

President
of the Treasury Board



Président
du Conseil du Trésor

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0R5

4/3/12

Ms. Donna Jodhan
President
Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians
P.O. Box 20262
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Kelowna, British Columbia
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Dear Ms. Jodhan:

Thank you for your letter, dated February 1, 2013, regarding WCAG 2.0 compliance and accessible websites. I have noted your comments.

The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring its websites achieve a high level of Web Accessibility. These requirements are defined in the *Standard on Web Accessibility*, which ensures that each Web page meets all five WCAG 2.0 conformance requirements. There has been much progress made by the Government of Canada on this front and departments are on track towards complying with the *Standard on Web Accessibility* by July 31, 2013.

In your letter, you inquired about the baseline established for “Accessibility Support” and how potential WCAG 2.0 failures would be addressed if they are not covered by published WCAG 2.0 “sufficient techniques”. These are technical questions related to the WCAG 2.0 set of technical requirements.

In regards to the baseline, the list of technologies that can be used to meet the *Standard on Web Accessibility* consists of the technologies that have sufficient techniques which are published by the World Wide Web Consortium in the *Techniques for WCAG 2.0* document (<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20-TECHS/>).

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In regards to how potential WCAG 2.0 failures would be addressed if they are not covered by published sufficient techniques, only the published WCAG 2.0 sufficient techniques are used for meeting the *Standard on Web Accessibility*. All other uses of technologies must meet the non-interference requirements from WCAG 2.0 conformance requirement 5 (Non-Interference) which requires that they not block users from accessing the rest of the page or reduce the compliance of the page as a whole.

This approach ensures that Web page compliance can be measured consistently and evolves with the updates to the WCAG 2.0 sufficient techniques. For more details on the technical requirements, please see Section 6.1.1 of the *Standard on Web Accessibility* (<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=23601§ion=text#cha6>).

In addition, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat is supporting departments with the following guidance and tools:

- *Guidance on Implementing the Standard on Web Accessibility* (<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ws-nw/wa-aw/wa-aw-guid-eng.asp>),
- Assessment methodology (<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ws-nw/wa-aw/wa-aw-assess-methd-eng.asp>)
- Web Experience Toolkit (<http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ws-nw/wa-aw/wet-boew/index-eng.asp>)

The Web Experience Toolkit includes reusable components for building and maintaining websites that are accessible. This toolkit is open source software and free for use by departments and external organizations. Many departments have already implemented the Web Experience Toolkit while others are in the process of implementation. I am also pleased to report that other jurisdictions, including the City of Ottawa, are using or looking to adopt the Web Experience Toolkit to improve the accessibility of their websites.

I am pleased to note that these and many other actions demonstrate the Government of Canada's commitment to Web Accessibility.

Again, thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Clement', written in a cursive style.

The Honourable Tony Clement, P.C., M.P.