continue to install lever-style doorknobs to replace round doorknobs in Premier's Office and Cabinet Office worksites over the current year.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing**Results Achieved:**

The first phase of the Cabinet Office project was completed in fiscal year 2008 – 2009, with all round doorknobs on Cabinet Office program suite entrances and boardrooms replaced with levers. In addition, automatic door openers were installed at the entrances of designated suites to facilitate access.

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former MIAs Accessibility Planning Team reviewed all priorities identified in phase two of its multi-year remedial action plan to remove existing barriers identified in

the 2003 – 2004 audit of ministry physical space, recommended specific priorities to be addressed in 2005 – 2006 and implemented necessary action as appropriate. (Phase one covered the period 2004 – 2005. Phase two began in 2005 – 2006 and continued for a maximum of three years to 2007 – 2008.)

MIA undertook to replace all round door knobs with lever door knobs. In addition, an automatic door opening mechanism was installed in the one entrance door to the ministry that did not have one previously. No new barriers were identified.

DRS identified the lack of visible exit signs within their work location as an accessibility issue. Working with facilities management, an external service provider was employed to investigate and install the necessary signs. Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of overall Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The Premier's Office and Cabinet Office, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) had all committed to the implementation of the Ontario Realty Corporation's Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities, as applicable, so that all building and renovation projects are brought into compliance with Ontario Building Code requirements for people with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will ensure that all accommodations projects relating to Premier's Office and Cabinet Office worksites meet all pertinent requirements of the Ontario Realty Corporation's Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities. In addition, any facilities planning studies undertaken for its office locations will include the identification of possible barriers to people with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Renovations and building maintenance work carried out for Premier's Office, Cabinet Office, the former MIA and the former DRS followed the provisions of the Ontario Realty Corporation's Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities. All staff space reconfigurations were planned in accordance with barrier-free principles.

Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of overall Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

COMPLETED

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Completed

As a component of the comprehensive Whitney Block upgrades project, an Elevator Voice Annunciation system will be installed in Whitney Block elevators.

Implementation Timeframe: 2007 – 2008

Results Achieved:

Work on the installation of a voice annunciation system in Whitney Block elevators proceeded during 2006 – 2007 as one of a number of initiatives within the larger Whitney Block upgrades project. Installation of the voice annunciation system was completed in 2008 – 2009.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Completed

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) committed to ensuring that all events were held in barrier-free venues, reviewing facilities to identify areas that restricted access to people with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: 2007 – March 2008

Results Achieved:

The locations and set-ups for events/meetings were monitored by the DRS ODA Lead.

Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of overall Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYEE ACCOMMODATION**Focus Area:** Employment**Impact:** Policy, Program, Service**Commitment:** Ongoing

The Cabinet Office Human Resources Plan will reflect the organization's commitment to support the needs of all employees, including staff with disabilities, through various means such as flexible working arrangements. Cabinet Office will also continue to assess and accommodate the employment-related accessibility needs of staff upon request, including by means of ergonomic assessment.

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) had also made commitments to ensure employee accommodation. Further, the two organizations also committed to preventing physical or communications barriers for their staff.

Planned Action(s):

Completion of the Cabinet Office Human Resources Plan and ongoing accommodation of employment-related accessibility needs of staff upon request.

Implementation Timeframe: 2007 – 2009**Results Achieved:**

A Cabinet Office Human Resources Plan is currently in development, which will include a framework for employee accommodation in the workplace. The original timeframe for the plan was extended in order to incorporate any relevant findings from an organization-wide corporate services review that was initiated while planning was in progress. Cabinet Office's Human Resources Plan is targeted for completion by the end of 2009 and will be in alignment with the findings of the corporate services review and the principles of the overarching OPS Human Resources Plan. Various flexible work arrangements are available for Cabinet Office staff, keeping in mind operational requirements and the necessity to cover core business hours. The employment-related accessibility needs of Cabinet Office staff were assessed and accommodated upon request, including ergonomic assessments. Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, human resources services for the MIA and DRS were provided by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT). The former MIA and the former DRS worked with MEDT Human Resources to support the needs of all employees, including staff with disabilities. Measures included ergonomic assessments, flexible working arrangements, and ongoing support for work-related accommodation measures, upon request. In addition, an ODA survey was circulated to former DRS staff with the aim of ensuring all identified needs were being met.

Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of overall Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT**Focus Area:** Employment**Impact:** Policy, Program, Service**Commitment:** Ongoing

The Premier's Office and Cabinet Office, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) had committed to maintaining an employee recruitment process that was fair and barrier-free, with appropriate accommodations measures being put in place for candidates upon request.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office Human Resources will continue to monitor job competitions within the organization to ensure that no barriers are inadvertently introduced into the process. Employment candidates will continue to receive appropriate accommodation upon request.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing**Results Achieved:**

Cabinet Office Human Resources and their counterparts at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (which provided human resources services to the former MIA and the former DRS prior to integration with Cabinet Office) ensured that all job competitions were undertaken in accordance with OPS protocols with respect to accessibility. Appropriate accommodation measures were available to employment candidates upon request. The recruitment process was monitored to ensure that it remained fair and barrier-free, with no obstacles to accessibility being introduced inadvertently.

INFORMATION TO EMPLOYEES**Focus Area:** Employment

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

New employees of the Premier's Office and Cabinet Office will be made aware through their general orientation package that employment-related accessibility measures are available for people with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Accessibility information for employees is included in orientation packages provided to all staff when they attend their human resources documentation sessions. Cabinet Office staff are also encouraged to visit the Cabinet Office Intranet site for useful workplace resources, including a wide range of information on accessibility.

INFORMATION TO MANAGERS

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The Premier's Office and Cabinet Office, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) had committed to support managers at all levels to understand and appropriately address the accommodation needs of their staff.

Planned Action(s):

All new managers will be reminded to take the Ministry of Government Services' Centre for Learning and Leadership e-course "ODA: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities", mandatory training for OPS managers.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

The requirement for Cabinet Office managers to take "ODA: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities" was highlighted in corporate service newsletters and raised at various management meetings. Awareness of the new corporate Employment Accommodation and Return to Work Operating Policy was promoted among managers and staff in the Premier's Office and Cabinet Office by sharing information at senior Cabinet Office management meetings and with key management in the Premier's Office. General staff awareness was also raised through information in Cabinet Office's corporate services newsletters and postings on the Cabinet Office Intranet site.

As standard practice, all new managers joining the former MIA prior to integration with Cabinet Office were encouraged to complete on-line training on accessibility issues. No new managers had joined MIA in the last year. In 2006 – 2007, three new managers and supervisors joined the ministry. All three completed the Ontario government's on-line accessibility training component.

Further reporting on accessibility training for managers will take place as part of overall Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

OTHER AREAS

NEW

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Policy, Program, Service

Commitment: New

A comprehensive new OPS Service Directive came into effect January 1, 2008. A strategic planning framework will be developed to ensure that Cabinet Office's accessibility planning activities support and align with the requirements of the new OPS Service Directive.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will review its existing accessibility planning process, planned commitments and achievements to date in light of the provisions of the new OPS Service Directive. Cabinet Office will identify linkages and develop a coordinated strategy to ensure that, going forward, accessibility planning activities support and are consistent with the requirements set out in the new directive.

Implementation Timeframe: 2008 – 2009

Results Achieved:

To be reported in the 2009 – 2010 Accessibility Plan.

ONGOING

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Act, Regulation, Policy

Commitment: Ongoing

As part of its regular analysis of Cabinet submissions, Cabinet Office will continue to include considerations, where appropriate, of implications for persons with disabilities and of how the proposed initiative would further the government's goal of a fully accessible Ontario by 2025.

Planned Action(s):

The analysis of Cabinet submissions is ongoing. The potential impact of the proposals on persons with disabilities will continue to be an important consideration in the review process. Training on writing submissions is offered through the Ministry of Government Services' Centre for Leadership and Learning approximately every 3-4 months.

Implementation Timeframe: Complete for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Cabinet Office policy advisors discussed accessibility issues with ministries in the course of providing guidance during the Cabinet submission process. Further, as part of a new OPS-wide training course on how to write Cabinet submissions, Cabinet Office advisors instructed ministry staff to consider implications for persons with disabilities when completing Cabinet submissions. The first training course was offered April 23, 2008.

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Act, Regulation, Policy

Commitment: Ongoing

Cabinet Office policy staff will help implement the accessibility standards development process by supporting inter-ministerial initiatives to assist with the continuing implementation of standards.

Planned Action(s):

Participation in inter-ministerial initiatives is ongoing.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Cabinet Office policy staff actively participated in inter-ministerial initiatives to support implementation of the accessibility standards, including reviewing and providing input into the OPS Accessibility Lens tool for policy and program development in June 2008. Cabinet Office policy staff also provided support to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in amending the standards development process in winter 2007 – 2008, as committed to by the government during the 2007 election.

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Cabinet Office and the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) committed to ensuring that all procurement activities would be consistent with the accessibility provisions of OPS corporate directives, guidelines and processes.

Planned Action(s):

Accessibility requirements in OPS corporate directives, guidelines and processes (e.g. Guidelines for Procurement of Accessible Goods and Services under the ODA) will continue to be a standard component of Cabinet Office's regular procurement practices. Staff will also continue to keep current on new corporate accessibility requirements for procurement.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Accessibility considerations were included in all Cabinet Office and former MIA procurement activities in accordance with corporate directives, guidelines and processes (e.g. Guidelines for Procurement of Accessible Goods and Services under the ODA), which provide for the requirements of persons with disabilities in the purchase of goods or services. Any new developments regarding accessibility in the procurement process were shared among the finance staff of Cabinet Office and the former MIA in a timely manner.

Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of overall Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Cabinet Office will continue to make every effort to ensure that funding is available (through corporate funds or internal reallocation) to address accessibility initiatives within the organization.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office Finance staff will keep apprised of all corporate funding resources available to ministries for accessibility initiatives in order to provide Premier's and Cabinet Office personnel with appropriate advice in accessibility planning. Expenditures relating to accessibility initiatives, barrier-removal and employee accommodation will be processed in a timely manner to ensure that there are no delays in meeting accessibility objectives.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Cabinet Office Finance staff provided advice on accessibility impacts relating to purchasing activities as required. Financial transactions arising from employee accommodation and/or barrier-removal were processed expeditiously.

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Emergency evacuation sessions for Whitney Block wardens and back-ups will continue to include emergency procedures for staff/visitors with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

Cabinet Office will coordinate an annual evacuation warden training session for all Whitney Block wardens and their back-ups (wardens are drawn from all co-located ministries in Whitney Block). The session will include emergency procedures for people needing assistance to evacuate.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Evacuation warden training, including emergency procedures for staff/visitors with disabilities, was provided to Whitney Block wardens and their back-ups in 2008. Staff who need assistance to evacuate were reminded to self-identify to their managers so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place.

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Accessibility factors and issues affecting people with disabilities will continue to form an integral component of emergency management planning for the Premier's Office and Cabinet Office.

Planned Action(s):

The annual update and development of the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office Business Continuity Plan will include a review of existing accessibility provisions and enhancements as appropriate.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

The Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities (joint publication of Emergency Management Ontario and the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario) were incorporated into the 2007 – 2008 Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office Business Continuity Plan (part of comprehensive evacuation procedures for Premier's Office and Cabinet Office staff). The Emergency Preparedness Guide was also made available to staff on the Cabinet Office Intranet site.

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

To ensure that staff are well prepared to support the government's efforts toward an inclusive, fully accessible Ontario, the Premier's Office and Cabinet Office, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) (prior to integration with Cabinet Office) all committed to ongoing promotion of accessibility awareness in the workplace.

Planned Action(s):

Information will be shared through various means, including Intranet site postings, newsletters, broadcast emails, information sessions, etc. Staff will be encouraged to take the accessibility e-courses offered by the Ministry of Government Services' Centre for Leadership and Learning (through the OPS Intranet site MyOPS).

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

Information on accessibility was available to employees through the Cabinet Office Intranet Employee Portal. Staff were encouraged to attend the 2008 Accessibility Expo to learn more about the progress that is being made in improving accessibility in the workplace and in the community.

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, MIA enlisted the assistance of the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario to present its annual in-house information session about accessibility issues as part of its popular monthly Lunch and Learn series. The January 2007 session was attended by approximately 40 ministry staff (57% of MIA staff).

Regular updates regarding accessibility news and events were provided by the DRS ODA Lead at branch meetings.

Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of overall Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Policy, Program, Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Barriers to accessibility in the workplace will continue to be identified by the Cabinet Office Accessibility Planning Group and addressed through the appropriate forum. The group will also monitor the implementation of this plan and report back to senior management. All major program areas within Cabinet Office will continue to be represented in the planning group.

Prior to integration with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008, the former Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) and the former Democratic Renewal Secretariat (DRS) made similar commitments for maintaining accessibility planning groups that worked collaboratively, kept senior management informed of accessibility issues, and whose membership was representative of areas across their organizations.

Planned Action(s):

The Cabinet Office Accessibility Planning Group will continue to participate in the annual planning process to develop the annual ministry accessibility plan. Planning group members will keep senior management apprised of the progress made on plan commitments throughout the year.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2007 – 2008 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

The 2007 – 2008 Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office Accessibility Plan was developed through the collaborative efforts of the Cabinet Office Accessibility Planning Group. The plan was released to the public as required by legislation and in accordance with corporate timelines on September 6, 2007.

Beginning 2008 – 09, membership in the Cabinet Office Accessibility Planning Group was expanded to include representation from the former MIA and the former DRS (which integrated with Cabinet Office on April 1, 2008). Prior to integration, the former MIA Accessibility Planning Team was comprised of staff from different parts of the ministry. The planning team was expanded in October 2005 by including the ministry's Corporate Projects Coordinator and a second representative from MIA Communications Branch.

Going forward, further results achieved will be reported as part of Premier's Office and Cabinet Office accessibility planning.

COMPLETED

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Act, Regulation

Commitment: Completed

The Democratic Renewal Secretariat will ensure that the acts and regulations falling under its responsibility contain the appropriate use of language with respect to barriers for people with disabilities as part of its business process.

Implementation Timeframe: 2007 – March 2008

Results Achieved:

All acts and regulations were reviewed by legal counsel and were found to be compliant.

For More Information

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

Please phone:

Office of the Director

Corporate Planning and Services Branch

Room 3540, Whitney Block

99 Wellesley Street West

Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1

General inquiry number: 416 325-7635

TTY number: 416 314-5721

E-mail: odapublicinquiries@ontario.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.

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