

Harbour Air Accessibility Plan

GENERAL

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Executive Summary

Harbour Air is deeply committed to fostering a culture of inclusivity and accessibility. We firmly believe that providing open access to all is not only integral to our company values but also essential for our sustained growth and competitiveness as a leader in the aviation industry. To contribute to a barrier-free Canada, we are actively developing an accessibility framework that will enhance the experiences of both our employees and the public we serve, ensuring they have the best possible interactions with our services.

We acknowledge that creating a barrier-free environment is a gradual process, and we are fully dedicated to continuously identifying, removing, and preventing barriers. In line with the requirements of the Accessible Canada Act, Harbour Air will build upon our existing efforts by developing our initial Accessibility Plan. This plan will serve as a roadmap, guiding our organization in meeting our accessibility commitments and fostering a culture of confidence and inclusion.

Recognizing the importance of addressing any gaps in these areas, we are committed to understanding and meeting the needs of individuals with limitations or disabilities. By actively recognizing and accommodating their unique requirements, we aim to create an environment that is accessible to all. Our ongoing efforts will ensure that our accessibility framework is responsive and adaptable, empowering everyone to fully engage with our services.

Through our steadfast dedication and ongoing commitment, Harbour Air is determined to create a culture where inclusivity and accessibility are at the forefront. We firmly believe that by building a barrier-free environment, we can contribute to a more inclusive Canada and provide exceptional experiences for all individuals, regardless of their abilities.

A summary of initial opportunities include:

- **Review Policies and Procedures:** Evaluate existing policies and procedures to ensure they align with accessibility standards and regulations. Identify any gaps or areas where adjustments are required to promote inclusivity and accessibility.
- Identify and address physical barriers within facilities, such as ramps, elevators, accessible parking spaces, signage, and washroom facilities. Implement modifications or upgrades to ensure compliance with accessibility standards.
- Review the accessibility of digital platforms, websites, and mobile applications. Make necessary adjustments to ensure they are compatible with assistive technologies, have clear navigation, provide alternative text for images, and are designed with inclusive user interfaces.
- Create comprehensive training programs for employees to raise awareness and understanding of accessibility, disability etiquette, and inclusive communication. Training can help foster a more inclusive and knowledgeable workforce.
- Establish processes to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the accessibility plan. Conduct periodic reviews, gather feedback, and make necessary adjustments to continuously improve accessibility within the organization.

Statement of Commitment

At Harbour Air, we are committed to making our organization and the services we provide accessible to all, including persons with disabilities. All Canadians have the right to benefit from our services equally and those who work with us have the right to perform their jobs free of barriers.

Reporting our Plan

As required by the *Accessible Canada Act*, we will publish a status report every year that measures our progress against our commitments. We will also review and update our Accessibility Plan every three years. Progress Reports and updates to our Accessibility Plan will be shaped by consultation with persons with disabilities.

ADDRESSING AREAS IDENTIFIED IN SECTION 5 - ACA

Employment

Barrier #1:

Our organization is currently experiencing challenges in attracting applicants from underrepresented populations, specifically persons with disabilities, which is impacting our ability to compete for top talent in the job market.

Actions:

- Train hiring managers in disability etiquette, unconscious bias, and inclusive recruitment practices. Provide guidance on accommodating candidates with disabilities throughout the recruitment and selection process to ensure a fair and inclusive experience for all applicants.

- Establish Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar support networks to provide a platform for employees with disabilities to connect, share experiences, and contribute to an inclusive work environment.
- Ensure that job postings and application processes are designed to be accessible and inclusive. This includes providing alternative formats, compatibility with assistive technologies, and clear language to facilitate equal access and participation for applicants with disabilities.

Barrier #2:

Accessibility information and resources may not be readily available or easily accessible to individuals with disabilities who are interested in pursuing a career in seaplane operations. This lack of information can make it difficult for them to assess the accessibility of facilities, equipment, and job tasks associated with specific aviation roles.

Actions:

- Establish a dedicated section on the organization's website that provides comprehensive accessibility information. This hub should include details about the accessibility features of facilities, equipment, and job tasks associated with various aviation roles. It can also highlight the organization's commitment to inclusion and provide contact information for individuals seeking further assistance.
- Develop informative guides or brochures that outline the accessibility features of key facilities, equipment, and work areas within the aviation organization. Make these resources available in accessible formats, such as electronic documents with compatibility for screen readers or large print versions.

Built Environment

Barrier #3:

The current state of our built environment reveals a significant gap in accommodating the needs of individuals with physical disabilities. The existing infrastructure and facilities are not designed or equipped with the necessary features and accommodations to ensure equal access and usability for everyone.

Actions:

- Our company is currently in the process of constructing a new head office, which presents a valuable opportunity to address the existing gaps in accessibility. The new head office project signifies our commitment to creating an inclusive environment that caters to the needs of individuals with physical disabilities. Through this construction, we aim to design and build a facility that prioritizes accessibility at every stage, ensuring equal access and usability for all employees and visitors, regardless of their physical abilities.
- Designate accessible parking spaces close to building entrances, ensuring there is sufficient space for vehicle maneuverability. Construct accessible pathways with appropriate slopes, tactile paving, and clear signage to guide individuals with disabilities from parking areas to the building entrance.
- Engage with accessibility consultants, architects, and experts who specialize in inclusive design. Collaborate with them to ensure that the new building plans incorporate accessibility features, such as accessible entrances, ramps, elevators, widened doorways, and appropriate signage, to create a barrier-free environment.

Barrier #4:

We have a lack of signage in our buildings that can create challenges and confusion, particularly for individuals with visual impairments or cognitive disabilities, who rely on clear and consistent signage to navigate the premises. When signage is inadequate, unclear, or absent, it can result in difficulties locating entrances, exits, restrooms, elevators, and other essential areas within the building. This can lead to frustration, delays, and a sense of exclusion for individuals with accessibility issues, impeding their ability to navigate the company's-built environment independently and confidently.

Actions:

- Ensure that all signage throughout the company's-built environment is clear, easy to read, and designed with accessibility in mind. Use high contrast colors, large and legible fonts, and tactile elements such as raised characters or Braille for individuals with visual impairments. Position signage at appropriate heights for wheelchair users and ensure it is well-lit for optimal visibility.
- Incorporate universal design principles into the design and placement of signage. Ensure that signage is positioned at appropriate heights for wheelchair users and consider the needs of individuals with different abilities, including those using mobility aids or assistive devices.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Barrier #5:

Our company currently does not have software compatibility for those requiring accessibility accommodation or assistive technologies to better view, read and understand the information available.

Actions:

- Regularly conduct compatibility testing with popular assistive technologies, such as screen readers, alternative input devices, and voice recognition software. Identify and address any compatibility issues to ensure smooth interaction between assistive technologies and the company's digital assets.
- Offer resources and support for employees and users who rely on assistive technologies. Provide guidance on the compatibility of specific software, websites, or digital platforms with different assistive technologies. Help in setting up and configuring assistive technologies to ensure optimal compatibility and usage.
- Involve individuals with disabilities in the user testing phase of software development, website updates, or digital platform enhancements. Their firsthand experience with assistive technologies can help identify compatibility issues and provide valuable feedback for improvement.

Barrier #6:

We acknowledge the presence of inaccessible websites within our organization, which can create significant barriers for individuals with disabilities. These barriers arise when websites are not designed with accessibility as a primary consideration. Challenges include the absence of alternative text for images, insufficient color contrast, link text that lacks descriptive information, and navigation systems that are inaccessible. These issues can make it challenging or even impossible for individuals with visual impairments or mobility limitations to access and navigate our website effectively.

Actions:

- Include text equivalents for non-text content such as videos, audio files, and interactive sources. This allows individuals with visual or hearing impairments to access the information presented in these formats through assistive technologies.
- Ensure that the website supports text resizing functionality so that users can adjust the font size according to their preferences. This is particularly beneficial for individuals with low vision or reading difficulties.

Communication Other than ICT

Barrier #8:

Currently there is no standard stream of communication which can hinder access to accessible programs and services. This includes insufficient alternative communication formats for printed materials, lack of sign language interpretation for deaf individuals, or failure to provide captioning or audio descriptions for multimedia content.

Actions:

- We can look into communication accessibility tools that can assist individuals with disabilities such as providing assistive technologies like screen readers, speech-to-text software, or captioning services for meetings and presentations. These tools enable individuals with visual or hearing impairments to participate fully in communication activities.

We can provide these alternate formats as soon as possible and within time frames listed in the *Accessible Canada Regulations*

- print
- large print
- braille
- audio format or an electronic format that's compatible with adaptive technology meant to help people with disabilities.

Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

Barrier #9:

Seaplane aviation has limited availability of accessible options in the market when trying to procure goods, services or facilities that meet specific accessibility needs, sometimes resulting in lack of suppliers.

Actions:

- We are seeking and researching collaboration with innovative suppliers that understand the need to accommodate accessibility.
- Actively advocate for accessibility in the industry and encourage suppliers to prioritize accessibility in their product or service offerings. This can involve engaging with industry associations, participating in conferences or trade shows focused on accessibility,

Design & Delivery of Programs and Services

Barrier #10:

We have an absence of clear policies and guidelines regarding accessibility and inclusive design that can hinder the effective implementation of accessible programs and services.

Actions:

- Develop clear and detailed guidelines for inclusive design. These guidelines should provide specific instructions and recommendations for designing and delivering accessible programs and services. They should cover various aspects such as physical accessibility, communication, digital content, and alternative formats.
- Conduct training sessions to educate staff members about accessibility, inclusive design principles, and the importance of ensuring equal access for individuals with disabilities.
- Create an Accessibility Checklist to help ensure key accessibility considerations are considered.

Transportation

Barrier #11:

Seaplanes often require passengers to navigate uneven surfaces, such as floating docks or pontoons, during boarding and deboarding. These surfaces can pose difficulties for individuals with mobility impairments, such as those using wheelchairs, walkers, or crutches.

Actions:

- Invest in the development and installation of accessible boarding infrastructure, such as ramps or lifts, that can provide smooth and safe access to seaplanes from the dock or pontoon.
- Train staff members in proper techniques for assisting passengers with mobility impairments during boarding and deboarding. This includes knowledge of how to safely navigate uneven surfaces and provide support as needed.

Barrier #12:

We currently have a comprehensive emergency evacuation procedure, however there is a lack of information available and accessible to those individuals with disabilities. The current procedures may not adequately address the unique challenges faced by passengers with mobility impairments or sensory disabilities during emergency situations.

Actions:

- Review and update existing emergency evacuation procedures to ensure they consider the specific needs of individuals with disabilities. This includes considering different types of disabilities, such as mobility impairments, sensory disabilities, or cognitive impairments, and developing strategies to assist passengers with these diverse needs during emergency situations.
- Provide comprehensive training to the seaplane crew on how to assist passengers with disabilities during emergency evacuations. This includes proper techniques for safely evacuating individuals with mobility impairments, clear communication strategies for passengers with hearing or visual impairments, and awareness of the specific needs and challenges faced by different disability groups.

- Engage with disability advocacy organizations and seek their input on the development and review of emergency evacuation procedures. Their expertise can provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and help identify areas for improvement.

CONSULTATIONS

To align with Harbour Air's commitment to make our workplace environment accessible to all, we have developed our Accessibility Plan in consultation with our employees, including those with disabilities.

We gathered feedback and input from our team members and external consultants in several ways:

- Collect information during onboarding.
- Speak with different levels of the organization on how we can better accommodate those with accessibility requirements and gain feedback, and/or suggestions.
- Engaging with external professionals in the field of accessibility to assist us with our installations of accessibility infrastructure in our new buildings to be constructed and/or with the seaplanes itself.

We will continue to involve all levels of the organization and primarily include those with limitations or disabilities to assist in our ongoing commitment to accessibility.

Note:

At Harbour Air, we recognize the need to continuously improve our accessibility plan and to ensure it is up-to-date and effective in addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. As part of our commitment to accessibility, we have initiated a comprehensive review of this plan. This review process will be completed within the next three weeks.

DEFINITIONS

Accessibility:

Refers to the needs of persons with disabilities being intentionally and thoughtfully considered when products, services and facilities are built or modified so they can be used and enjoyed by persons of all abilities.

Barrier:

The *Accessible Canada Act* defines a barrier as "anything—including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of 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."

Disability:

The *Accessible Canada Act* defines a disability as "any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment—or a functional limitation— whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society."