



2017 PROGRESS REPORT MULTI YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2016-2021

INTRODUCTION

Science North strives to provide goods, services and facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities. Our multi-year Accessibility Plan serves as a road map to help us meet our obligations and remove barriers to accessibility. Science North will report annually on the progress of our plan, will review and update the plan at least once every five years and will ensure the plan is posted on our website and made available in alternative formats upon request.

This document provides an update on the work undertaken in 2017 towards meeting the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). This document responds to section 4(3) (a) of the IASR which requires obligated organizations to prepare an annual status report on the progress achieved on their multi-year accessibility plan.

ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Science North Accessibility Compliance Committee is responsible to develop the Centre's multi-year Accessibility Plan and to ensure the actions set out in the Plan are implemented, working in conjunction with the designated individuals or units responsible to lead each initiative.

On an ongoing basis, the Accessibility Compliance Committee monitors legislative changes to the Act and its regulations, and as required, will incorporate those changes into the Science Centre's Accessibility Plan.

IASR COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES FOR 2017

In 2017 Science North undertook a number of initiatives to respond to the requirements of the IASR. The IASR requirements and the initiatives undertaken to address them are as follows:

PART 1 – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Develop accessibility policies, including a statement of organizational commitment. Make policies publically available.

- ✓ An Accessibility Policy and Statement of Organization Commitment to accessibility is in place. The Statement of Organizational Commitment is imbedded in Science North's multi-year Accessibility Plan.

Develop a multi-year accessibility plan and report annually on the multi-year accessibility plan.

- ✓ The five-year Accessibility Plan (2016-2021) is in place and accessible by all staff and general public at:
(<https://sciencenorth.ca/about/corporate/accountability/policies/index.aspx?id=808>)
- ✓ Science North's annual progress reports are posted publicly on its website.

Submit accessibility compliance report in accordance with prescribed schedule

- ✓ The next required compliance report will be submitted prior to the deadline date of December 31, 2018.

Integrate accessibility in procuring or acquiring goods, services and facilities, as well as procuring or acquiring self-serve kiosks.

- ✓ Random audit of procurement documents is done to ensure compliance with the requirement to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so
- ✓ The Procurement & Contracts Officer considers and includes appropriate accessibility criteria in all RFx.
- ✓ All new staff responsible for procurement activities receives training on the procurement or acquisition of accessible goods, services or facilities, including the procurement or acquisition of self-serve kiosks.

Provide training on the IASR and Human Rights Code to employees, volunteers or persons who participate in developing policies, and others who provide goods / services / facilities on behalf of Science North.

- ✓ Training and proof of training on IASR requirements is part of Science North's new employee on-boarding process including individual training and formal review at orientation.
- ✓ Suppliers providing services on behalf of Science North are required to submit certification that their staff receive training in accordance with the requirements of the Customer Service and IAS regulations.

PART II – INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

Upon request, provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports.

- ✓ On a case-by-case basis Science North continues to respond to requests for accessible formats and communication supports from persons with disabilities.
- ✓ In 2017 Science North enhanced the visitor experience in its IMAX Theatre with the installation of hearing devices for visitors with auditory disabilities.
- ✓ Science North has created an action plan to develop corporate-wide standards for making information accessible. Implementation of the plan is expected to be completed in 2018.
- ✓ Science staff reviewed and updated the Science Centre's *Characteristics of Excellence for Exhibitory* by incorporating accessibility as one of the characteristics for exhibit development.

Ensure any new websites and web content on new websites comply with: a) WCAG 2.0 Level A by Jan 1, 2014; and b) WCAG 2.0 Level AA by Jan 1, 2021

- ✓ A new website is currently under development that will improve website accessibility for persons with disabilities. The new website is designed to meet the IASR WCAG2.0AA guidelines.

PART III – EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

This section of the Regulation includes requirements related to: a) Recruitment, assessment and selection; b) Accessible formats and communication supports for employees; c) Workplace emergency response; d) Return to work processes;

e) Performance management, career development and redeployment.

- ✓ Science North continues to ensure its employment practices meet the requirements of Part III of the IASR. This includes:
 - All individuals including job applicants, applicants selected to participate in an assessment or selection process, successful applicants, and employees are all notified that accommodation is available upon request in relation to the recruitment process, materials or processes used therewith, and policies for accommodating employees with disabilities;
 - Accommodation requests from employees with disabilities are addressed on a case-by-case basis. Funds are allocated annually to address these requests. To date all accommodation requests have been addressed;
 - Science North maintains a written process for a) the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities; and b) the return to work of an employee who has been absent from work due to a disability and requires disability-related accommodations;
 - Science North takes into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans when, a) using its performance management process, b) providing career development and advancement, and c) redeploying our employees with disabilities.

PART IV – TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS

As Science North provides neither conventional or specialized transportation services this section of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation does not apply.

PART V – DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment)

This section of the Regulation applies to public spaces that are newly constructed or redeveloped on and after the dates set out in the schedule in section 80.5 and that are covered by Part. O. Reg. 413/12, s. 6.

- ✓ In 2017 Science North continued to implement improvements to its facilities based on a prioritized five year list, as follows:
 - Continued the initiative of improving accessibility to public washrooms through the installation of power door openers on entrance doors of six separate washrooms making it easier for people with mobility devices to enter and exist;
 - Continued the initiative of improving accessibility to staff and public spaces through the installation of ramps at several entrance door locations to remove elevation differences making it easier for people with mobility devices to enter and exist;
 - Architectural drawings were prepared in 2017 to address the structural changes required to Science North's popular "Discovery Theatre" in order to provide accessible seating for visitors with disabilities. The modification work is expected to be completed in late 2018 or early 2019.
 - Modifications were made to the Science North parking lot: a) size and number of accessible parking spaces were increased to meet requirements of the regulation and, b) approved signage (as per regulation 581 of the Highway Traffic Act) was installed.
 - Initial work was begun on the development of a fully accessible family washroom, to be located in the main lobby of Science North.
 - The height and configuration of the Copper Café service counter at Dynamic Earth was corrected to ensure it complies with maximum height specifications. In addition, design work was completed to correct the height of the Sales Ticket desk and Big Nickel Boutique sales counter to ensure both comply with maximum height specifications.
 - The location of washroom hand dryers (currently located at standard standing height), were all lowered to ensure easy access to, and use of, these units for people with in wheelchairs and with limited physical abilities to use.