

Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA)

Treasury Board Secretariat

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Dedicated to advancing accessibility in the public service

Presentation by Stephanie Austin – April, 2021

Government Priorities

The Government of Canada has committed to removing barriers for Canadians with disabilities and advancing accessibility for all Canadians.

Recent key federal actions have included, among others:



Legislation:

- Accessible Canada Act (ACA)
- Forthcoming regulations under the ACA

Machinery:

- Accessibility Standards Canada
- Office of Disability Inclusion & Accessible Canada Directorate (ESDC)
- Office of Public Service Accessibility (TBS)
- Accessibility Commissioner (CHRC)

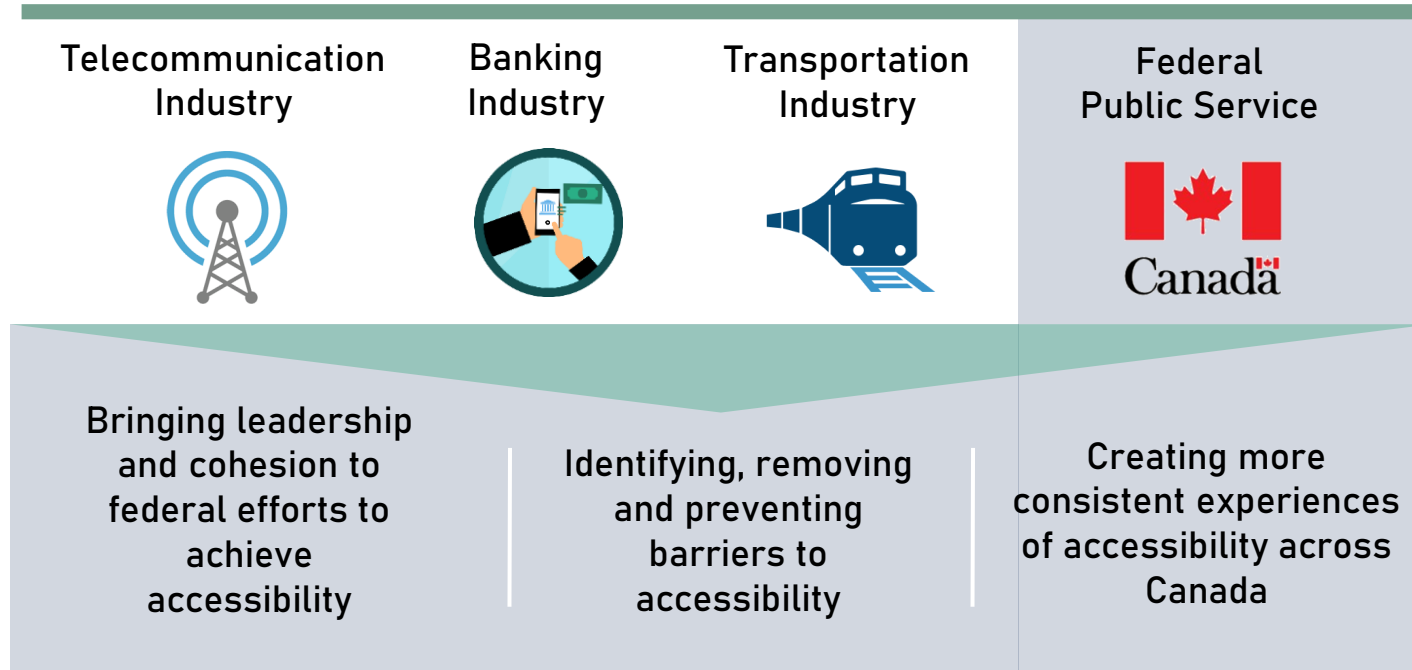
Leadership:

- Minister of Employment, Workforce Development & Disability Inclusion (ESDC)
- DM of Public Service Accessibility (TBS)

Accessible Canada Act (ACA) - 2019

The Act puts into force the development on new accessibility standards and regulations aimed at creating a barrier-free Canada for persons with disabilities.

▼ Summary:



▼ Key Features:

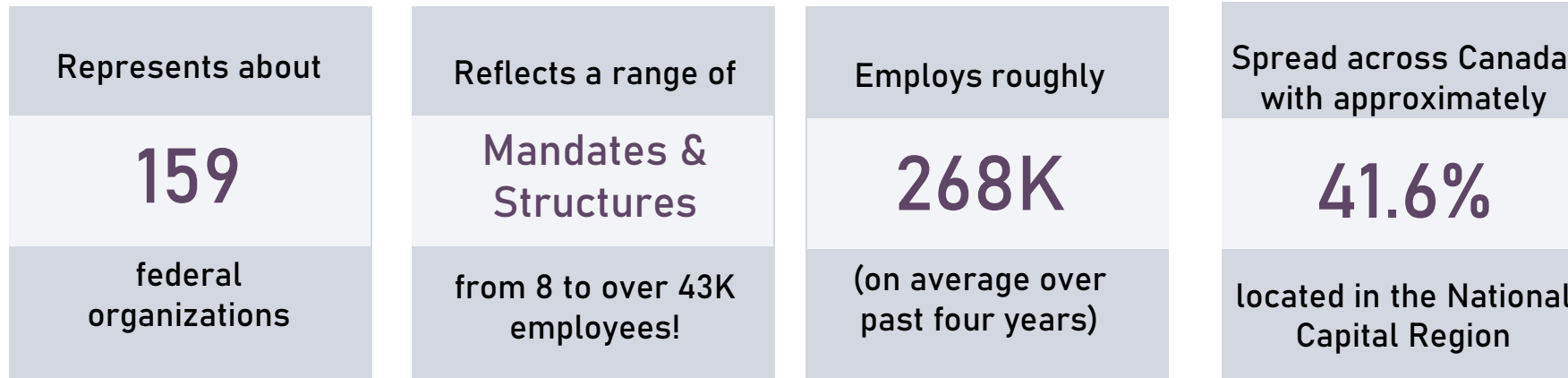
All federally-regulated sectors under the Act will need to:

- ✓ Prepare and publish accessibility plans
- ✓ Set up a feedback process
- ✓ Prepare and publish progress reports

Regulations laying out these details are under development.

Government of Canada as an Employer

The Act applies to the Government of Canada, as the employer of the federal Public Service. Its workforce is large, complex, and decentralized.






- Deputy Heads of the various organizations have extensive delegated authorities and accountabilities (e.g., financial, HR, IT and facilities)

Government of Canada as a Service Provider

The Act also applies to the Government of Canada as a service provider to Canadians across all touch-points (e.g., phone, in-person, online etc.)







- Examples of service volume:

+56.4M Phone Calls	1-800-0-CANADA, call center agents, self-service interactive voice response systems, Passport Call Centre, CRA	
+ 24M In-Person Client Services	Services Canada Centres and sites, Passport Office	
+ 225M Online Visits / Services	Includes visits to Canada.ca, MyService Canada Account, filled taxes online or through autofill functions	

Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA)

The Government established the Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA) to help provide leadership and prepare the public service to meet the requirements of the ACA.

Since 2018, OPSA has provided leadership in accessibility by:

-  Creating an Accessibility Strategy & Progress Report
-  Managing a Centralized Enabling Workplace Fund
-  Launching early pilots (Passport, Self-assessment tool)
-  Measuring progress and results in public service accessibility
-  Organizing outreach and engagement events
-  Establishing governance and community building



Nothing Without Us: An Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada

- The Accessibility Strategy has five goals:
 - 1 Improving recruitment, retention, and promotion of persons with disabilities
 - 2 Enhancing the accessibility of the built environment
 - 3 Making ICT usable by all
 - 4 Equipping public servants to design and deliver accessible programs and services
 - 5 Building an accessibility confident public service

First progress report: December 2020 (see Canada.ca/accessiblegc)

Key actors: TBS (OPSA, OCHRO, OCIO), SSC, PSPC, CPCS, PSC, ESDC

Governance: DM & ADM Accessibility Groups, 5 technical WGs



Centralized Enabling Workplace Fund (CEWF)

One of OPSA's core functions is to manage a Fund (\$10M over 5 years) that helps improve workplace accommodation practices and reduce barriers.

- Objective: improve workplace accommodation practices, reduce barriers that contribute to the need for individual accommodations.
- Funding Supports: pilot tools & guidance, improvements to existing practices and experimentation with innovative accommodation solutions that can be scaled across GC.

Examples of Funded Initiatives:

Lending Library

Pilot Accessibility
Passport for
Employees

Benchmarking
Study on
Accommodation
Practices

Organizational
Self-Assessment
Tool

Accessibility Hub

Accessible
Templates and
other resources



Employees

Managers

Leaders in
Policy

Senior
Leaders

Your Role: What can you do to improve accessibility?

Advancing accessibility involves us all.

Small actions you can take today:



- Be an ally for persons with disabilities in your own organization
- Recognize your own unconscious biases and learn through tools, training
- Challenge yourself to be inclusive from the start in all of your work

Lead by example...



- Ensure your team is trained on communicating accessibly
- Ask, listen, and take action to provide workplace accommodations
- Address stigma and take concrete steps to make your team inclusive for all
- Set targets & expectations for teams to integrate accessibility



- Review your approaches and practices related to accessibility (consult; codevelop)
- Build in accessibility from the start in every stage of your policy modernization
- Engage with persons with disabilities and incorporate their feedback



- Lead by example to help support culture change on accessibility
- Set targets & expectations for teams to integrate accessibility
- Commit to measurable change for disability inclusion

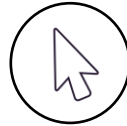
Connect with OPSA

Access tools and resources, share questions, and engage through our events!



Email

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Website

www.Canada.ca/accessiblegc



DM Twitter

[@yazminelaroche](https://twitter.com/yazminelaroche)



GCPedia (Accessibility Hub)

www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/OPSA/BAFP