SSC's Accessibility Plan 2022 - 2025

Presentation to Rotary Ottawa South

March 1, 2023

Shared Services Canada   Services partagés Canada

Canada

Agenda

- **Who is SSC?**

- **Why Accessibility is Important**

- **The Accessible Canada Act and Regulations**

- **Highlights of SSC's Accessibility Plan 2022 – 2025**

- **Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Implementation Approach**

- **Call to Action: What can Rotary Ottawa South do?**

Who is Shared Services Canada?

Shared Services Canada (SSC) delivers digital services to Government of Canada organizations.

We provide modern, secure and reliable IT services so federal organizations can deliver digital programs and services that meet Canadians needs.

Why Accessibility is Important

- Accessibility is about ensuring that everyone, including persons with disabilities, have equal opportunities to do their best work and succeed in their lives and careers.

- Being an accessible employer and service provider means being more innovative, efficient and productive.

- People with disabilities are masters of innovation. In learning to adapt to a world not designed for them, they have strengths in problem-solving skills, agility, persistence, forethought and a willingness to experiment—essentially, they can fuel innovation.

Fun Fact
Many everyday items that we enjoy today were designed for persons with disabilities. This includes:
- Typewriter/keyboard
- Voice recognition/voice to text (Siri)
- Closed captioning
- Audio books
- Curb cuts
- Electric toothbrush

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Why preventing and removing barriers is important for SSC

- Accessibility means proactively removing barriers that prevent people from being able to use devices, services, programs or information that SSC provides.

  - In some cases, unaddressed barriers can create exclusion.

- Barriers can be anything that hinders full and equal participation.

  - Accessibility barriers can be environmental or attitudinal.

- Systemic barriers are policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded.

- **Proactively removing barriers to inclusion is true user-centric service design and delivery**

  - A key to real transformation

  - A shift from being reactive to being proactive

Strategic Alignment
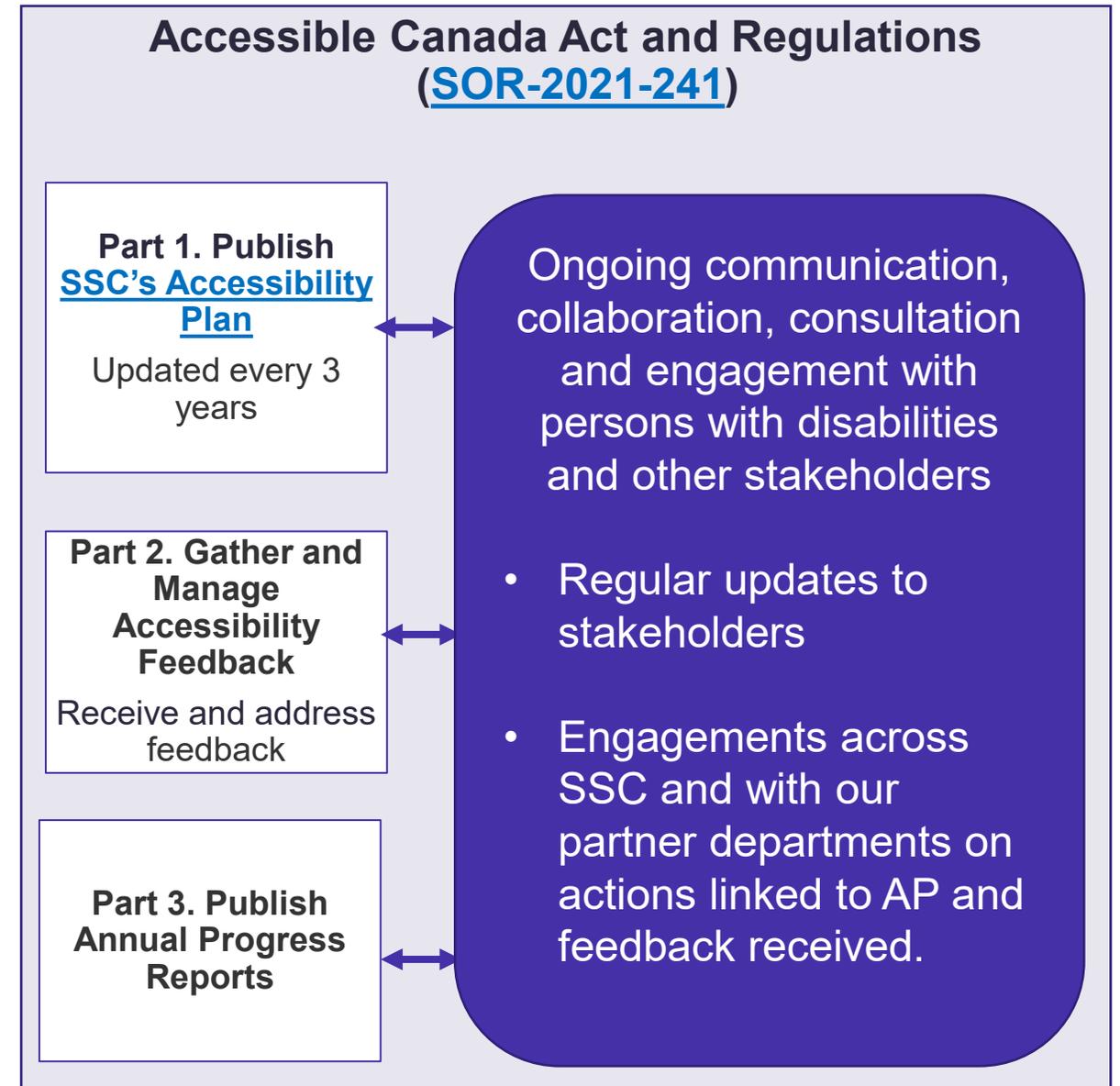
SSC's work on accessibility aligns with:

- [SSC 3.0 An Enterprise Approach](#) – whole-of-government approach to accessible IT solutions and services

- SSC [CIO's Mission](#)

- [The Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada](#) – co-leading on Goal 3: Making ICT usable by all

- The [Call to Action on Anti-racism, Equity, and inclusion in the public service by Clerk of the Privy Council](#) – SSC is an acknowledged leader in accessibility

- [Government of Canada's Digital Operations Strategic Plan](#) – SSC preparing for new GC ICT Accessibility policy and standard coming soon

- [Treasury Board Policy and Directive on Service and Digital](#)

- [Accessibility Standards Canada](#) and [GC Digital Standards](#) – User-centric and inclusive needs are addressed in SSC's modernized systems and services

SSC's Unique Position

Given SSC's mandate to provide ICT and services to the GC, our partners are relying on SSC to deliver ICT infrastructure and services that support the delivery of accessible programs and services to Canadians.

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The Accessible Canada Act and Regulations at a Glance

To benefit all persons, especially persons with disabilities, the **Accessible Canada Act (ACA)** requires **all** federally regulated organizations to publish an accessibility plan that **identifies**, **removes** and **prevents accessibility barriers** in **seven priorities** by 2040.

Accessible Canada Act and Regulations (SOR-2021-241)

Part 1. Publish SSC's Accessibility Plan
Updated every 3 years

Part 2. Gather and Manage Accessibility Feedback
Receive and address feedback

Part 3. Publish Annual Progress Reports

Ongoing communication, collaboration, consultation and engagement with persons with disabilities and other stakeholders

- Regular updates to stakeholders

- Engagements across SSC and with our partner departments on actions linked to AP and feedback received.

Enterprise Roles and Responsibilities

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

- Prepares the public service to meet the requirements of the ACA.
- Develops policies, provides strategic direction and policy advice and support policy implementation.

Employment and Social Development Canada

- Develops regulations and guidance for the ACA.
- Accessibility Commissioner enforces ACA

Accessibility Standards Canada

- Creates national standards for accessibility that will apply to federally regulated organizations

Departments

Build a culture that embraces inclusivity and accessibility

Identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility

Be inclusive and build accessibility from the start when developing or procuring anything

Shared Services Canada (SSC)

- Provides public servants with a suite of accessible digital communication and collaboration tools as well as ICT accessibility assessment tools.

Public Services and Procurement Canada

- Provides guidelines on purchasing accessible goods and services.

Canada School of Public Service

- Provides training materials and learning opportunities on inclusion and accessibility

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Corporate Roles and Responsibilities

Accessibility Planning and Reporting Team

- Oversees SSC's progress in meeting the requirements of the ACA including managing feedback
- Provides strategic direction and advice

[Accessibility, Accommodations and Adaptive Computer Technology Program](#) (AAACT)*

- Job Accommodation and Adaptation Services
- Inclusive Design and Digital Accessibility Services
- Training, Workshops and Skills development

Persons with Disabilities Network and Co-Champions

- Provides a safe space where members and allies can share thoughts and ideas

SSC Branches and Employees

Build a workplace and culture that embraces inclusivity and accessibility

Identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility

Be inclusive and build accessibility from the start when developing or procuring anything

Chief Information Officer (SSC)

- Provides SSC employees with a suite of accessible digital communication and collaboration tools

Accessibility Triage Team / Procurement and Vendor Relations – Applied Procurement Policy

- Provides advice and guidance on purchasing accessible ICT and other goods and services

Human Resources and Workplace

- Help managers hire and build strong and diverse teams

*AAACT serves the GC and SSC

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Highlights of SSC's Accessibility Plan 2022 - 2025

A shared path to a more inclusive, barrier-free public service

Accessibility Plan

The AP is about…	The AP is NOT about…
Working towards a barrier-free public service by 2040	How SSC might accommodate an individual's needs based on a person making a request
SSC becoming a more disability inclusive and accessible provider of modern, secure and reliable IT services to Government of Canada organizations	SSC achieving its employment equity hiring targets (although implementing the AP will help us do that)
Making SSC a disability-inclusive employer	
Building accessibility into everything SSC does from the start, or by default, (this is similar to security, privacy, official languages, etc.)	
Making progress on the identification, prevention, and removal of accessibility barriers in SSC's programs, services, systems, policies, practices and procedures.	
Focusing on incremental progress, not perfection	
Setting a baseline that allows SSC to apply continuous improvement.	

Priority Areas in the Accessibility Plan

1. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

2. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

3. PROCUREMENT OF GOODS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

4. EMPLOYMENT

5. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

6. COMMUNICATION

+ 7. CULTURE*

8. TRANSPORTATION

* **Note**: SSC added Culture as a priority.

- Set out by the Accessible Canada Act
- All priority areas are interconnected
- **Culture** and **Communication** as priorities helps enable the work in the other priority areas
- **Employment** is supported by work in the other priority areas (e.g. employees with disabilities have the same opportunities as anyone else **at SSC to succeed in their work**)
- **Programs and Services** – what SSC does for our partners and clients (they rely on us to provide accessible products and services)
- **Information and Communications Technology** – about the technology that SSC employees use

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SSC's Accessibility Plan 2022–25 at a glance

The plan identifies actions SSC will take to proactively identify, remove and prevent accessibility barriers in **eight** priority areas
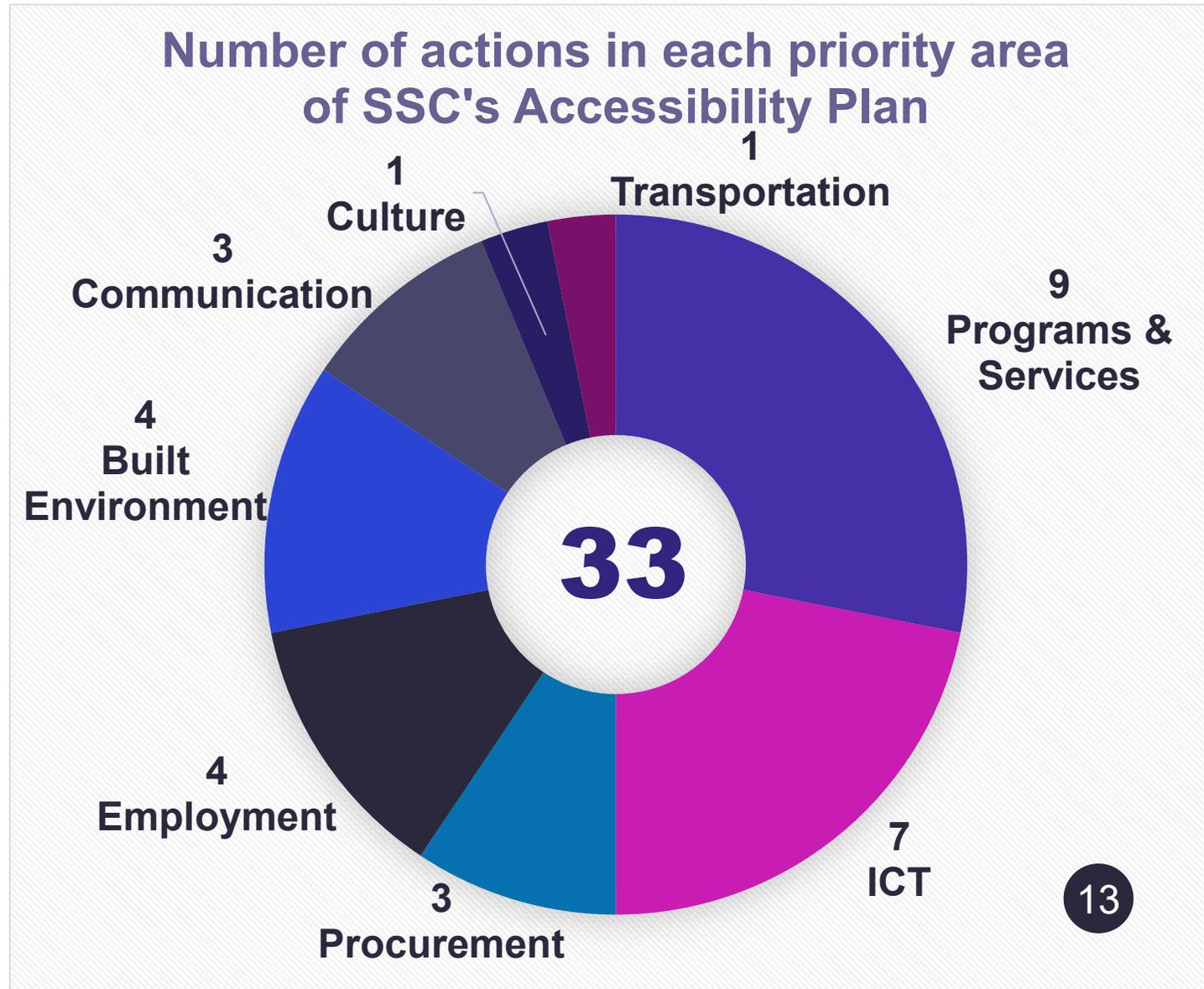
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Number of years for the plan

33

The number of planned actions identified in SSC's Accessibility Plan

8 ★★☆

The plan commits to holding 8 reviews related to the priority areas

135

From February to July, SSC collected information from 135 individuals as part of the consultations.

Number of actions in each priority area of SSC's Accessibility Plan

1 Culture

3 Communication

1 Transportation

9 Programs & Services

4 Built Environment

33

7 ICT

4 Employment

3 Procurement

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Key Takeaways for Implementing the Accessibility Plan (slide 1 of 2)

- **No one Branch or OPI is fully responsible for a particular priority**

    - The APR team will support Branches and organizations, but we cannot do your work for you.

- **Accessibility is everyone's responsibility** - similar to Official Languages, security, GBA+, etc.

- **Ongoing collaboration and consultation across SSC is necessary**

    - Priorities are interconnected

    - Barriers, feedback and, or challenges identified are often horizontal, and multiple organizations are responsible for different aspects

- **Plan ahead** - Integrating accessibility into existing corporate, branch and operational level plans and reports is key and reduces the reporting burden.

    - SSC's 2023-2024 DP's accessibility commitment is: To integrate accessibility into existing planning; and To begin to implement the SSC Accessibility Plan 2022-2025.

    - SSC first Accessibility Plan progress report must be published by December 16, 2023. The call to report progress will be aligned with SSC's existing integrated annual planning and reporting process

Key Takeaways for Implementing the Accessibility Plan (slide 2 of 2)

- **A hybrid top-down and bottom-up approach is needed**
  - Top-down: Using key corporate functions and good communication, everyone has the information they need
  - Bottom-up: Teams dealing with accessibility related issues in their day to day need to identify and report them up so they can be resolved.
- **Horizontal coordination is vital**
  - Cross-area reviews, information sharing, solving problems outside of our typical silos, etc.
- **Need to crawl before we can walk, and walk before we can run**
  - Focusing on incremental progress, not perfection
  - Change management for greater awareness and understanding is essential
- **Together, we will succeed**
  - SSC's people want to know how to plan for accessibility
  - We want to collaborate with teams and leverage existing initiatives, activities, knowledge and expertise

What Rotary Ottawa South could do to be more disability-inclusive

- **Commit to increasing awareness** of the barriers that confront persons with disabilities

- Encourage our members to learn more about accessibility and disability inclusion, perhaps by holding meetings focussed on diversity and inclusion

- Promote, **model and reinforce accessibility best practices in your day-to-day activities**, such as:

  - Ask that all communications and documents be accessible

  - Plan and hold accessible meetings

  - Have conversations about accessibility and disability inclusion – does everyone in the club have what they need to work to the best of their ability?

  - Be curious. Ask or consult on the accessibility and disability inclusion impacts of decisions or recommended solutions

- Find out how we can **improve the rates of recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities** within Rotary.

- Plan and undertake an **accessibility review of the Club** in consultation with persons with disabilities

> Ideas are powerful things, not requiring studious contemplation but an action,
> even if it is only an inner action.
> Author: Midge Decter

Discussion

- Questions, comments, feedback?

- Provide [feedback on accessibility at Shared Services Canada](#)

Link: [Shared Services Canada's Accessibility Plan 2022–25](#)