



Accessibility Plan and Feedback Process 2023- 2026

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Voyageur Aviation Accessibility Plan

2023-2026

Corporate Human Resources

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Message from the President

On July 11, 2019, the Government of Canada enacted Bill C-81. The Act recognizes accessibility as a human right and sets a goal of a barrier-free Canada by 2040. The Act establishes a framework for preventing and removing barriers in the built environment, employment, transportation, information and communication, and goods and services.

Our parent corporation, Chorus Aviation, is committed to creating and fostering a culture of accessibility across the group of companies by leading this change, working alongside the subsidiaries, employees, and community members across the country to make it happen. In 2022, with participation throughout the group of companies, Chorus established accessibility working groups, held listening forums, and conducted employee surveys to help identify existing barriers and potential solutions. Through this work we have developed a Plan that is informed and proactive, a process that is inclusive and open to receive and incorporate feedback, as well as transparent oversight and reporting commitments.

I am pleased to share the progress Voyageur Aviation has made, as of June 1st, 2024, on our first 3-year Accessibility Plan – a roadmap for creating a more inclusive and accessible workplace. It is consistent with our commitment to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

This plan identifies goals and specific actions to be taken over the next three years. It is a living document that will continue to evolve as we learn how to ensure our work environments are inclusive and barrier-free. In this first plan, many of the actions focus on activities and items that will embed accessibility into our daily operations and organizational culture.

As we continue implementing actions identified in the plan, we remain committed to gathering feedback to learn, improve and update our Plan. On an annual basis over the next three years as this first Accessibility Plan is implemented, we will ensure our progress is shared.

Achieving a fully accessible organization by 2040 is not just a legal requirement; it's the right thing to do. We will continue to work together to ensure that our workplace culture is one that supports and empowers all employees to reach their full potential in a work environment that is welcoming and supportive.

Sincerely,

Cory Cousineau,
President
Voyageur Aviation Corporation.

General

Brief overview of Voyageur Aviation

Voyageur Aviation Corp. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Chorus Aviation Inc., head quartered in North Bay, Ontario, with approximately 350 employees. Voyageur is a leading provider of specialized aviation services including:

- specialty air charter,
- contract flying services,
- aircraft modification and MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) services,
- aeronautical parts and provisioning, and
- in-service support, for customers around the world.

Air charter and contract flying services are comprised of medical, logistical and humanitarian flights for governmental agencies and organizations, and NGOs (non-governmental organisation) such as the United Nations and World Food Program. Aircraft modification, MRO services, the provisioning and sale of aircraft parts, base inventory (BI) management services, component repair and overhaul, supports regional airlines, aircraft leasing companies, cargo and speciality operators, NGOs, governments, and other aviation related companies through out the world.

Voyageur Aviation delivers innovative solutions to customers with unique aviation requirements and operates under the core principles of comprehensive safety management, quality assurance, and client-dedicated solutions.

The Accessibility Act and Regulations

For federally regulated organizations the [Accessible Canada Act](#) was legislated in 2019 with the intent to achieve a barrier-free Canada by January 1, 2040. The Act benefits all Canadians, especially persons with disabilities, by proactively identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility in eight priority areas:

1. employment
2. the built environment (buildings and public spaces)
3. information and communication technologies and communication (ICT)
4. communication (other than ICT)
5. the procurement of goods, services, and facilities
6. the design and delivery of programs and services, and
7. transportation
8. the provisions of CTA accessibility-regulated regulations

The Act is to be implemented in recognition of, and in accordance with, the following principles:

- everyone must be treated with dignity,

- everyone must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the life they are able and wish to have,
- everyone must be able to participate fully and equally in society,
- everyone must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire,
- laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must take into account the ways that different kinds of barriers and discrimination intersect,
- persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures, and
- accessibility standards and regulations must be made with the goal of achieving the highest level of accessibility.

The ACA defines what constitutes a '[barrier](#)'. The legislation also defines what constitutes a '[disability](#)'.

The ACA tasks federally regulated entities with three important requirements to support accessibility:

- Create three-year accessibility plans, in consultation with persons with disabilities, that set out how they will identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility.
- Publish annual progress reports that describe how organizations are delivering upon their accessibility plans.
- Implement processes to collect, manage, and respond to feedback on accessibility, including accessibility plans and progress report.

The ACA gives the authority to create and enforce accessibility regulations. The ACA also establishes a framework for advancing accessibility through a combination of new and existing organizations and positions that administer and enforce the ACA and monitor outcomes.

A [summary of the Accessible Canada Act](#) is available online.

The [Accessible Canada Regulations](#) operationalize the ACA's accessibility planning and reporting requirements.

Accessibility Statement

Voyageur Aviation (VA) is committed to the intent of the ACA of making Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040. Through this initial, as well as successive, Accessibility Plans, VA will; identify, remove and prevent barriers. We will work alongside our employees, accessibility working groups, community members and partners to create and implement these plans. We are committed to creating and supporting inclusive, barrier-free, working environments to increase participation of persons with disabilities.

Feedback on the Voyager Aviation Accessibility Plan

To obtain a copy of Voyager Aviation's Accessibility Plan, Feedback Process and/or Progress Report in an alternate format, or to provide feedback on accessibility at Voyager Aviation, please contact the Disability Management and Attendance Specialist.

Mail:

Disability Management and Attendance Specialist

1500 Airport Road
North Bay, Ontario
P1B 8G2 CANADA

Telephone:

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Telephone: Human Resources: 705-476-1750

Email:

disabilitymanagement@voyav.com

Voyager Aviation commits to providing our accessibility plan in the following formats within 15 days of a request:

- **Print**
- **Large print** (increased font size and clarity)
- **Braille** (a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers)
- **Audio** (a recording of someone reading the text out loud)
- **Electronic** (an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that is intended to assist persons with disabilities)

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting to employees and the public will be on an annual cycle, as required under the ACA. Reporting will include an annual progress report to review achievements, revisions to the Accessibility Plan, as well as to report Plan feedback both from within and outside the organization.

The HR Group will coordinate the monitoring and reporting process and lead the development of the annual progress report. VA executives and managers will work with the HR group on these activities.

Monitoring and reporting will be informed by consultations with:

- Accessibility Working Group.
- Employee Resource Group

- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee
- External partners, as required.

Decision-making in relation to annual reporting resides with the President of Voyageur Aviation.

Consultations

The development of VA's Accessibility Plan is based information and findings from internal and external consultations.

The consultation process was designed and facilitated by Chorus' Human Resources team for the Chorus group of companies. This team worked with community members, FETCO¹, People Access², employees & persons with disabilities to identify barriers to accessibility in the work environments of the Chorus group of companies. The process included virtual group discussions, phone interviews, online questionnaires, and phone and email submissions. The consultations took place from April – December 2022.

Through the consultation process, participants identified:

- Potential accessible barriers for hiring and onboarding, physical workspaces, communications, training, technology, digital access, and document handling.
- Potential solutions to the identified barriers, challenges and financial impacts.
- Short term and long term actions in priority area.

Voyageur Aviation Action in Priority Areas

Organization Culture

Goal 1 – Create a culture of accessibility, where respect and inclusion are embedded in all aspects of the workplace and where all employees are empowered and supported to achieve their full potential.

Action 1.1: Provide accessibility learning opportunities to employees as well as identify recommended and mandatory accessibility training in VA's learning matrix.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources

Timeline: 2023-2025, and ongoing

Action 1.2: Create an accessibility forum available to all employees to raise concerns, provide feedback, consultations, and share lived experiences.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources

Timeline: 2023-2024

¹ Federally Regulated Employers-Transportation and Communication (FETCO) association.

² People Access is a division of Excellence Canada (formally the National Quality Institute).

Employment

Biases and barriers in the recruitment process leads to persons with disabilities to be underrepresented in our workforce as well as limit the full participation of all employees.

Goal 2 - Implement accessible practices to eliminate and prevent barriers to the recruitment, retention, and promotion of persons with disabilities.

Action 2.1: Ensure recruitment and onboarding processes and documents are fully accessible and supports are clearly communicated.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources

Timeline: 2023-2024, ongoing

Action 2.2: Provide training to all hiring managers to ensure an inclusive and barrier-free recruitment and onboarding experience for all candidates.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources

Timeline: 2025, ongoing

Action 2.3: Review group benefits to identify gaps and shortfalls for persons with disabilities.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources with

Timeline: 2025

Action 2.4: Complete and review the findings of the Employment System Review of internal policies and practices to identify systemic and attitudinal barriers towards persons with persons with disabilities.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources with Chorus HR.

Timeline: 2025

Action 2.5: Develop and promote fully inclusive talent management programs to ensure participation of all employees.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources

Timeline: 2025-2026

Built Environment

Our physical workspaces meet all building codes; however, these standards do not mean offices are accessible. For example, not all doors are equipped with automatic door openers.

Goal 3 -Create a workspace free of physical barriers to improve the working environment for all VA employees and visitors.

Action 3.1: Revise Voyageur's Building Condition Assessments (BCA) to incorporate a11y findings and recommendations of Built Environment Action Plan.

Lead: Corporate Services - Facilities

Timeline: 2023-2024, ongoing.

Action 3.2: Replace low lumines incandescent lighting noise-making light ballasts with silent LEG lights in Hangars 5 & 6 to reduce eyestrain and noise.

Lead: Corporate Services - Facilities

Timeline: 2023-2024, ongoing.

Action 3.3: Install automatic door openers on specific external and internal doors to facilitate barrier-free travel throughout the North Bay hangar facilities.

Lead: Corporate Services – Facilities

Timeline: 2024-2025

Action 3.4: Identify locations for and create accessible work stations/office(s)/cubicles, including ones with access to natural light.

Lead: Corporate Services – Facilities with HR

Timeline: 2024-2025

Action 3.5: Identify a location and develop a design for a quiet/safe space, with dimmable lights across to support multi-faith practice and provide a low sensory environment.

Lead: Corporate Services – Facilities with HR

Timeline: 2024-2025

Goal 4 - Ensure all employees have a safe environment to work in.

Action 4.1: Ensure that smoke, fire and other emergency alarms have visual as well as auditory alerts.

Lead: Corporate Services – Facilities

Timeline: 2023-2024

Action 4.2 Modify emergency exits from Hangar 5 (airside) and H1 (parking lot side) to make fully accessible.

Lead: Corporate Services – Facilities

Timeline: 2024-2025

Action 4.3: Add external lighting to illuminate building evacuation collection zone to improve safety at night.

Lead: Corporate Services – Facilities

Timeline: 2023-2024

Action 4.4: Integrate an accessibility lens in the investigation of identification of occupational safety and health safety issues.

Lead: SMRS and Corporate Services – HR

Timeline: 2023-2024

Action 4.5: Review and update all safety and emergency procedures to ensure they are barrier-free and support persons with disabilities.

Lead: SMRS and Corporate Services – HR

Timeline: 2023-2025, ongoing.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The accessibility of the information and communication technology hardware and software has not been assessed and optimized consistently across the organization.

Goal 5 – Provide accessible technology to ensure all staff have access tools and platforms needed to perform work.

Action 5.1: Create an IT procurement checklist to ensure software and devices purchased meet accessibility requirements.

Lead: Corporate Services – IT

Timeline: 2023-2024

Action 5.2: Assess the accessibility of current software and devices to identify barriers.

Lead: Corporate Services – IT

Timeline: 2023-2024

Goal 6 – Existing technology is optimized and/or updated to improve accessibility. New technology and digital systems meet accessibility requirements.

Action 6.1: IT employees are trained on how to use, implement and support assistive/adaptive technologies and accessibility capabilities of the IT operating systems.

Lead: Corporate Services – IT and Human Resources.

Timeline: 2023-2024, and ongoing.

Notes: A formal training guide outlining accessibility features will be developed.

Action 6.2: Same as action 5.2 above.

Lead: Corporate Services – IT

Timeline: 2023-2024

Goal 7 – Websites, web-tools and templates meet technical and functional accessibility requirements for all users.

Action 7.1 – Complete comprehensive review of exiting digital systems to identify and remove accessibility barriers and to ensure all information platforms are compatible with current adaptive technology.

Lead: Corporate Services – IT and Human Resources.

Timeline: 2024

Communications other than ICT

We need to communicate in ways that make our messages inclusive for all. Sometimes we fail to use plain language in our communications, and we do not consistently consider barriers to accessibility when choosing spaces and venues for meetings and gatherings.

Goal 8 – Information is fully accessible: communication systems, processes, products and services are designed and implemented in accordance with accessibility standards, are inclusive and respectful of persons with disabilities.

Action 8.1: Develop a reference guide for accessible and inclusive communication.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources.

Timeline: 2023-2024.

Action 8.2: Provide accessible communication training to employees engaged in disseminating information.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources.

Timeline: 2024-2025.

Action 8.3: Provide guidance, promote and socialize best practices for events, gatherings and group communications.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources.

Timeline: 2023-2024.

Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

The design and delivery of programs and services at Voyageur are not consistently informed by persons with disabilities and relevant accessibility best practices are not consistently considered and incorporated.

Goal 9 -Develop and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and services to ensure an optimal user experience.

Action 9.1: Develop a process to ensure persons with disabilities are consulted, and accessibility best practices are considered and where possible in the design and delivery of programs and services.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources.

Timeline: 2023-2024.

Procurement of products and services and facilities

The procurement of barrier-free products and services, including adaptive and assistive technologies and devices, is done on a case-by-case basis. This potentially introduces too much variation in the accessibility of products and services and it's difficult to consistently apply relevant procurement best practices.

Goal 10 – Accessibility is a key consideration when procuring products and services for employees.

Action 10.1: Identify and list products and services with accessibility requirements.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources.

Timeline: 2023-2024, and ongoing.

Action 10.2: Develop a reference guide and a checklist for Accessibility requirements and considerations for products and services that need to be barrier free.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources.

Timeline: 2025

Transportation

Goal 11 – Create a seamless and respectful boarding process for passengers with disabilities, ensuring they can board and deboard the aircraft safely, comfortably, and with dignity.

Action 11.1: Improve the ease and comfort of mobility for all passengers through airports, ensuring seamless assistance for all passengers, with particular attention to those requiring additional support.

Lead: SRMS (safety and Risk Management System) and Flight Operations.

Timeline: 2025, ongoing.

Action 11.2: Provide training for airport staff on customer service and assistance techniques tailored for passengers with varying needs and on how to assist passengers with mobility needs in a manner that respects privacy and dignity.

Lead: SRMS (Safety and Risk Management System) and Flight Operations

Timeline: 2025, ongoing.

Action 11.3: Create specialized boarding zones at the gate for passengers with disabilities to board first, reducing wait times and stress.

Lead: SRMS (safety and Risk Management System) and Flight Operations.

Timeline: 2025, ongoing.

Action 11.4: Implement a luggage handling policy that ensures passengers with disabilities have priority for storage space in overhead bins.

Lead: SRMS (safety and Risk Management System) and Flight Operations.

Timeline: 2025, ongoing.

Action 11.5: Create a mobility aid handling procedure to ensure that all mobility aids are safely transported, including special packaging if needed.

Lead: SRMS (safety and Risk Management System) and Flight Operations.

Timeline: 2025, ongoing.

Action 11.6: Label and track mobility aids to minimize the risk of loss, ensuring each item is clearly identifiable through the baggage system.

Lead: Flight Operations

Timeline: 2025, ongoing.

Action 11.5: Develop a standardized system for mobility aid storage in the aircraft hold, such as designated compartments or the ability to securely stow items in the cabin for easy access.

Lead: SRMS (safety and Risk Management System) and Flight Operations.

Timeline: 2025, ongoing.

Action 11.6: Implement post-flight assistance for passengers to disembark with ease, ensuring that the same level of care and respect is maintained throughout the journey.

Lead: Flight Operations

Timeline: 2025, ongoing.

Provisions of CTA Accessibility-Related Regulations

Voyageur Aviation is subject to the Personnel Training for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities Regulations (SOR/94-42)

Goal 12 – Ensure that personnel are adequately trained to assist persons with disabilities, promoting accessibility and support in various environments.

Action 12.1: Provide training to staff that covers: The specific needs of persons with disabilities, the appropriate methods and techniques for providing assistance and the rights of persons with disabilities with dignity and respect.

Lead: Corporate Services – Human Resources.

Timeline: 2023-2026, and ongoing.

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| a11y: | Shorthand for “accessibility” as “a” followed by 11 more letters, followed by “y”. |
| AAC: | Accessibility Advisory Committee. |
| Access: | A place that is easily reached, an environment that is easily navigated or a program or service that can easily be obtained. |
| Accessibility: | The combination of aspects that influence a person's ability to function within an environment. |
| Accessible Canada Act: | The Accessible Canada Act is a law passed in 2019 to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040. |
| Accessible Communications: | Benefits all audiences by making information clear, direct, and easy to understand. It takes into consideration the various barriers to accessing information and provides opportunities for feedback. |
| Accommodation: | The personalized adaptation of a workplace to overcome any barriers faced by persons with disabilities. |
| Adaptive Device: | Any tool used to help an individual with a disability perform activities of daily living. |
| Alternative (Alt) Text: | A short text that is used to describe images. |
| ASL: | American Sign Language |
| Assistive Technology: | Any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities. |
| Audible: | Related to hearing or sensing sound. |
| Barrier: | A physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal obstacle, anything that is based on information or communications or resulting from a policy or a practice, that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation. |
| Braille: | A reading and writing system for people who are visually impaired. |
| Built Environment: | The human-made building and spaces that provide us places to live, work and play. Including homes, buildings, streets, sidewalks, open or green spaces, and the supporting infrastructure such as water or energy supply. |

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| Camel Case: | Capitalization of the first letter of each word in a multi-word hashtag. Without Camel Case, hashtags will be read aloud as one long, unintelligible word. |
| Caption: | Captions convey not only the content of the spoken dialogue but also equivalents for non-dialogue audio information needed to understand the program content. It includes sound effects, music, laughter and speaker identification and location. |
| CART: | Communication Access Real-time Translation. |
| Colour Contrast: | The difference in saturation, brightness, and pigment of different elements relative to one another. |
| CSA: | Canadian Standards Association. |
| Communication: | The sharing or receiving of information through verbal or non-verbal ways, including speech or oral communication; writing or graphs, and signs, signals, and behaviours. |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing: | Partial or total inability to hear in one or both ears. |
| Decorative Image: | An image that does not contain information and is used for visual appeal only. Decorative images do not require Alt Text. |
| Disability: | A physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, sensory, learning or communication impairment, or a functional limitation, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that hinders a person's full and equal participation in society. |
| Diversity: | <p>Diversity is how people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented.</p> <p>Chorus Aviation defines diversity broadly to include all aspects of identity. This expanded definition of diversity includes race, religion, gender, disability, personality, learning styles, geography, and functional expertise.</p> |
| Employee Advisory Committee on Accessibility: | The purpose of the advisory committee is to share thoughts on how Public Services and Procurement Canada can remove barriers for departmental employees and how it can support an accessible and inclusive workplace. |
| Employment: | A paid work agreement between an employer and an employee. |
| Equitable/Equity: | A commitment to fairness. Equitable access is different from equal access. Equality means everybody is treated the same. Equity means everybody is treated fairly, based on their needs and abilities. |

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| Inclusion: | The act of recognizing, valuing, and building on differences in identity, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, experiences and perspectives while respecting human rights. |
| Individual Accommodation Plan: | The individual accommodation plan is transferable with the employee throughout their career, whether it is a lateral movement or promotion, within a department or to another department. Transferability eliminates the need for repeated reassessments and renegotiations for support to best perform the job. |
| Infrastructure: | The “underlying structure” that makes a place livable and keeps its systems working (e.g., roads, sewers, clean water, electricity, and more). |
| Information and communications technology: | Technologies that allow access to information through communication. These technologies include all mediums that can be used to record or store information, and broadcast or transmit information through voice, text and video. |
| LSF: | French Sign Language |
| Lived Experience: | Lived experience is personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand (not through technology) involvement in everyday events rather than through examples given by other people. |
| Negative Bias: | A tendency to register negative stimuli more often and to focus on these events. For example, you might be having a great day at work when a co-worker makes an offhand comment that you find irritating. You then find yourself stewing over their words for the rest of the workday. |
| Plain Language: | Language a reader or listener can understand easily and completely. |
| Procurement: | Purchasing or obtaining goods and services. Accessible procurement involves determining what is required for a product or service to be accessible, and either finding ways to procure something that meets those requirements or, documenting why this is not possible and what will be done if an accessible alternative is requested. |
| Program design and delivery: | Removal of barriers that exclude people with a variety of physical and cognitive disabilities. Accessible design specifically considers the needs of people with disabilities. |
| Retrofit: | To add features that were not included in the original design. |
| RHFAC: | Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification. (Learn more at: https://www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible/rating-certification) |

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| Systemic barriers: | A pattern of behaviour inherent in systems, policies, assistive devices, accessible communications, and accessible and utility design that creates or perpetuates disadvantage for persons with disabilities. It also includes individuals believing their identity will not be valued because they don't see it represented in the organization. |
| Transportation: | To go from one place to another, as by car, train, plane, or ship; take a trip or journey. |
| Unconscious Bias: | Favouritism toward or prejudice against people of a particular ethnicity, gender, or social group influences one's actions or perceptions. |
| Vision Impairment: | Also known as blind, low-sighted, or vision loss is a decreased ability to see to the degree that causes problems not fixable by usual means, such as glasses. It also includes those who have a decreased ability to see because they do not have access to glasses or contact lenses. |
| World Wide Web Consortium (W3C): | The World Wide Web Consortium sets web technology standards. |
| Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG): | The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines define how to make web content accessible to persons with disabilities. |

For a complete list of accessibility terms as outlined by the Government of Canada, please visit:

<https://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/publications/accessibilite-accessibility-eng.html>