



Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation

# BEST PRACTICES IN TOURISM ACCESSIBILITY FOR TRAVELLERS WITH RESTRICTED PHYSICAL ABILITY

FINAL REPORT  
APEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP

*October 2003*

Conducted by:

## Kéroul

Tourism and culture for  
people with restricted  
physical ability



With the collaboration of:

CANADIAN  
TOURISM  
COMMISSION



COMMISSION  
CANADIENNE  
DU TOURISME

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 STUDY CONTEXT

At the inaugural APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting in Seoul in July 2000, the tourism ministers adopted the Tourism Charter, which referred to four specific policy goals, the second of which was “increasing mobility of visitors and stimulating demand for tourism goods and services in the APEC region.”

The project discussed here identifies best practices for tourism accessibility for travellers with restricted physical ability (RPA) and falls under policy goal #2 of the Tourism Charter. This project may also serve as a base for member economies to establish a credible and internationally comparable set of standards describing the stage reached in providing tourism accessibility to travellers with RPA.

Wishing to make tourism more accessible to its members, APEC commissioned this study on best practices in accessibility. Touching various aspects of accessibility, the examples are drawn from the initiatives of governmental as well as non-governmental agencies.

### 1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

As stated in the Tourism Working Group Request For Proposals, the objectives of the survey of best practices on tourism accessibility for travellers with RPA are to:

- Promote greater accessibility to tourism for travellers with RPA by consolidating all standards for tourism accessibility into a comprehensive manual;
- Raise the level of awareness on the importance and significance of making travel accessible to everyone;
- Harmonize the standards in providing tourism accessibility to travellers with RPA and allow APEC members to identify areas to be modified and/or improved in order to support full accessibility to travellers with RPA; and
- Facilitate the exchange of information among members.

As we have seen, the study is part of a considerable process of thought and discussion to encourage the mobility of travellers within APEC member economies and to stimulate tourism demand in the Asia-Pacific region.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study**

In order to accomplish its objectives, the study examined examples of best practices supplied by APEC member economies to evaluate their transferability.

Nevertheless, the reader should view the practices presented here as a simple exploration of the possibilities that were offered.

In this context, this report is therefore intended to offer:

- A discussion of the principles that should guide the actions of APEC member economies with regard to the accessibility of tourism for travellers with RPA;
- Documentation of the thought processes of APEC member economies regarding desirable standards of accessibility; and
- Concrete examples to enrich the toolboxes of the member economies.

## **1.3 METHODOLOGY**

The identification of examples on accessible tourism for travellers with RPA relied first and foremost on the collaboration of the APEC Tourism Working Group member economies.

The method chosen for the survey was a questionnaire, self-completed by either the APEC representative, a member of a government agency, or a member of an organization representing persons with RPA. This was considered the most efficient means to reach all the APEC community.

Each submitter was invited to provide additional support material such as published articles, photographs or other graphic material, brochures or promotional material.

Twenty-two completed questionnaires were returned from 11 member economies. Participation in the study, namely, gathering and structuring the information, was undoubtedly a considerable task for some of the organizations and may have limited some participation.

Each of the proposed initiatives was examined according to the analytical framework developed for the study. The goal of this analysis was not to rank the initiatives from best to worst, but rather to evaluate their “transferability” to other countries. Based on the analysis, it was then possible to select examples likely to advance the cause of accessible tourism.

A review of literature and a search on the Internet was then undertaken for secondary data.

Participating member economies were:

- Australia
- Canada
- Chinese Taipei
- Hong Kong, China
- Japan
- Macau, China
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Republic of the Philippines
- Thailand
- United States

## 2. INFORMATION ON PERSONS WITH RESTRICTED PHYSICAL ABILITY

### 2.1 WHO ARE PERSONS WITH RESTRICTED PHYSICAL ABILITY?

For the purpose of this document, a person with RPA is any person who has a disability or whose activity is limited, whether the cause is physiological or mental. The World Health Organization (WHO) has adopted the following definition to describe this condition:

*...disability is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.<sup>1</sup>*

According to the Society for Accessible Tourism Hospitality (SATH), there are an estimated 859 million persons worldwide with disabilities. For example, Australia's 1993 survey indicated that persons with a disability comprise 18 percent of its population. New Zealand's national household survey (1996) yielded a disability rate of 19.1 percent. Within the United States alone, as of 1994-1995, 20.6 percent of the population – 54 million persons – had a disability. In Canada, the percentage of persons with disabilities was 15.5 percent as of 1991 (Kéroul, 1995). In Europe, Deloitte Touche estimated in 1991 that there were 50 million persons with disabilities at any given time, roughly 14 percent of the population.

Notably, the estimated disability rates reported by different regions vary widely. The variation depends, to a large extent, on the research methodology used. For example, a 1987 survey in China indicated 4.9 percent of the population living with a disability. In the Philippines, in the 1995 census, conducted by the National Statistics Office, there were 919,332 persons with RPA (1.2 percent of the total population).

The proportion of older persons in the population of developed countries is already rising dramatically. The same phenomenon is starting to occur in developing countries. According to United Nations projections, by the year 2025 about 14 percent of the Asia-Pacific region's total population will be 60 years or older, and the region will be home to 56 percent of the world's older persons. Among older persons, a significant percentage presents some type of disability. For example, in Western Australia over 50 percent of persons over 60 years of age have a disability. In Canada, 46 percent of persons aged 65 and over have a disability.

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization, *International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps*, 1980.

## 2.2 TRAVELLERS AND ACCESSIBILITY

Persons with RPA are travellers with habits, preferences and goals similar to those of the general population. While these individuals do have specific needs in some respects, only a small portion of these travellers requires sophisticated equipment.

Access varies depending on disability. According to Simon Darcy (1998), access has three main dimensions:

- (a) **Physical access**, which involves persons with physical disabilities requiring the use of wheelchairs or walking aids and, consequently, the provision of, for example, handrails, ramps, lifts and lowered counters.
- (b) **Sensory access**, which involves persons with hearing or sight impairments, necessitating the provision of, for example, tactile markings, signs, labels, hearing augmentation-listening systems and audio cues for lifts and lights.
- (c) **Communication access**, which involves those persons who have difficulty with the written word, vision, speech, and hearing impairments of persons from other cultures.

Persons with RPA have a right to, and do want to, enjoy travel and leisure experiences. Like everyone else, tourists with RPA want to visit places with which they identify, places consistent with their lifestyle, where they can find pleasure, safety and comfort. They also seek friendly, inhabited places.

However, their travel experiences are still characterized by numerous constraints.

### 2.2.1 Transportation

Transportation is a crucial issue, representing a major portion of a tourism-related trip. While air travel in general has become easier and airlines increasingly provide user-friendly services to these travellers, some problems still arise from time to time that can seriously inconvenience a traveller with RPA. For example, an issue among some

travellers with RPA is the damage to and loss of wheelchairs on airplanes. Other constraints facing wheelchair travellers include the difficulty of boarding and disembarking the aircraft, changing flights, and the inaccessibility of airplane restrooms. For persons with visual impairments, identifying and retrieving luggage becomes another obstacle in the course of their already difficult journey.

For local or regional trips, persons with RPA use various modes of transportation trips – such as car, bus or train. Private automobiles equipped with customized features have the advantage of providing schedule flexibility if used for pleasure travel. However, only a small group of affluent persons with RPA can afford such cars. Modern technology greatly facilitates bus travel, as those with RPA can now journey in buses equipped with hydraulic lifts, which help them to board easily. “Low-floor” buses are gradually becoming the standard for intra-urban public transportation in a growing number of countries. These buses have the floor some 50 cm above street level. They feature a hydraulic “kneeling” function, which reduces the step to some 25 cm. However, in most countries the availability of such specially designed buses remains limited. While trains could better accommodate the travel needs of persons with RPA, the gap between car door and platform is often too wide; access to toilets and compartments also remains a constraint, especially for persons with physical disabilities and wheelchair users.

### 2.2.2 Accommodations

Accommodations and restaurants are frequently ill equipped to meet the needs of tourists with RPA. The lack of suitable accommodations will often limit persons to up-scale hotels, which are most often the only establishments that are accessible. For example, very few hotels offer accessible rooms with wide entrances or low switches, hand dryers, towel racks and beds. Of the rooms available, few are on the ground floor.

Access throughout hotels is also problematic. Few hotels have elevators to all floors, access to reception, pool or bar areas, clear signage, visual alarms, and complete access through the entire building. While the majority of hotels provide special parking areas, these are often uncovered and quite distant from the main hotel entrances, often requiring that steps be negotiated in order to enter or exit buildings.

Many travellers with RPA have difficulty accessing restaurant establishments within tourist destination areas. Others encounter problems after making hotel reservations. In some instances, rooms that were promoted as accessible were actually inaccessible to persons with

RPA. For example, showers with handrails may well accommodate some people, but, for many wheelchair users, bathtubs present a major barrier.



### 2.2.3 Tourism Sites

Major barriers for travellers with RPA involve physical obstacles that limit access to tourism sites and attractions, the very elements that underlie, or enhance, a journey.

Attractions may include leisure-based activities, such as visiting theme parks or participating in sport events; nature- or historical-based activities, such as visiting museums or a patrimonial site; and socio-cultural activities, such as festivals or exhibitions. In these activities, most of the constraints encountered by tourists with RPA involve site inaccessibility. For example, beaches are often not equipped to accommodate wheelchair users. Similarly, poor access to museums, historical monuments or shopping areas restricts persons with RPA from participation in these activities.

### 2.2.4 Travel Planning

For travellers with RPA, planning a vacation can be somewhat daunting. Their constraints lead such travellers to ensure that proper attention will be given to their special needs. Arrangements cannot be made without the assistance of travel agencies that cater to those special needs.

For several years, accessible tourism has shown promising signs of expansion. Yet tour operators have only recently started to appreciate the potential of this market. Many opportunities exist for the distribution network to market products and services that are underused.

### 2.2.5 Customer Services

Very often services providers are uncomfortable in direct contact situation with persons with RPA because they don't know what is required from them.

There is a range of disabilities which may have different implications. Usually, these customers require no additional assistance, although many of them will appreciate it.

Staff training is important at all level of the tourism organization not only for those employees in direct contact with clients but also housekeeping and support staff who might encounter clients in the performance of their duties. Often, simply increased awareness, good communication will be even more important than the assistance techniques.

### **3. WHAT IS A BEST PRACTICE IN TOURISM ACCESSIBILITY?**

Tourism is a rapidly growing industry in the Asia-Pacific region. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the Asia-Pacific region registered an annual growth rate of 5.5 percent in 2001. Further, this trend is expected to continue at the same rate for the years to come.

The Asia-Pacific region is becoming more and more aware of the opportunity offered by the potential market of travellers with RPA. The tourism industry wants to understand the needs involved and learn how to respond to these challenges for the benefit of all.

Although much remains to be done before proclaiming a barrier-free environment, many economies have already made great strides in improving access to tourism for persons with RPA.

A best practice in tourism accessibility is a one that is replicable, transferable or adaptable: an initiative conducted successfully and with a tangible impact on improving people's tourism experiences.

Identifying best practices is useful as a means to:

- Improve public policies based on what works;
- Raise awareness of decision makers; and
- Share and transfer knowledge, expertise and experience through networking and peer-to-peer learning.

The categories of best practices developed for the study were chosen in order to identify initiatives from different aspects of tourism accessibility.

### 3.1 CATEGORIES OF BEST PRACTICES

The practices addressed are categorized as follows:

Themes	Best practices case studies
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and procedures</li> <li>• Evaluation methods and tools</li> <li>• Regulatory methods and tools</li> </ul>
Physical planning and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation methods and tools</li> <li>• Regulatory methods and tools</li> <li>• Certification methods and tools, and labelling</li> <li>• Support mechanisms and development tools</li> </ul>
Research and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of market (expectations and needs of clientele)</li> <li>• Techniques for gathering and using information</li> <li>• Financial aid granted to individuals and businesses</li> </ul>
Information and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanisms for communicating accessibility standards</li> <li>• Facilities specific to tourism industry</li> <li>• Infrastructures common to public establishments</li> <li>• Method of disseminating information concerning services, establishments and attractions</li> </ul>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer service</li> <li>- Hospitality</li> <li>- Physical planning</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Type of clientele <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism industry</li> <li>- Professionals working for common public establishments</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel industry organizations</li> <li>• Specialized travel agencies</li> <li>• Specialized individual or group tour packages</li> </ul>
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative projects sponsored by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regions</li> <li>- Municipalities</li> <li>- Businesses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Organizations dedicated to tourism for disabled persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representation and promotion of rights</li> <li>• Networking and partnership</li> <li>• Member services</li> </ul>

### 3.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA OF A BEST PRACTICE

For the purposes of this study, best practices selected had to possess one or more of the following characteristics:

- Foster accessibility

Short-, medium-and long-term actions – spearheaded by economies, municipalities or tourism organizations – that improve accessibility by targeting services, attractions or mechanisms.

- Be transferable

The content and processes involved must be reproducible as is or with adaptation.

- Inspire action

Initiatives that encourage tourism organizations to be responsible, highlight the importance of acting “outside the box,” for example, by bringing together new players and mobilizing them around common issues.

- Involve all or several layers of government and stakeholders

Initiatives that encourage collaboration, using resources and expertise from public, private and non-governmental organizations.

- Address real needs

The actions effectively address the expressed needs of persons with RPA.

## 4. BEST PRACTICES BY CATEGORIES

This chapter presents numerous innovative accessibility-development strategies implemented within the APEC region. It is intended to enable officials, policy-makers, the tourism industry, non-governmental organizations and volunteers to quickly review a range of possible innovations that could be applicable in their respective economies.

### 4.1 TRANSPORTATION

Economy	Initiative
Australia	Disability Standards for accessible public transport 2002
Hong Kong	Public transport services for persons with disabilities
Canada	Intercity coach "To accompany" card
	<i>Access to Travel Website</i>
	The Canadian Transportation Agency

## Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002

**Member Economy:**  
Australia

**Category:**  
Transportation

**Contact:**  
Tourism Division  
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### **PROJECT**

The Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport provide practical measures to be taken by transport operators and providers to make public transport more accessible, both for persons with disabilities, as well as the elderly and those travelling with young children.

### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

- To ensure public transport operators and providers remove discrimination from public transport services;
- To remove discrimination on the basis of disability from public transport services over a 30-year period;
- To ensure that persons with disabilities, their families and caregivers can participate fully in, and enjoy, community life;
- To promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* seeks to eliminate discrimination, "as far as possible," against persons with disabilities. Public transport is a service covered by this Act.

Transport standards ensure that public transport is more accessible for persons with disabilities, the elderly and parents with infants in strollers.

For the first time, the Transport Standards set out formal requirements for accessibility to public transport in Australia. The standards take into account the range of disabilities covered by the Act and apply to a range of public transport conveyances, premises and infrastructure, with some limited exceptions. They provide greater certainty about rights and obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act*.

The standards prescribe detailed requirements in relation to accessibility issues such as access paths, manoeuvring areas, ramps and boarding devices, allocated spaces, handrails, doorways, controls, symbols and signs, the payment of fares, the provision of information, belongings, etc.

In prescribing how public transport is to be made accessible, the Standards acknowledge certain rights of

## **Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002**

passengers, operators and providers, as well as impose some responsibilities.

Providers and operators of public transport, infrastructure and premises must meet the requirements for all new items coming into service and will have a staggered compliance timeframe for upgrading equipment. All new items will have to comply with the standards from the time they come into effect so that non-conforming items are gradually retired or upgraded in accordance with an incremental compliance timetable.

In appropriate cases, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is also able to grant temporary exemptions from the requirements of the standards, taking into account advice from the National Transport Secretariat, to ensure that the system operates in a fair and balanced way.

The Disability Standards apply to the operation or provision of public transportation services and facilities to persons with disabilities by public and private sector operators of public transportation.

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

The Commonwealth Government estimates the cost of Australia-wide compliance with the disability standards over 20 years was \$3.7 billion (Australian), in 1999.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

The standards were developed following extensive consultation with the transport industry, people with restricted physical ability and government representatives.

The Attorney General funds a Disability Discrimination Act Standards Project established by disability community peak organizations to co-ordinate input by persons with disabilities to standards development processes.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

Section 31 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* provides for the making of standards. The Act gives the Attorney General the power to formulate these standards, while reserving the power to review the standards to Parliament, according to typical arrangements made for delegated legislation.

The Attorney General may make Disability Standards to specify rights and responsibilities about equal access and opportunity for

## **Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002**

persons with disabilities, in more detail and with more certainty than the Act itself provides. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission has a function of advising the Attorney General on making such standards.

The Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport and accompanying Guidelines under the *Disability Discrimination Act* 1992 came into effect on 23 October 2002 – 10 years after the Act passed through Parliament. They will be reviewed at five-year intervals.

The Disability Standards detail mandatory performance outcomes covering a range of accessibility issues. Due to the very specific requirements in the Disability Standards, they are the national authority for compliance with anti-discrimination legislation in the areas specified in the Disability Standards.

The compliance timetable ensures that increased accessibility is provided in a way that does not create an undue burden for operators and providers by allowing for incremental compliance with the relevant requirements over 30 years, with milestones at the fifth, tenth, fifteenth, twentieth and thirtieth years.

For example, 10 years after the standards commence, operators and providers must ensure full compliance with the relevant requirements in relation to surfaces; handrails and grab rails; gateways; and vending machines, as applicable to conveyances, premises and infrastructure. After 20 years, all buses must be fully compliant with the standards.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

Public transport is becoming more accessible by the replacement or upgrading of conveyances, premises and infrastructure at the end of their service lives.



## **Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002**

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Example of persons with disabilities, government and industry groups working together to find practical ways to eliminate discrimination;
- Information provided to transport operators to assist them in eliminating, to the extent possible, discrimination from public transport services for persons with disabilities;
- Provision of certainty about particular requirements, which need to be complied with in accordance with a specific timetable;
- Temporary exemptions granted by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission from the requirements of the standards, in appropriate cases, to ensure that the system operates in a fair and balanced way;
- A copy of the Transport Standards and accompanying Guidelines are available at <http://www.law.gov.au/DSFAPT/Welcome.html>.

## Public Transport Services for Persons with Disabilities

**Member Economy:**  
Hong Kong, China

**Category:**  
Transportation

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### **PROJECT**

Provision of convenient transport services for persons with disabilities.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To provide a barrier-free public transport service to persons with disabilities;
- To enhance their mobility and their integration with the community.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Hong Kong covers a small area of less than 1,100 square kilometres. It has one of the world's best public transport systems comprising railways, regular and light buses, taxis and ferries. The region serves more than 11 million commuters daily, with no direct government subsidies.

During the last decade, the government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region promoted accessibility by improving the transport system and by encouraging transport operators to provide facilities for citizens with disabilities.

The Transport Department promotes access to transportation through the provision of accessible public transport services and on-street facilities.

Public transport and railway operators are encouraged to make their vehicles and services accessible as far as is practicable.

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

The Transport Department is in charge of monitoring the improvements to public transport services. It is also responsible for the design and consultation process:

- The Highway Department is responsible for construction projects;
- The Electrical and Mechanical Service Departments are responsible for the installation of audible tactile signals.

The government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region provides incentives to the private sector, in the form of a profitable operating environment, guidelines and design standards.

Major transport companies are responsible for procurement of wheelchair accessible buses and for installation and retrofitting of disabled facilities in railway stations, train and bus compartments.

## Public Transport Services for Persons with Disabilities

### PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

The Transport Department of the Hong Kong SAR government is the agency that oversees and implements accessible transportation.

Organizations representing persons with disabilities are part of the consultation process and provide input regarding facilities requirements.

### PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Access and transportation are priority issues for persons with a disability. Both are necessary for the overall objective of equal opportunity and full social integration. With this in mind, The Hong Kong SAR government's policy objectives are to ensure:

- The development of a barrier-free physical environment that permits access to all buildings and facilities for all persons with disabilities;
- The development of a transport system that includes provisions to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, so as to enhance their mobility within society and facilitate their full participation and integration into the community.

The Transport Department set up a Working Group on Access to Public Transport for persons with disabilities. The working group was created to facilitate communication among representatives of persons with disabilities, public transport operators, and relevant government departments. The working group has provided a useful forum for the exchange of views and the discussion of issues of common concern. It also takes the lead in tackling problems common to all public transport operators, such as establishing common standards and guidelines on the provision and modification of facilities.

The working group continues to identify new initiatives on a regular basis and monitors implementation of approved programs. The Transport Department has developed and formulated a Transport Planning and Design Manual, in consultation with representatives of persons with disabilities, to provide general guidelines on the design and provision of facilities and to promote awareness of such factors. The manual has been widely adopted by various planners and providers of services for persons with disabilities.

## Public Transport Services for Persons with Disabilities

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

As a consequence of the implemented measures, Hong Kong is better able to meet the transport needs of persons with disabilities.

The government provides accessible traffic facilities, such as over 10,000 audible traffic signals, tactile warning strips and dropped kerbs at pedestrian crossings.

The government also funds Rehabus services for those who are unable to use public transport. It is a territory-wide transport network comprising a fleet of about 90 wheelchair - accessible buses. The network offers scheduled and feeder services on fixed routes, plus a dial-a-ride service to enable some 490,000 passengers a year to travel to work, school, etc.

The bus operators in Hong Kong have introduced about 2,000 wheelchair-accessible buses in Hong Kong, or about 30 percent of all buses. These buses are equipped with a fixed ramp and wheelchair parking space inside the compartment. This number should increase to about 3,200 by 2006.

Taxis have been adapted for persons with visual impairment. At present, over 17,200, or 95 percent of all taxis, have a Braille and tactile vehicle registration-number plate inside the vehicle compartment. By 2004, all 18,000 taxis in Hong Kong will be equipped with this plate.

Also, about 7,500 newly registered taxis in Hong Kong have been installed with talking meters that announce taxi service and taxi fare messages in Cantonese, Putonghua and English.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Policy, legislation and institutional arrangements to support implementation of accessible public transportation;
- Effective coordination between government departments, major transport operators, and organizations for persons with disabilities.

## Intercity Coach “To Accompany” Card

**Member Economy:  
Canada**

**Category:  
Transportation**

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### PROJECT

Introduction by the Quebec Bus Owners Association (l'Association des propriétaires d'autobus du Québec) of a free travel card for those who accompany persons with restricted physical ability. This “To Accompany” card is valid on all intercity bus services in the province of Quebec.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To make travel more affordable for persons with restricted physical ability and their attendants;
- To develop a travel attendant policy for all bus companies in Quebec;
- The long-term objective is to have the card recognized by all carriers across Canada.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The Quebec Bus Owners Association (QBOA) is a not-for-profit organization that has represented private businesses operating in the bus transportation sector in Quebec since 1926.

In June 1995, the intercity bus transportation industry offered uneven travel privileges for persons accompanying travellers with restricted physical ability. In fact, some customers preferred other modes of transportation because having to buy a ticket for the person accompanying them made the cost prohibitive.

In 1997, the QBOA announced the commissioning of 15 fully accessible coaches for travellers with restricted physical ability. The Quebec intercity bus system was finally opening up to passengers with all levels of disability, finally allowing them to use public transportation like all Quebecers. The “To Accompany” travel card further enhances the network's accessibility by eliminating the fare for the person accompanying a person with restricted physical ability who is unable to travel alone. The “To Accompany” card is meant for all persons with restricted physical ability over eight years of age who need to be accompanied on their intercity journeys.

The card is important because, although intercity coach transport is increasingly accessible to persons with restricted physical ability, there are still some limitations and some personal needs that carriers cannot meet. For these reasons, an accompanying person is essential for some travellers.

## **Intercity Coach "To Accompany" Card**

To qualify for the card, the accompanying person must be at least 14 years old and capable of providing the required care that is not normally provided by carrier staff.

Participants must submit the completed form, with their photograph, to the Quebec Bus Owners Association QBOA, which will evaluate their eligibility and issue the card within four weeks.

There are no charges for issuing the Quebec "To Accompany" card which is valid for five years. Before the expiration date, a renewal form is sent to the participants.

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

The annual cost of the program is US \$6,900. The QBOA supervises the program and has assigned one half-time secretary to the program. The only equipments needed are the cards and a plastic laminator.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

The program is funded by the Quebec Bus Owners Association, l'Office des personnes handicapées du Québec (Quebec Board for Disabled Persons), the Ministère des Transports (Quebec transport ministry), and by individual intercity carrier members (27).

Ten associations representing persons with restricted physical ability have contributed to the introduction of the card, supplying their members with information on the program.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

In 1995, the QBOA formed a committee to define what might be a fair, accessible and useful program based on need. Subsequently, it obtained from the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec (the Quebec Board for Disabled Persons) the authority to query applicants about their disabilities and their needs. In August 1997, the program was in place.

The associations for the disabled were widely consulted and their recommendations make up the core of the agreement.

The QBOA has launched a wide-scale effort to maintain the support of participating carriers. In addition, the carriers and their association are committed to ensuring that the Quebec "To Accompany" card will be recognized by other Canadian associations of intercity coach carriers.

## **Intercity Coach "To Accompany" Card**

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

The "To Accompany" card is now part of the service offering of intercity bus carriers. As the QBOA is a key player, the card is recognized by all 27 member-companies.

The card has become a standard service that travellers with restricted physical ability and their attendants have come to expect and the card. In Quebec, 2,699 cards have been issued.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Partnership between the private and public sectors and organizations for persons with restricted physical ability;
- Modest resources requirement;

## Access to Travel Website

**Member Economy:**  
Canada

**Category:**  
Transportation

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## PROJECT

The Access to Travel (ATT) Website contains information on accessible bus, train, plane and ferry transportation, on government policies and programs and on public and private local transportation, as well as links to other accessible-transportation sites. It is an initiative of the federal government, managed by Transport Canada, the federal transport ministry.

### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- The goal of the Access to Travel Website is to provide persons with disabilities, their caregivers, and seniors, information on accessible-transportation services across Canada, in order to make their travelling experiences easier and more enjoyable;
- The ATT Website project enables Transport Canada to help the Canadian government fulfill its commitment to create a more inclusive society in Canada, while encouraging interdepartmental collaboration and private/public sector partnerships;
- The Access to Travel Website provides information in both of Canada's official languages, English and French.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

A study conducted by Transport Canada in the summer of 2000 found that Canadians and international travellers with disabilities face numerous challenges and difficulties when travelling in Canada. Differences were found in accessible transportation services among communities and a lack of readily available information. This made trip planning onerous and time consuming. In response, the Access to Travel Website was developed to address these difficulties by the federal government in partnership with several provincial governments, as well as the private and not-for-profit sectors.

Although the ATT Website is directed primarily to persons with disabilities, it also provides information for their families and caregivers. The information on the site is also useful for seniors.

The Website was built on the principles of simplicity, relevancy, currency, comprehensiveness, and consistency in order to be useful to as many persons as possible. Users have an opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions on the Website or file a complaint against a service provider. If a service provider wishes to be listed on the Website there is a mechanism in place for it to do so.



## Access to Travel Website

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

Transport Canada manages the ATT Website project. Two Transport Canada employees are directly responsible for developing and maintaining the Website, with support from another four working in information management and technology.

Provincial and territorial representatives provide contact information and local accessible-transportation information that is used to populate the Access to Travel database.

Kéroul, a not-for-profit organization, and the Ontario Community Transportation Association (OCTA), both gathered data on accessible transportation in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario.

Private sector consultants, Once Corporation and subcontractor IntoInfo Inc. initially designed the ATT Website. The technologies used for the project are an Oracle database, a Microsoft Web and NT server, Dreamweaver, Coast Webmaster 5.0, and Lynx software, as well as accessibility software (JAWS, Zoomtext, Bobby).

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

The Access to Travel Website was developed by Transport Canada in collaboration with the Canadian Transportation Agency, the Canadian Tourism Commission, Human Resources Development, Canada's Office of Disability Issues, and the Canadian Government On-Line office. Kéroul, OCTA, and the Canadian provinces and territories are all instrumental towards furthering the Website.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

The first phase included two project stages:

Step 1: Conceptual design

Step 2: Design and development, Website and database testing, communications and marketing, manuals, translation, travel and promotion

Phase 1 was completed on March 31, 2002, and the Website was officially launched on April 4, 2002.

Phase 2 took place during 2002-2003, which involved the signing of co-operative agreements with the Canadian provinces and

## Access to Travel Website

territories, promoting the Website, and conducting usability testing and accessibility testing.

Phase 3, 2003-2005, involved continued development of the site by building public-private partnerships, collaborating with provincial and territorial governments, and not-for-profit organizations.

The future challenges of the project are:

- Usability testing, user feedback, and monitoring help to determine how the Access to Travel Website can better serve persons with disabilities, seniors, all Canadians, and our international friends travelling in Canada. The Access to Travel team aim to improve both the content of the Website and ease of understanding and finding information on the Website;
- To continue to collect more data from local communities and to market the Website;
- To explore Website improvements such as connecting accessible transport to accessible travel through gathering information on local tourist attractions, hotel accommodations, restaurants, and other sites and facilities;
- To integrate the Access to Travel project with the projects of other government departments.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

During the Access to Travel Website's first year, there were 330,000 successful hits, with a typical user staying on the site an average of 24 minutes. The number of hits rose from roughly 20,000 per month during the spring/summer of 2002 to about 40,000 per month during the winter of 2003.

More travellers are becoming aware of the availability of accessible transportation in Canada.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- A Web-based database of shared information;
- A public, private and not-for-profit sector partnership;
- A clear plan of action, with milestones;
- A clear commitment to communicate government policy and information on accessible transportation.

## The Canadian Transportation Agency

**Member Economy:**  
Canada

**Category:**  
Transportation

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### PROJECT

The Canadian Transportation Agency's mission is to administer transportation legislation and Government of Canada policies to help achieve an efficient and accessible transportation system by education, consultation and essential regulation.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that persons with disabilities obtain access to Canada's transportation system by eliminating unnecessary or unjustified barriers.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The Agency is an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal that makes decisions on a wide range of economic matters involving federally regulated modes of transportation (air, rail and marine), and has the powers, rights and privileges of a superior court to exercise its authority. Along with its roles as an economic regulator and an aeronautical authority, the Agency works to facilitate accessible transportation, and serves as a dispute resolution authority over certain transportation rate and service complaints.

The *Canada Transportation Act* is the Agency's enabling statute to implement the federal government's transportation policy. The National Transportation Policy, as set out in paragraph 5 of the *Canada Transportation Act*, requires that carriers or modes of transportation carry traffic under fares, rates and conditions that do not constitute an undue obstacle to the mobility of persons, including persons with disabilities. To that end, the Act gives the Canadian Transportation Agency responsibility for setting, administering and enforcing accessibility standards for all modes of transportation under federal jurisdiction (air, rail, marine and extra-provincial bus transportation).

With the approval of the Governor in Council, the Agency may make regulations to eliminate all undue obstacles in the transportation network governed by the Act. More specifically, the Agency may regulate:

- The design, construction or modification of means of transportation and related facilities and premises, and their equipment;
- Training of personnel interacting with persons with disabilities;
- The tariffs, rates, fares, charges, and terms and conditions of carriage of persons with disabilities; and

## The Canadian Transportation Agency

- Communication of information to persons with disabilities.

The Agency may also conduct investigations to determine whether unnecessary obstacles to the mobility of persons with disabilities exist.

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

The Agency currently has seven permanent members. A staff of about 270 employees assists the members in their decision-making process and provides administrative support.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

The Agency has its own Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Committee's objective is to work with the Agency in developing regulations and standards which will enhance the accessibility of transportation by removing undue obstacles to the mobility of persons with disabilities. The Committee is composed of representatives of organizations of and for persons with disabilities, industry representatives and, other government departments. The Agency meets with the members of its committee yearly.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

The Agency's program of accessible transportation includes four main activities:

- Complaint Resolution;
- Development of Regulatory Instruments;
- Public consultation and Liaison;
- Monitoring.

#### *Complaint Resolution*

If a person with a disability encounters an obstacle while travelling, that person may choose to file a complaint with the Agency. The Agency must then consult those involved and make a decision within 120 days unless the parties agree to an extension. If the Agency determines the problem is an "undue obstacle," it may order corrective action. For example, the Agency may order the removal of the obstacle, the payment of compensation or both.

In many instances, a traveller with a disability may resolve a problem by talking with the transportation service provider. The Agency also uses mediation to help parties come to an

## The Canadian Transportation Agency

agreement. However, if the problem is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, the Agency can settle the dispute through a formal complaint process.

### *Development of Regulatory Instruments*

In accordance with the government policy of setting standards using alternatives to regulations, the Agency also adopts regulatory instruments having a voluntary application: guidelines, codes of practice, reports and recommendations.

Two sets of regulations were adopted by the Agency:

- Terms and Conditions of Carriage. Under Part VII of the Air Transportation Regulations, certain air carriers are required to provide various services and information to travellers with disabilities. The regulations cover Canadian air carriers operating services within Canada with aircraft of 30 or more seats; and
- The Personnel Training Regulations, applying to carriers and terminal operators in the air, rail and marine modes.

The Agency also adopted the following instruments, which the transportation industry has committed to implement on a voluntary basis:

- The Air Code of Practice (1997) to improve accessibility of aircraft of 30 or more passenger seats);
- The Rail Code of Practice (1998) to improve passenger rail car accessibility and terms and conditions of carriage and;
- The Ferry Code of Practice (1999) to improve accessibility of ferries of 1000 gross tonnes or more.

In 1997, the Agency also released the Communication Barriers Report to address barriers to communication facing persons with disabilities who travel by air. Following the issuance of this report, the Agency is currently developing a new Code of Practice: Removing Communication Barriers to Travellers with Disabilities to improve access to transportation-related information for persons with disabilities for air, rail and ferry terminals and carriers. A User's Guide, which accompanies the new Code, is also currently being developed to help industry implement the provisions of the Communications Code. The Guide will be made available at the same time as the Code.

## The Canadian Transportation Agency

### *Public consultation and Liaison*

Communicating with Canadians is a priority for the Agency in achieving an efficient and accessible transportation system. Sharing information and obtaining the views of a wide variety of people are important activities to raise awareness of the problems experienced by travellers with disabilities. The Agency also recognizes the vital role of accessible transportation to the tourism sector and promotes tourism to persons with disabilities in Canada and abroad.

The Agency consults regularly with groups and associations representing persons with disabilities, government departments and representatives from the transportation industry. It also studies issues and conducts surveys relating to accessibility in the transportation industry and promotes awareness of transportation accessibility regulations and, their products and program through liaison and presentations at conferences and trade shows and international events.

Agency programs are directed at informing and consulting transportation service providers and users. Through printed material, the Agency's Web site and participation in public events, the Canadian Transportation Agency provides information about its services, and also the rights and obligations of transportation operators and their customers.

The Agency publishes a newsletter and a number of consumer publications to better inform and educate travellers. These are also available electronically on the Agency's Website as follows:

- Air Travel Guide ([http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/guide/index\\_e.html](http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/guide/index_e.html)).
- Air Travel Accessibility Survey Report ([http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/surv-rpts/atd\\_survey/cover\\_e.html](http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/surv-rpts/atd_survey/cover_e.html));
- Reservation Checklist ([http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/reservation/checklist\\_e.pdf](http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/reservation/checklist_e.pdf));
- "Moving Ahead" Newsletters ([http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/newsletter/index\\_e.html](http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/newsletter/index_e.html));
- This newsletter is distributed to over 4,000 individuals included on the Agency's database. In 1998, the Agency released a special issue on tourism and transportation. The Agency also provides information in multiple formats.

## The Canadian Transportation Agency

### Monitoring

The Agency monitors the implementation of all of its codes of practice on transportation accessibility and Personnel Training Regulations. Monitoring questionnaires are used to collect data on the implementation of all criteria in the codes. The results are included in monitoring reports available to the public and presented to the Agency's Accessibility Advisory Committee. This information is also verified by site visits by the Agency's field enforcement agents.

The implementation of the Personnel Training Regulations is evaluated on an on-going basis. Transportation Service Providers under federal jurisdiction submit their training plans for all staff who interact with the travelling public and these plans are reviewed and monitored by Agency staff.

In the year 2000, the Agency conducted a survey of persons with disabilities who travelled by air. The survey was designed in part to measure the effectiveness of the Agency's regulations and codes of practice in improving air travel accessibility and also to establish where gaps remain in the accessibility of the air travel network, and which groups of persons with disabilities were particularly affected (additional information and results of the survey are available at the Agency's Website at [http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/surv-rpts/atd\\_survey/cover\\_e.html](http://www.cta-otc.gc.ca/access/surv-rpts/atd_survey/cover_e.html)).

The Agency also evaluates the effectiveness of its public information tools, such as the Air Travel Guide, by conducting surveys and consultations with travellers with disabilities.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

In 2002, the Canadian Transportation Agency completed its sixth full year as an independent quasi-judicial administrative tribunal and regulator of transportation under federal jurisdiction.

The results of the industry surveys are encouraging. Most of the criteria are at a level of full or high compliance in all three modes and only a few are at a level of low or non-compliance. This shows the positive impact of the Agency's codes of practice and monitoring on the transportation industry. It also shows that carriers want to improve the levels of accessibility of their fleets.

## The Canadian Transportation Agency

Generally, the criteria with a low rate of compliance included colour contrasting and tactile identification of equipment and accessories, such as signs and markers for call buttons. On average, rail carriers showed improvement in the identification of accessible washrooms, tactile markers on accessories in accessible washrooms, and emergency window exits.

In 2003, the Agency will present the survey results of the three codes of practice to its Accessibility Advisory Committee and send copies of the reports to all carriers that participated in the surveys.

Transportation service providers are encouraged to continue their commitment to overall fleet accessibility. They should regularly assess themselves against the requirements of the codes, remembering that all new equipment should meet or exceed the codes' accessibility criteria.

The Agency will continue to conduct periodic surveys to measure and report on improvements in accessibility.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Global approach to accessibility issues for persons with disabilities;
- Implementation of regulations and standards;
- Partnership with public and private sectors and with organizations for persons with disabilities;
- Information, guidance and publications available on the agency's Website;
- Resolution of complaints.



## 4.2 PHYSICAL PLANNING AND ACCESSIBILITY

Economy	Initiative
New Zealand	<i>The Building Act (1991)</i>
United States	The Access Board, a federal agency committed to accessible design
Mexico	Promotion of the technical aspects of accessibility for tourism establishments
Canada	Evaluation and accreditation program of accessible tourism sites and facilities

## The Building Act (1991)

**Member Economy:**  
New Zealand

**Category:**  
Physical Planning and  
Accessibility

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### PROJECT

The way New Zealand has integrated access for persons with disabilities within its building legislation serves as a useful example for countries undertaking similar building control changes.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To draft a building legislation that is performance based;
- To include accessibility for persons with disabilities in the only legislation with building requirements;
- To apply the legislation nationally.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The *Building Act 1991* sets down the law for building work in New Zealand. Building requirements in other legislation were to be revoked and replaced by or included in the new building legislation. In developing the accessibility requirements within the *Building Act*, it was expected that when properly implemented, good design for access would enable independent use of the built environment by all individuals regardless of age and mobility, enhance the usability of buildings and reduce the possibility for injury by accident. This meant that access for persons with disabilities in buildings would inevitably become a part of the new building legislation, rather than be contained in specific disability legislation.

The provision of accessibility in public buildings/spaces within the Act (Section 47(a)) arose out of recognition of the needs of and the difficulties faced by persons with disabilities in New Zealand when accessing and moving within public buildings. New Zealand has become known internationally for its advancement in implementing access requirements. In New Zealand the 2001 statistics showed that nearly one in five individuals, or 19 percent of the population, lives with the long-term effects of a disability. In addition, it is estimated that 15 percent of the world's population has a disabling condition so it is not unreasonable to assume that a significant proportion of visitors to New Zealand have restricted mobility.

#### MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT

The New Zealand government developed the Act as part of its ongoing program of policy development and implementation.

#### PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

## The Building Act (1991)

It was essential that the development of the new legislation include a consultation process with organizations for persons with disabilities to match the objectives held for the new legislation with the accessibility provisions contained in the existing legislation.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

The purpose of the *Building Act* is to provide for necessary controls for building work and to ensure that buildings are safe and sanitary, have means of escape from fire, and to co-ordinate these controls with other controls relating to building use and the management of natural and physical resources. The act aims to achieve this by controlling the construction, alteration, demolition or removal of a building through the building consent process, and a performance based national building code. It prohibits certain changes of use of a building unless appropriate upgrading is carried out and enforces annual inspections to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all occupants.

The Building Regulations 1992 were established under the *Building Act* and generally cover various administrative procedures as well as setting out the Building Code.

Local government bodies have administrative and enforcement powers under the *Building Act*. A local government body can only grant a building consent for a new building if it fully complies with access provisions of the Building Code. The local government body reserves the right to close down or condemn a building. It may also carry out work on the building at the owner's expense, or issue a notice requiring work to be rectified and other work to be stopped in the meantime.

A local government body will, on the satisfactory completion of building work, issue a code compliance certificate indicating that all necessary provisions of the New Zealand Code have been satisfied. A "warrant of fitness" is provided to confirm that the inspection, reporting and maintenance requirements contained in the compliance schedule have been fully met with during the previous 12 months. A copy of the building warrant of fitness must be publicly displayed where it can be seen by users of the building.

## The Building Act (1991)

### Accessibility within the *Building Act*

The Act requires access for persons with disabilities in all new constructions and alterations. Under Section 47(a), titled “Access and facilities for persons with disabilities to and within buildings”, particular regard is given to the need to provide access and facilities so that persons with disabilities can enter and carry out normal activities and processes in buildings.

Subsection 1 of this Section notes that “in any case where provision is being made for the construction or alteration of any building to which the public are to be admitted, whether on payment or otherwise, reasonable and adequate provision by way of access, parking provisions, and sanitary conveniences, shall be made for persons with disabilities who may be expected to visit or work in that building and carry out normal activities and processes.” The provisions of the section apply to, but are not be limited to, buildings, and parts of buildings (including driveways, access ways, and passages within and between complexes and developments, and associated landscaping, if any) that are intended to be used for a number of purposes. Purposes include commercial buildings, land, sea and air passenger terminals and facilities, hotels and motels, museums, art galleries, restaurants and numerous others.

The mandatory requirements for access are implemented, in practice, on the basis of the “accessible route.” This is defined, in the Building Code, as an access route usable by persons with disability. It is a continuous route that can be negotiated unaided by a wheelchair user. The route must extend from the street boundary or parking area to those spaces within the building required to be accessible to enable persons with disabilities to carry out normal activities and processes within the building.” With the exception of such places as plant rooms, the accessible route applies to all parts of a building and its environs. The two most important elements of the “accessible route” are that it is continuous and that it enables unaided, or independent, access. In other words, every person, including a person with disability, can approach, enter and use a building without requiring assistance. The Act’s mandatory requirements include specifications regarding toilet doors, which must slide or open out. Bath controls should be reachable from a seated position, and ramps must have easy gradients for independent use.

## The Building Act (1991)

### PROJECT RESULTS

Implementation has encouraged a number of accommodation providers to recognize the value of travellers with disabilities. There are now accessible bed and breakfasts, home stays, holiday parks with tourist flats/cabins and hotels and motels. However, the degree of access to and ease of movement around the buildings varies among different providers.

These benefits in terms of increasing ease of access have been noted by a number of visitors to New Zealand. Travellers comments include the high level of accessibility in all sizes of towns, and that accessible accommodation could be found at reasonable rates. The *Building Act* helps ensure that all kinds of accommodation in terms of price range are accessible to persons with disabilities. It applies to the building of and alterations to all kinds of establishments, not just those that are regarded as “luxury” accommodation providers.

The Lofts Apartments, Queenstown, on New Zealand’s South Island, are an example of a tourism provider that has extended accessibility beyond the requirements of the Act. The tourist accommodation provides flat access to a fully accessible apartment with excellent security. It has a wheelchair-accessible kitchen with a low bench, knee space and a wheel-in pantry. It also has a large suite with a toilet, wet area shower and laundry.

### KEY ELEMENTS

- Performance based legislation;
- Objectives to be achieved rather than prescribing construction methods. The emphasis is on how a building and its components must perform as opposed to how the building must be designed and constructed;
- Access requirements for persons with disabilities in all new constructions and alterations included in the *Building Act*;
- Nationally applied legislation: The *Building Act* is the only legislation with buildings requirements;
- Administrative and enforcement powers of local government bodies under the *Building Act*.

## The Access Board: A Federal Agency Committed to Accessible Design

**Member Economy:**  
**United States**

**Category:**  
**Physical Planning and Accessibility**

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### PROJECT

The Access Board is an independent federal agency devoted to accessibility for persons with disabilities. Created in 1973 to ensure access to federally funded facilities, the Board is a leading source of information on accessible design.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To develop and maintain accessibility requirements for the built environment, transportation vehicles; telecommunications equipment, and for electronic and information technology, in the federal sector;
- To provide technical assistance and training on these guidelines and standards;
- To enforce accessibility standards for federally funded facilities.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The Board is structured to function as a coordinating body among federal agencies and to directly represent the public, particularly persons with disabilities.

The Board develops accessibility requirements under several laws and follows a process common to most federal regulations, which provides an opportunity for public comment. These laws include:

- *Architectural Barriers Act*, a law requiring access to facilities designed, built, altered, or leased with federal funds;
- *Americans with Disabilities Act*, a major civil rights law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability in the private and public sectors;
- *Telecommunications Act* (Section 255), which requires access to new telecommunications and customer premises equipment where "readily achievable";
- *Rehabilitation Act*, and amendments to section 508 to ensure access to electronic and information technology in the federal sector.

In developing accessibility requirements, it has become standard practice for the Board to establish advisory or regulatory negotiation committees.

### MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT

The Access Board operates with about 30 staff and a governing board.

## The Access Board: A Federal Agency Committed to Accessible Design

About half of the governing board is made up of representatives from most of the federal departments.

The other half consists of members of the public appointed by the President to four-year terms. Every year the Board elects officers, including a Chair and Vice-chair. These posts alternate between a public and a federal member.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

Advisory committees and regulatory negotiation committees allow interested groups, including those representing designers, industry, and persons with disabilities, to play a substantive role in the Board's development of guidelines, which are then proposed for public comment.

The Board routinely coordinates with private-sector standards organizations. Such coordination has a twofold purpose: it allows the Board to encourage or enhance the coverage of accessibility by industry standards and also advances the harmonization of Board guidelines and industry standards.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

An increasing awareness of the problems many Americans were encountering with barriers to accessibility led Congress to take a careful and extensive look at the problem in 1965. Congress created the National Commission on Architectural Barriers to Rehabilitation of the Handicapped. The Commission's charge was to determine the extent to which architectural barriers prevented access to public facilities, report on what was being done to eliminate barriers, and propose measures to eliminate and prevent barriers. The Commission's report, issued in June 1968, laid the groundwork for succeeding legislation.

Congress began implementing the Commission's recommendations by enacting the *Architectural Barriers Act (ABA)* on August 12, 1968. In passing this law, Congress aimed to make federal facilities fully accessible to persons with disabilities. Congress also expected the federal government's activity in eliminating barriers to set an example for state and local governments and private industry.

Several years after the *Architectural Barriers Act* had become law, Congress observed that compliance had been uneven and that no initiatives to create federal design standards for accessibility were underway. Clearly, one central agency needed to take charge of enforcing the *Architectural Barriers Act* and ensuring development of design standards. The concept of such

## The Access Board: A Federal Agency Committed to Accessible Design

an agency began to take shape as Congress considered the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. Section 502 of this law created the Access Board, originally named the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board. The Board was charged with ensuring federal agency compliance with the *Architectural Barriers Act* and proposing solutions to the environmental barriers problems addressed in the act.

Compliance was the primary essence of the Board's function. As originally constituted, the Board had Cabinet-level officials of eight federal agencies responsible for nearly all federal programs that affected the design, development, and construction of buildings and facilities. The eight were the departments of Health, Education and Welfare; Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Labor; Transportation; the General Services Administration; the Veterans Administration; and the U.S. Postal Service.

The *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1978* added to the Board's mandate and changed its structure and composition. The new law authorized the Board to establish minimum accessibility guidelines under the ABA and to ensure compliance with the requirements. The Board's technical assistance role was expanded to include providing help on the removal of barriers including for the first time, communication barriers in federally funded buildings and facilities. In addition, the Board was directed to provide technical assistance to private entities to the extent practicable.

During the 1980s, the Board continued its work in enforcing and providing technical assistance on the ABA as it applied to federal buildings and facilities. Increasingly, however, the Board was asked to take part in research and testimony before Congress on a range of accessible design issues which would come together as part of the civil rights legislation known as the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* enacted in 1990.

The *Americans with Disabilities Act* extends to persons with disabilities civil rights and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in the private sector and in state and local governments, public accommodations and services, including transportation, provided by public and private entities. The act also provides for telecommunication relay services for persons with hearing or speech impairments.

The *Americans with Disabilities Act* expanded the Board's mandate to include:



## The Access Board: A Federal Agency Committed to Accessible Design

- Developing the accessibility guidelines for facilities and transit vehicles covered by the law;
- Providing technical assistance and training on these guidelines; and
- Conducting research to support and maintain the guidelines.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

The Board provides technical assistance on all of its guidelines and standards. It maintains a toll-free telephone line to answer questions but also receives inquiries by mail, e-mail and fax. In 2002, The Board responded to more than 13,280 inquiries, most of which came from designers, architects, code officials, manufacturers and persons with disabilities. The majority of questions concerned the ADA Accessibility Guidelines, the most widely used document issued by the Board.

The Board provides training on its design requirements and routinely participates in programs and conferences throughout the country sponsored by other organizations.

The Board also uses its Website at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov) to provide guidance and interpretative materials on its design criteria, including answers to frequently asked questions and on-line training modules. The site had more than 1.2 million user sessions and 10.3 million hits over the course of 2002.

The Board was established to develop and enforce design requirements for facilities covered by the *Architectural Barriers Act* (ABA). The Board enforces the ABA through the investigation of complaints it receives concerning particular facilities. The first step of an investigation is to determine whether the facility is covered by the law. The next step is to verify whether the facility meets the applicable accessibility standards. If it does not, then the Board will work with the entities responsible to develop a plan to bring the facility into compliance. Cases are closed only after the necessary corrective action is completed.

The Board supplies various printed materials to the public free upon request. These include copies of all of its guidelines and standards and related guidance materials, such as technical bulletins, design guides, and manuals. More than 30 such publications are available in print and on the Board's Website.

The Board also funds research on various aspects of accessibility relating to architecture, communications, and transportation.

**The Access  
Board: A Federal  
Agency  
Committed to  
Accessible  
Design**

**KEY ELEMENTS**

- Global approach to accessibility issues for persons with disabilities;
- Development of accessibility requirements under several laws;
- Partnership with public and private sectors and with organizations for persons with disabilities.

## **Promotion of the Technical Aspects of Accessibility for Tourism Establishments**

**Member Economy:  
Mexico**

**Category:  
Physical Planning and Accessibility**

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### **PROJECT**

Publication of a technical manual on accessibility in a built-up environment, and organization of seminars for tourism service providers.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To promote the construction of adequate spaces for persons with disabilities;
- To foster a culture of accessibility;
- To increase the integration of persons with restricted physical ability into the community.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project started in January 2001 in Mexico.

An Accessibility Recommendations manual was designed by the Office for the Representation and Integration of Persons with Disabilities (a federal agency). Its specifications are based on a universal design of products and environments to be usable by all persons. The manual contains technical requirements for accessibility of public open spaces, and access to public buildings and facilities by persons with disabilities. These technical requirements are to be applied in the design, construction, and renovation of buildings and facilities.

Technical seminars were designed to encourage appropriate construction.

Under the supervision of the Tourism Ministry, municipal authorities convene meetings of various associations and interested members of the public to encourage participation in the seminars.

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

Publication of the document and organization of the seminars were funded by the federal government. The Tourism Ministry coordinates the information seminars project for the tourism sector.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

The Tourism Ministry works with the support of other federal entities and the collaboration of the various states and municipalities.

## **Promotion of the Technical Aspects of Accessibility for Tourism Establishments**

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

The project for promoting the technical aspects of accessibility was established as a consequence of actions taken by the Office for the Representation and Integration of Persons with Disabilities, which reports to the Office of the President.

The tourism sector was involved in the project to foster accessibility of new constructions and the restoration of establishments in the major tourism destinations of Mexico.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

The publication of 5,000 printed copies of the *Accessibility Recommendations* manual were distributed throughout Mexico and the manual is also available on the Internet at <http://discapacidad.presidencia.gob.mx/?P=6>

The seminars are attended by diverse groups and associations.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Collaboration among different levels of government;
- *Accessibility Recommendations* are based on universal design.

## Evaluation and Accreditation Program for Accessible Tourism Sites and Facilities

**Member Economy:**  
Canada

**Category:**  
Physical Planning and Accessibility

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### PROJECT

For over 25 years, Kéroul has been developing an accreditation program designating hotels, restaurants, museums and historical sites as adapted, partially accessible, or inaccessible to persons with restricted physical ability.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the accuracy of information on accessibility;
- To evaluate the accessibility of tourism infrastructures;
- To disseminate information on accessibility;
- To provide tools to tourism and cultural stakeholders who wish to improve the accessibility of their sites and facilities.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project started in 1979 in the province of Quebec.

Tourism products present a number of shortcomings that challenge persons with restricted physical ability. Kéroul provides an important service by identifying accessible tourism facilities— including cultural sites— so clients have fair and accurate knowledge of the degree of accessibility. This information is then published in *Accessible Quebec* guides and directories on the tourism industry.

Kéroul evaluates the accessibility of all tourism establishments in the province of Quebec in co-operation with tourism industry partners, namely: the Corporation de l'industrie touristique du Québec (lodging), Camping Quebec (camping), the ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (restaurants and food services) and other networks.

The completed questionnaires are compiled and analyzed by Kéroul's research department. By the end of 2002, over 6,200 questionnaires had been completed.

### MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT

A research and development consultant supervises the work of the evaluators and compiles and computerizes the data. Qualified persons with disabilities are also hired to do evaluation work.

## Evaluation and Accreditation Program for Accessible Tourism Sites and Facilities

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

Many organizations are involved in the evaluation process:

- Corporation de l'industrie touristique du Québec (Quebec tourism industry corporation): this association's evaluators are trained by Kéroul and complete the accommodation questionnaire;
- Camping Quebec: the sites are evaluated by an employee of the association;
- Regional tourism associations: yearly publish the list of accessible sites annually in their directories;
- Tourism Quebec: recognizes Kéroul's role in disseminating information on accessibility and allows Kéroul to present a Special Mention award at the Grands prix du tourisme québécois;
- Tourism industry quality program: Kéroul's criteria are the only ones recognized for assignment of ratings (adapted, partially accessible, and inaccessible).

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

Kéroul has developed a survey process for evaluating and accrediting tourism sites:

- Identify needs of clientele (evaluation priorities);
- Analyze supply and demand per industry sector (pre-survey);
- Design questionnaires in terms of sectors to be evaluated;
- Train evaluators;
- Evaluate establishments;
- Analyze and compile data;
- Data processing;
- Disseminate information to clientele (print and Internet-based guides published by Kéroul or the tourism industry);
- Disseminate information to tourism industry (provide examples and advice to help establishments become accessible);
- Present a special mention award at the Grand prix du tourisme québécois to a stakeholder that has made efforts to improve the accessibility of its site or establishment.

A complaint system has been set up for dissatisfied clients to submit their comments.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

Only seven percent of establishments are considered adapted and 27 percent partially accessible. Accreditation is slowly but gradually increasing the number of accessible tourism and cultural establishments in Quebec.

## Evaluation and Accreditation Program for Accessible Tourism Sites and Facilities

***Fair and accurate information for travellers with restricted physical ability has been disseminated.*** Various documents have been produced to encourage owners and managers to improve the accessibility of their establishments. A guide, *Building Design and Hospitality... to Better Serve Your Clients*, contains many design and renovation suggestions to improve the accessibility of buildings and establishments. Also, the pamphlet “Accès sans obstacles” provides resources and services for owners and managers of tourism and cultural establishments.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Creation of a survey process for evaluating and accrediting tourism sites and establishments;
- Evaluation process done by persons with restricted physical ability;
- A single set of criteria for assignment of accessibility rating;
- Incorporation of the criteria into the Quebec tourism industry’s quality program;
- Publication of a guide, *Building Design and Hospitality... to Better Serve Your Clients*, which is available in French and English, and is being translated into Thai.

### 4.3 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Economy	Initiative
Japan	Study on public information symbols
Canada	Market study on the behaviours of tourists with restricted physical ability in Canada
	Universal accessibility standards



## Study on Public Information Symbols

**Member Economy:**  
Japan

**Category:**  
Research and Development

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## PROJECT

Development and application of universally public information symbols to be used in signage at airports, stadiums, and other public facilities in Japan.

### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To enable international travellers, including persons with disabilities, to recognize the graphic symbols at a glance at public facilities;
- To standardize pictograms that can be easily understood by international tourists who might not understand the language;
- To apply universal design principles.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The resulting pictograms are action-oriented images featuring designs of simple forms that attract attention and ensure easy interpretation. Based on principles of universal design, the pictograms are easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

- A substantial inventory of approximately 1,200 pictograms was collected from 63 institutions, from which candidates for standardization were selected. The symbols of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the pictograms developed by the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) were also examined;
- The Japan Sign Design Association and Kenzo Nakagawa of NDC Graphics designed the first symbols, using the graphic elements by a study committee and under its editorship;
- The graphic symbols were evaluated for their appropriateness by means of comprehension and visibility tests specified by the ISO and Japan Industrial Standards Association (JIS).

### MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport and the Nippon Foundation co-sponsored the project.

### PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

The project was made possible with the support and co-operation of a wide range of fields, including government organizations such as, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and

## Study on Public Information Symbols

Transport; the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry; the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; the National Police Agency; and the Fire and Disaster Management Agency; travel and distribution associations; consumer groups; groups for persons with restricted physical ability; welfare groups; academic experts; and designers.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

Graphic symbols used at high-traffic public facilities such as public transportation, tourist attractions, sports venues and commercial facilities can be effective means of providing important information. In Japan, these symbols were used inconsistently from facility to facility, not being standardized by the Japanese Industrial Standards association (JIS).

In 1999, the Eco-Mo Foundation, a public service organization affiliated with the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, established the Study Committee of Public Information Symbols.

The task of the committee was to standardize and improve the public information symbols, with growing attention from the perspective of normalization and establishing a barrier-free society.

The study committee spent the first year collecting existing public information symbols internationally, classifying categories, selecting referents variants and studying descriptions.

During the second year, the designed symbols were tested for visual recognition and understanding, which were followed by further study and modifications. The committee included graphic designers as well as groups for persons with disabilities, who all took part in the tests. The symbols were also posted on the Internet, and opinions from the general public were collected.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

The Study Committee settled on a total of 125 public information symbols. In 2002, the Japanese Standards Association adopted 104 of the symbols as the Japanese Industrial Standards.

## **Study on Public Information Symbols**

Pilot projects were initiated in Tokyo, Shinjuku, and other large train terminals have already started to employ some of the new pictograms. They also are being used throughout the new World Cup stadium and also at the East Asian Games held in Osaka.

The pictograms are available on the Eco-Mo Foundation Website (<http://www.ecomo.or.jp>) together with usage guidelines. The standardized pictograms, though copyrighted, that can be freely used by anyone.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Commitment of public-private partnership to work together to develop standardized pictograms as public signage.

## Market Study on the Behaviours of Tourists with Restricted Physical Ability in Canada

**Member Economy:**  
Canada

**Category:**  
Research and Development

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### PROJECT

A Canada-wide market study that draws a detailed picture of the tourism and culture behaviours and needs of Canadians with restricted physical ability.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To improve knowledge of the travel culture, behaviours and needs of Canadians with restricted physical ability;
- To help supply-side stakeholders gain a better understanding of the expectations of this market;
- To sensitize the tourism industry and general public to the importance of the persons with restricted physical ability.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Persons with restricted physical ability represent approximately 15 percent of the overall Canadian population, and nearly 80 percent of this population segment is prepared to travel fairly frequently in Canada and abroad. These are the main conclusions of an initial survey commissioned by Kéroul in 1995. Kéroul decided to take this research further and commissioned a new study to gather objective data on the tourism behaviours of persons with restricted physical ability.

For the purpose of the survey, persons with restricted physical ability defined as having:

- Physical disabilities;
- Mobility problems;
- Agility problems;
- Obesity;
- Small stature;
- Vision problems;
- Hearing problems.

### MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT

The study was carried out by the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), Department of Urban and Tourism Studies, and by the polling firm of Léger Marketing.

### PRINCIPAL PARTNERS:

The study was funded by Canada Economic Development, a federal agency mandated to promote regional economic development in Canada, and by Tourisme Québec, a destination marketing organization for the province of Quebec.

## **Market Study on the Behaviours of Tourists with Restricted Physical Ability in Canada**

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

The survey included five overall dimensions:

- The socio-economic characteristics of the population being studied;
- Departures and travel behaviours in the previous year;
- The accessibility of tourist sites and attractions during these trips;
- The factors (elements) and activities that encourage travel;
- Trips planned in the upcoming year.

The target population was Canadian adults with restricted physical ability who could be reached by telephone and who were able to express themselves in either French or English.

The sample was drawn using the Canada Survey Sampler software. It was stratified, by province, and non-proportional to the weight of the provinces, with a random sample in each province. The data were weighted on the basis of the most recent national census (1996) to reflect the actual demographic make-up of each province.

The polling firm Léger Marketing collected the data during spring and summer of 2000. The firm conducted 1003 interviews, with a response rate of 65 percent and a maximum statistical margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percent, 19 times out of 20. Each interview lasted an average of 15.6 minutes.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

The study proves the considerable potential of the market of travellers with restricted physical ability, given the large proportion of these individuals who travel, and the fact that their stays are longer than those observed in the general population. Each year, more than 2.2 million people with restricted physical ability take trips of at least one night, more than 80 kilometers away from home. The average duration of the last trip taken by these travellers was eight days.

According to the survey, the economic repercussions related to tourism and travel for this segment market is estimated to US \$1 billion per year.

Persons with restricted physical ability take an average of four trips annually and rarely travel alone. In 82 percent of cases, they are accompanied by one or more individuals.

## **Market Study on the Behaviours of Tourists with Restricted Physical Ability in Canada**

The essential criterion in these travellers' choice of a tourist destination is accessibility of its facilities, services and attractions. Their main information sources are travel agents, acquaintances and the Internet.

Obstacles that hinder access to tourist sites and facilities affect one-third of this clientele either directly or indirectly. The impact of the obstacles increases with the degree of mobility impairment.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- A study conducted under supervision of knowledgeable researchers;
- Representative study sample with reliable useful results;
- Published report in both English and French.

## Universal Accessibility Standard

**Member Economy:**  
Canada

**Category:**  
Research and  
Development

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### PROJECT

A formal system of universal accessibility standards for tourism establishments and infrastructure.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To reduce or eliminate the obstacles to international tourism faced by persons with restricted physical ability;
- To ensure that all of the standards developed for those with mobility, sight and hearing impairments are recognized nationally and internationally.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project consisted of researching and designing a coherent system of accessibility standards that takes into account the many realities of people with restricted physical ability and closely approaches the recognized standards of other countries.

The standards feature five levels of accessibility:

- **Level 1: Total accessibility** - Facilities meet all of the accessibility standards for persons with impaired mobility, including those in motorized wheelchairs and/or those with limited use of their upper limbs;
- **Level 2: Partial accessibility** - The establishment is accessible to independent persons in wheelchairs, with some restrictions. In general, these requirements meet the needs of users of manual wheel chairs, which are easier to manoeuvre;
- **Level 3: Reduced accessibility** - The establishment is accessible to persons with impaired mobility who are able to walk. Facilities do not meet the requirements of level 1 or level 2;
- **Sensory: Visual impairment** - The establishment is accessible to persons who are visually impaired. **Hearing impairment** - The establishment is accessible to persons with impaired hearing;
- **Small stature:** The establishment is accessible to persons of small stature.

### MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT

The Office des personnes handicapées du Québec (Quebec Board for Disabled Persons) assumed the US \$6,900 cost of the project

### PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

Several organizations supported the project, notably: La société logique, a resource center for architectural accessibility; the

## Universal Accessibility Standard

Quebec Paraplegic Association; L'association québécoise des personnes de petite taille (The Quebec Association for Persons of Small Stature); the Quebec Centre for the Hearing Impaired; the Quebec Federation of Senior Citizens; le Regroupement des aveugles et amblyopes du Québec (Quebec Organization of the Blind and Visually Impaired).

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

In November 1998, Kéroul, a Quebec organization that promotes tourism and culture for persons with restricted physical ability, saw a need for universal standards of accessibility that could provide simple, reliable information for tourists with restricted physical ability. The consulting firm of Groupe DBSF was commissioned to conduct this study.

Initially, the following standards were analyzed: the Quebec Building Code; the Alberta Access Program; the U.S. *Americans with Disabilities Act*; France's Ministry of Housing; and Great Britain's Tourism for All accessibility standards. Also, the recommendations of the following organizations were analyzed: the European Union's "Access to tourism establishments by persons with disabilities"; l'Association québécoise de loisirs pour personnes handicapées (Quebec Recreational Association for Persons with Disabilities); and Kéroul's own recommendations.

The analysis compared the requirements of each standard, assessed its relevance, identified similarities and differences, and enabled the assessment of various levels of accessibility, in accordance with the requirements of the standard.

The analysis of comparable standards produced the following findings:

- Standards were found to be directed at two main types of infrastructure and establishments, specifically:
  - Infrastructure common to public establishments (tourism and non-tourism) such as public telephones, restrooms and parking facilities; and
  - Establishments and facilities specific to the tourism industry, such as campgrounds, movie theatres, and airports.
- Simplicity was a vital characteristic in facilitating the universal understanding and application of a standard;
- A universal standard had to have the potential to reduce the major differences between accessibility levels;



## Universal Accessibility Standard

- Cultural and functional differences in perception were allowable, but the standard had to be specific enough to enable assessment of its application;
- The identifying, directional, regulatory and informational values of signs posted in public places had to be respected. Also, the presence of auditory, visual and tactile signals was essential.

Universal accessibility standards were developed from these results, following extensive consultation with organizations representing persons with restricted physical ability.

Following are the main reasons behind the choices made in developing the proposed standards:

- The standards must, above all, promote the independence of persons with restricted physical ability;
- The implementation of new standards must allow a smooth transition from one system to another for tourism establishments that already meet accessibility criteria. The standards are purposely not overly restrictive in order to ensure compliance by a greater number of establishments. The focus is on the essential rather than the desirable;
- The requirements called for by the standards must command the respect of persons with physical disabilities; however, such persons must be willing to accept that they will not necessarily be guaranteed the same comforts they have at home;
- Because of the limitations specific to the various types of disabilities, a distinction was made between persons with sensory disabilities (visual or hearing impairment), persons of small stature, and persons with impaired mobility;
- The width requirements for wheelchair accessibility are based on the minimum and maximum measurements of a wheelchair, as well as its turning radius.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

The standards were adopted by the Quebec organizations representing persons with restricted physical ability, specifically individuals with motor, visual or hearing impairment.

The accessibility criteria are now being incorporated into the Quebec tourism industry's Quality Program. This program aims at supporting the tourism companies to raise the level of service

## **Universal Accessibility Standard**

offered to the customers, to guarantee uniformity and consistency.

The study has resulted in the development of the only known set of standards, officially recognized by the Quebec tourism ministry, for categorizing the accessibility of tourism sites and establishments for travellers with physical, visual or hearing impairment.

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Accessibility criteria based on a study of comparable elements in Canada, the United States, England, France and the European Union;
- Partnership with organization for persons with disabilities;
- Flexible standards system for gradual implementation.

#### **4.4 INFORMATION AND PROMOTION**

<b>Economy</b>	<b>Initiative</b>
Australia	Tourism Challenge — Access for All
New Zealand	Accessible New Zealand, visitor's guide for travellers with restricted mobility

## **The Tourism Challenge – Access for All**

**Member Economy:  
Australia**

**Category:  
Information and  
Promotion**

**Contact:  
Tourism Division  
Level 1, 33 Allara street  
GPO Box 9839  
Canberra, ACT 2600  
Australia**

**Mrs. Trudi Ridge  
Regional and Niche  
Tourism  
Business Development  
Group**

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Fax:  
+612-6213-7093**

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trudi.ridge@industry.gov.au**

**Website:  
www.industry.gov.au**

### **PROJECT**

An information kit on tourists with disabilities, covering topics such as accommodation, legislation and marketing from a tourism perspective.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To increase the participation of persons with disabilities in tourism by improving access and services and by promoting these tourism opportunities within the community of persons with disabilities;
- To provide information and guidance to tourism service operators/providers about how to better cater for tourists with disabilities and offered guidance on how to build on existing minimum levels of accessibility.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

In the lead up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games there was a need to increase awareness among tourism service providers of the persons with disabilities and the opportunities this market presents.

In 1997, the former Office of National Tourism (now the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources) produced The Tourism Challenge – Access for All information kit designed as a guide for tourism service providers.

The material for the project include:

- An information kit – loose pages covering issues relevant to service providers, supplemented with material from other agencies, including case studies or showcase profiles of commendable businesses and services;
- A contact kit – summary of contact details for tourists with disabilities;
- An Internet page – publishing material from information and contact kit, with links to relevant tourism and disability support sites. The Internet page also includes feedback mechanisms such as access counter and response option;
- A database - list of disability or tourism organizations, publications sorted for ready reference; for international inquiries, summary of guidelines on important issues such as airline policies, guide dogs, medical benefits reciprocity are also available.

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

## The Tourism Challenge– Access for All

The project was fund by the former Office of National Tourism.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

The Office of national Tourism undertook the project in consultation with the Office of Disability, Department of Health and Family Services.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

Preliminary research and anecdotal evidence indicated that there was (and still is) a scarcity of tourism information available to persons with disabilities or to industry service providers. In 1997, it was crucial that the industry be prepared to meet the needs of tourists with disabilities. Therefore, this kit was developed in consultation with a Steering Committee representative of government, industry and community groups.

It was decided that the main targets for this project were tourism services providers and persons with disabilities. The primary focus was the domestic market; a small amount of material relevant to international tourists would be compiled.

The information kit consisted of eight information sheets designed to be used either individually or as a complete package and presented in a folder for ready reference.

The Information kit covers the following topics:

**Accommodation:** Accessible accommodation does not necessarily mean incurring major expense. Often modifications can be simple and inexpensive, yet effective.

**Service Training:** Service techniques can make or break a reputation. Extra awareness of the needs of persons with disabilities is no great burden. Staff can be encouraged to develop relevant skills to assist these clients. Often simply raising staff awareness, good communication and flexibility may be all that is needed.

**Marketing:** A good business operator knows the importance of advertising. The challenge is to make certain that the target market is aware of what the business offers them. There are some suggestions for promoting businesses to persons with restricted physical ability, their families and friends.

## The Tourism Challenge– Access for All

**Legislation:** Legislation exists in Australia to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Therefore it is necessary to consider whether premises used by the public and the goods and services offered are accessible to everyone.

**Tourism Stories:** It is important to realize that persons with disabilities are no different from other members of the community. They are consumers of goods and services and as potential customers, they and their friends and families, will be attracted to a business that makes its services and facilities accessible.

**Contact Details:** There are a number of relevant organizations and agencies that can provide further information on issues raised in the Kit. These are listed on the relevant information sheet.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

The International Day of Persons with a Disability on December 3, 1997, provided an opportunity for the launch of the kit. The following four-pronged distribution strategy was adopted:

- An introduction letter from the federal minister and bulk copies of the kit were distributed to regional offices. For example, state and territory Tourism Authorities, Commonwealth Department state offices, commonwealth and state health departments and the Australian Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled (ACROD);
- An introduction letter from the federal minister and one kit was sent to local governments, regional tourism centers and tourism hospitality facilities, including contact details to obtain further copies;
- An advertising flyer was sent to universities, institutes of technology and training colleges;
- Advertising flyers were inserted in certain newsletters and publications.

A number of tourism service providers have made positive steps towards providing a high standard of service to persons with disabilities and are seeing the benefits. They provide examples of best practice for the tourism industry.

## **The Tourism Challenge– Access for All**

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Information sheets designed to be used either individually or as a complete package and presented in a folder for ready reference;
- Provision of useful introduction for operators looking to improve service to the special needs market;
- Partnership between representatives of government, industry and community groups;
- Effective distribution strategy.

## **Accessible New Zealand, Visitor's Guide for Travellers with Restricted Mobility**

**Member Economy:**  
New Zealand

**Category:**  
Information and Promotion

**Contact:**

**Mrs. Alexia Pickering -  
Accessible Options  
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Wellington,  
New Zealand**

**Mrs. Alexia Pickering**

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**+644-976-9944**  
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**+644-976-9940**

**E-mail:**  
**alexiapickering@clear.net.nz**

**Website:**  
**www.travelaxess.co.nz**

### **PROJECT**

A publication providing information on the accessibility of New Zealand's accommodations and attractions.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To inform travellers, tourism decision makers, visitor information providers and inbound tour operators on the accessibility of accommodations and attractions;
- To create an awareness of the value of persons with disabilities as a consumer market to the tourism sector.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

*Accessible New Zealand* is a 300+-page visitor guide for travellers with disabilities. The publication provides information on the accessibility of New Zealand's best known attractions and includes a list of accessible accommodation options.

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

The author and one contractor worked for a year on the design and development of the database, which can be accessed via the Internet.

For the visits of all sites assistance with transport and accompanying on trips were needed.

Employees at the publishing company gave their time to design the cover and format and checked all data for inaccuracies. This work took at least three months and was done in consultation with the author.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

Volunteer assistance from friends and family.

McLaren Brown Publishing provided in-kind support for graphic design and publishing services.

The project was financed with the help of several partners:

- 20 percent sponsored by Waikato Business and Development Board (grant for feasibility study), Monkton Trust (charitable trust) – research grant and McLaren Brown Publishing;
- 30 percent financed by Tourism New Zealand and Air New Zealand;
- 50 percent financed by the author, Alexia Pickering.



## Accessible New Zealand, Visitor's Guide for Travellers with Restricted Mobility

### PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The project started in 1995, coordinated from Hamilton, in New Zealand.

There is a demand from travellers with restricted mobility for accurate and comprehensive information on the accessibility of accommodation and attractions within New Zealand.

Travel guidebooks were available in several other global destinations. There was an opportunity to provide similar information for travellers to New Zealand with restricted mobility.

Alexia Pickering first identified the need for accessible New Zealand travel information following travels to countries where accessible travel visitor guides were available. She received funding from the local Business and Development Board (now Industry New Zealand, a central government agency), to conduct a business feasibility study on the publication of accessible travel information. The study resulted in the design and development of a database of accessible accommodation ([www.travelaxess.co.nz](http://www.travelaxess.co.nz)) and a free telephone information service. This information proved popular and it became clear that there was not only a demand for a visitor guide that could be used during travels around New Zealand, but that the guide should also comprise an independent assessment of sites by a person with disabilities.

The author spent three years gathering information, carrying out several tours throughout both the North and South Islands. She received funding from a charitable trust (Monckton Trust) to undertake this research and relied heavily on volunteer support from family and friends who assisted with the logistics of travelling around the country and visiting each of the sites within the guide. One of the most common comments from the feasibility study was that the term "access" as used by accommodation operators was often limited to entranceways. The author personally inspected each site to assess the accessibility of other amenities including shower, toilet and kitchen facilities.

Alexia Pickering spent six months full time compiling and writing up the results of her research. After seeking quotes from publishers and recognizing that she would be unable to fund the publication of the guide independently, she approached prominent tourism organizations for sponsorship. Air New Zealand agreed to purchase a full-page colour advertisement worth US \$2,400. Tourism New Zealand, the government agency responsible for the offshore marketing of New Zealand as a

destination, purchased 1,000 copies in advance and this provided seed funding that allowed the publication of the guide to proceed. Publishing company McLaren Brown contributed graphic design, formatting and staff time.

## Accessible New Zealand, Visitor's Guide for Travellers with Restricted Mobility

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

5,000 copies of *Accessible New Zealand* were printed and of this total, 2,000 were distributed to travel and tourism agencies, 1,000 to the disability sector and the remainder was distributed to retailers for sale.

*Accessible New Zealand* was launched in 2000 at New Zealand's Parliament. The launch was attended by a number of dignitaries including the Minister of Disability Issues and the Minister of Tourism as well as members of both the tourism and disabilities sectors. Many of those copies were distributed to travel and tourism agencies. The Travel Agents Association of New Zealand received and distributed 600 copies to their membership. Tourism New Zealand provided copies to all of their international offices and each of the 90 official visitor information centers within New Zealand. Each of the operations listed in the guide also received a free copy. Whitcoulls, New Zealand's largest chain of booksellers, was the sole retailer of *Accessible New Zealand*.

Positive feedback on *Accessible New Zealand* from domestic and international visitors to New Zealand. Many acknowledged that the guide was key to the selection of New Zealand as a visitor destination as it demonstrated that consideration was given to the needs of travellers with disabilities.

The guide has assisted in creating a far greater awareness of accessible travel by the tourism sector in general.

Alexia Pickering has now been approached to provide New Zealand accessibility information for Jason's Travel Media, which produces over 30 travel publications within Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific Islands. Given that accessible travel information will be contained within mainstream guides, there are no plans to reprint *Accessible New Zealand*. However, more detailed updated information will still be available from the Travel Access database at [www.travelaccess.co.nz](http://www.travelaccess.co.nz).

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- A publication focusing on information on accessible tourism sites and services;
- A database of accessible attractions and accommodations available on the Internet;
- A guide of sites independently assessed by a person with disabilities; Distribution network of a guide to travel and tourism agencies throughout New Zealand.

## 4.5 TRAINING

<b>Economy</b>	<b>Initiative</b>
Philippines	Training sessions for the transportation sector
Canada	Training sessions on customer services offered to travellers with disabilities and seniors persons

## **Training Sessions for the Transportation Sector**

**Member Economy:  
Philippines**

**Category:  
Training**

**Contact:  
National Council for the  
Welfare of Disabled  
Persons  
R/F SRA Main Building,  
North Avenue, Diliman  
1100 Quezon City  
Philippines**

**Mrs. Catalina L. Fermin  
Executive Director**

**Phone:  
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Fax:  
+632-929-8879**

**E-mail:  
council@ncwdp.gov.ph**

**Web site:  
www.ncwdp.gov.ph**

### **PROJECT**

Training on Assisting the Disabled and Elderly Persons Who Travel (ADEPT).

#### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

- To generate awareness among participants on the Accessibility Law, particularly provisions relating to transport facilities;
- To acquaint participants with policies of implementing agencies on the prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities;
- To enhance the mobility of persons with disabilities and the elderly to make their travelling smooth, safe and trouble-free;
- To develop appropriate attitude, knowledge and skills of the participants on the proper handling and care of persons with disabilities before boarding, while on board and when disembarking from transport facilities.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

The project "Training on Assisting the Disabled and Elderly Persons Who Travel (ADEPT)" was initiated in 1994 by the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons (NCWDP), the national government agency mandated to formulate policies and coordinate activities of all agencies, whether public or private, concerning disability issues.

The training project came about with the enactment in 1983 of the Accessibility Law, which is "An Act to enhance the mobility of disabled persons by requiring certain buildings, institutions, establishments and public utilities to install facilities and other devices." The law sought to promote the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities to participate fully in social life.

A manual entitled "Guidebook on Assisting Disabled and Elderly Persons Who Travel" was developed to help train personnel and crew of land, sea and air transportation firms. This aims to make them confident and at ease in assisting the elderly and persons with disabilities who travel. Participants develop appropriate attitudes, knowledge and skills on the proper handling and care of such clients.

The National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons coordinates schedule, venue and resource persons.

## **Training Sessions for the Transportation Sector**

The training utilizes lectures, hands-on/practicum, role playing and simulation exercises. An open forum follows at the end of each module on the following areas of concern:

- Guiding visually impaired passengers;
- Assisting passengers with restricted physical ability/physically impaired passengers;
- Communicating with hearing impaired passengers;
- Handling passengers with learning disability.

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

- Experts are invited to serve as resource persons during the training, for which they are paid an honorarium.
- The manuals are provided by the NCWDP, but the cost of the venue and the resource persons honoraria are borne by the requesting agency.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

Many organizations contributed to the training project:

- De La Salle University - Health Sciences Campus;
- University of the Philippines, College of Allied Medical Professions;
- Resources for the Blind;
- Philippine School for the Deaf;
- Cupertino Center (Foundation for Retarded Children);
- Autism Society Philippines, Inc.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

The course and its manual were developed by the Task Force on Transportation of the NCWDP Inter-Agency Committee on Accessibility now referred to as the Sub-Committee on Accessibility and Telecommunications. Trainings has already been conducted in the sea, land and air transport sectors and will continue upon request and as the need arises.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

The training provides safe, trouble-free travel and enhanced mobility for travellers with disabilities as well as the elderly persons.

The training contributed to the fulfillment of Council's mission and the implementation of the Philippine Accessibility Law.

## **Training Sessions for the Transportation Sector**

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Air, land and sea personnel trained for assisting persons with disabilities as well as the elderly;
- Project initiated by organizations dedicated to persons with disabilities.

## Training Sessions on Customer Services for Travellers with Disabilities and Seniors Persons

**Member Economy:**  
Canada

**Category:**  
Training

**Contact:**  
Kéroul  
4545, avenue Pierre-De  
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Succursale M.  
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Canada  
H1V 3R2

**Mr. Jean-François Lavoie**

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1-514-254-0766

**E-mail:**  
jflavoie@keroul.qc.ca

**Website:**  
www.keroul.qc.ca

### PROJECT

Development and delivery of courses in hospitality and customer service for those working with persons with disabilities and seniors, and given by persons with restricted physical ability.

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To develop the hospitality and customer service skills of culture and tourism industry personnel who work with persons with disabilities and seniors;
- To improve the quality of services offered to persons with disabilities and to seniors.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

“Welcoming Ways” is a course on service delivery to persons with disabilities and seniors in Quebec. The client's needs and the responsibilities of the employees being trained are analyzed. There are several modules available. The basic training is a three-hour course for 12 to 18 individuals. If the participants' duties require them to provide physical assistance or, for instance, transfer a person with disabilities, an additional module on transfer and assistance techniques is added. Similarly, if the training is for airline personnel, a module on handling wheelchairs is added.

For students of tourism, the training takes place in classrooms. For personnel already working in the tourism field, the training is conducted at the place of business or in a hotel meeting room. At the end of each session, the participants fill out a course evaluation form, which helps to improve the course content. The training has also been adapted to the demands of the business world, and the health and transportation sectors. The course is tax deductible for companies and organizations.

#### Course content:

- The clientele and the market;
- Description of client groups;
- Perceptions and attitudes;
- Hospitality and assistance techniques;
- Practical exercises.

A special feature of the course is that the trainers are persons with restricted physical ability. Simply being in contact with a person with disabilities during the training helps the participants feel more at ease with these clients, as well as understand their needs.



**Training sessions  
on customer  
services for  
travellers with  
disabilities and  
for seniors  
persons**

**MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

The course is available for sale at US \$45 per individual attending. Two types of training are available: private (for pre-established groups) and public (which allows individual registrations). A fact book and certificate are distributed to participants. A provincial grant covers two-thirds of the course expenses, when it is sold to Quebec learning institutions.

The trainers have university-level training in human resources management or relevant experience in group facilitation.

**PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

The training is certified by Emploi Québec (the provincial agency responsible for sustainable employment measures and offering services for job placement and labour market information) and by the Conseil québécois de ressources humaines en tourisme (a provincial forum responsible for human resources development strategies in tourism).

The course is recognized by Tourisme Québec (the provincial destination marketing organization) as part of its tourism industry quality program.

**PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

The course has been available since 1983. Kéroul has one staff member dedicated to refining and improving the course and another who markets the course to members of the tourism and cultural industry in Quebec and Canada. The course is available in both English and French. A group of six trainers in three cities complete the team.

In response to training requests from outside Canada, Kéroul has developed a “training the trainers” program, which consists of a weeklong workshop intensive.

**PROJECT RESULTS**

Since 1983, over 20,000 persons have been trained. The training, initially offered to tourism industry employees and tourism and hotel students, has been adapted to the demands of the business world, the culture industry, and the health and transportation sectors.

Air, motor coach and public urban transit carriers and a number of employees of museums and tourist attractions, hotels, and now financial institutions and government have also taken the training.

**Training sessions  
on customer  
services for  
travellers with  
disabilities and  
for seniors  
persons**

**KEY ELEMENTS**

- Training offered by persons with restricted physical ability;
- Flexible training adapted to the needs of businesses;
- Training recognized by government human resource agencies;
- Eligible training expense under provincial tax law;
- Constantly updated training and improved based on participant evaluations.

#### **4.6 ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO PERSONS WITH RESTRICTED PHYSICAL ABILITY**

<b>Economy</b>	<b>Initiative</b>
Japan	The study group, Tourism For All
Canada	K�roul, tourism and culture for persons with RPA

**Tourism for All****Member Economy:**  
**Japan****Category:**  
**Organizations**  
**Dedicated to Tourism**  
**for Travellers with**  
**Restricted Physical**  
**Ability****Contact:****Tourism for All, Japan**  
**C/O Office Kinuta, 29-4**  
**Kinuta 1-chome**  
**Setagaya-ku, Tokyo**  
**157-0073**  
**Japan****Mr. Iichiro Kusanagi****Phone:****+813-3416-0428****Fax:****+813-3416-0428****E-mail:****kusanagi@tourism.jp****Website:****www.yasashiitabi.net****PROJECT**

Tourism for All is an organization dedicated to making travel possible for persons with restricted physical ability.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

- To create a social environment in which everyone, including those with restricted physical ability, can travel comfortably without worry about inaccessibility.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

Since its creation in 1991, the organization has taken up the issues of "barrier-free" and "universal" design. These are among the principles that guide the actions and initiatives of organization. Tourism for All has two sub-groups, named "Manabi-tai" (Learning Group) and "Asobi-tai" (Playing Group).

The activities of Manabi-tai are diversified and involve:

- Organizing gatherings on specific themes, such as attendant care during travel or legislation for traffic access;
- Developing various research projects, relating mainly to a barrier-free travel environment;
- Evaluating the accessibility of tourism sites and establishments. For example, before the opening of the Nagano Paralympic Games in 1998, the group was consulted to evaluate the accessibility of the sites and facilities;
- Making representations to various levels of government and tourism authorities to promote accessibility;
- Participating in travel and tourism industry conferences and trade shows.

The members take what they learn at the study meetings into the workplace, among which are travel agencies, airlines, and hotels.

**MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

The organization employs one administrative clerk (for correspondence and accounting) and a number of volunteers handle the activities of the board of directors and the publication of the newsletter.

Tourism for All operates with limited resources. The budget for 2001 was US \$5,300. The organization funds its operations mostly through annual membership dues and contribution from participants in activities, such as lectures.

## Tourism for All

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

There is a co-operative relationship with the Association for Travel-Free in Yokohama, and with Accessible Morioka.

The Japanese Association of Travel Agents (JATA) provides the site for the monthly meetings financially supports the promotional activities of Tourism for All.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

Tourism for All was founded in 1991 by a group of 10 individuals. Originally it was a study group to research ways to promote an environment in which every individual could travel freely, without physical restrictions or barriers.

Over the years, the group has consolidated its activities, although its financial resources remain limited. While it continues to meet monthly, the group has broadened its action to include research, education and the dissemination of information on accessibility, as well as representations to stakeholders in the tourism industry.

After 12 years of existence, Tourism for All has over a 100 members, all of whom play an active role in the organization.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

In 1995, Tourism for All produced a book entitled *A Travel Handbook for The Disabled*, published by Gakuensha Publications.

Tourism for All has held two symposiums on travel for the elderly and for persons with restricted physical ability (1994 and 1997).

### **KEY ELEMENTS**

- Partnership with an Association of Travel Agents;
- Modest resources and volunteers participation.

## **Kéroul, Tourism and Culture for Persons with Restricted Physical Ability**

**Member Economy:  
Canada**

**Category:  
Organizations  
Dedicated to Tourism  
for Travellers with  
Restricted Physical  
Ability**

**Contact:  
Kéroul  
4545 avenue Pierre-De  
Coubertin,  
C.P. 1000, succursale M.  
Montréal, Quebec  
Canada  
H1V 3R2**

**Mrs. Lyne Ménard**

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+514-252-3104  
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lmenard@keroul.qc.ca**

**Website:  
www.keroul.qc.ca**

### **PROJECT**

Kéroul, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1979, has as its objective to make tourism and culture accessible to persons with restricted physical ability, as well as to their families and travelling companions. Kéroul has worked closely with the industry for many years to adapt and develop better tourism products. To aid in achieving this objective, Kéroul created an advisory “VIP Committee” to bring together stakeholders from the tourism, business and government sectors.

### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

- To promote and foster the development of tourism and culture among persons with restricted physical ability;
- To increase the accessibility of tourist sites and cultural events for persons with restricted physical ability;
- To sensitize business and organizations operating in the area of tourism and culture to the needs of persons with restricted physical ability.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

Kéroul, houses a range of complementary tourism services under one roof. Its research department identifies accessible places, its travel information department and *Accessible Quebec Guide* provide information on accessibility, and its training department educates personnel on providing hospitality and service to seniors and persons with disabilities.

To ensure that it has the necessary tools to achieve its objectives, Kéroul prepares a new development plan every three years. Some of the priorities are: Increase the accessibility of Montreal’s underground city; develop and offer an “Accessible Canadian Route”; promote awareness of Kéroul’s training products among enterprises involved in Quebec’s quality certification process; create business relationships with cultural enterprises; identify accessible cultural and farm tourism sites in Quebec; identify accessible accommodations across Canada; offer adapted packages Canada-wide; create strategic alliances with disability organizations on a Canada-wide and international scale; have the system of standards developed by Kéroul recognized by international organization.

Kéroul also participates each year in the World Congress for Travellers with Disabilities, organized by the American Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality.

## **Kéroul, Tourism and Culture for Persons with Restricted Physical Ability**

### **MAIN RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE PROJECT**

Kéroul is staffed by nine employees and a number of contract workers. The organization also hires evaluators during the summer and has eight regional trainers. A good number of its employees, evaluators and trainers are persons with restricted physical ability.

Kéroul has had a VIP Committee since 1993. This is an advisory committee composed of 30 persons from the business and tourism milieus, who provide Kéroul with sound advice on a variety of subjects.

The organization funds its activities through the sale of courses and publications, an annual benefit evening, and contributions by members. In addition, almost 60 percent of its budget comes from grants from various Quebec government departments and agencies, including the tourism, sports and recreation, culture and communications, and transport ministries.

### **PRINCIPAL PARTNERS**

Over the years, Kéroul has created a network of contacts with 30 or so federal and provincial government departments and agencies. Kéroul's principal partners in the tourism industry are the regional tourism associations, hotel associations, and restaurant and food services associations. Kéroul is also a member of Regroupement Loisir Québec, a private organization representing 105 sports and recreation associations, the Quebec council on leisure, the International Bureau of Social Tourism, the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montréal, the confederation of provincial organizations for disabled persons, Tourism Montréal, and Culture Montréal.

Private partners also support Kéroul, such as Van-Action, a company dedicated to manufacturing accessible taxis and accessible shuttles, which has put an adapted van at the organization's disposal.

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

While hitchhiking in his wheelchair, in the 1970s, the founder André Leclerc realized the extent of the obstacles preventing Quebec from being a tourist destination accessible to persons with restricted physical ability. From that time on, he began approaching tourism establishments to convince them to make themselves accessible and founded Kéroul in 1979. The name Kéroul is derived from «Québec roule» or literally "Quebec rolls."

## **Kéroul, Tourism and Culture for Persons with Restricted Physical Ability**

Initially, Kéroul received subsidies from the federal government. Later, in 1987, Kéroul was recognized by Tourism Quebec, as its official representative on tourism accessibility issues.

### **PROJECT RESULTS**

- Today, Kéroul represents 240,000 persons through its 40 member organizations;
- Kéroul has succeeded in incorporating the issue of accessibility into many programs, standards and recommendations of advisory committees;
- It works in partnership with over 30 federal and provincial departments;
- It is the Quebec Ministry of Tourism's official representative for the evaluation and accreditation of all tourism establishments in Quebec, based on accessibility criteria Kéroul has developed;
- Kéroul also participated in the revision of the Quebec Building Code. The 1995 Code now provides that 10 percent of rooms in accommodation establishments must be accessible to persons with restricted physical ability. A more effective Building Code provides for improved accessibility in new buildings;
- In order to promote accessibility, the provincial and federal governments have improved their tax deduction policies. Certain expenses are now tax-deductible if they relate to making alterations to a building to adapt it to the needs of disabled persons;
- Kéroul has trained 20,000 persons in the tourism industry and responded to 17,000 requests for tourist information over the past 23 years;
- Each year, Kéroul selects, for a special mention award at the Grands prix du tourisme gala, a tourism establishment or site that has demonstrated its commitment to excellence in accessibility;
- Increasingly, Kéroul's services are being solicited on an international level. It receives regular invitations to lecture on the results of its studies and to sensitize tourism stakeholders to the accessibility of establishments and tourist and cultural attractions. Some countries, like Peru and Costa Rica, have developed partnership projects with Kéroul.



**Kéroul, Tourism  
and Culture for  
Persons with  
Restricted  
Physical Ability**

**KEY ELEMENTS**

- Organization totally dedicated to tourism for persons with restricted physical ability;
- Partnership with organizations with similar goals;
- Staff composed with many persons with restricted physical ability;
- Encourages ongoing commitment to the needs of persons with restricted physical ability by sponsoring an annual award.

## **5. CONDITIONS TO PROMOTE TOURISM ACCESSIBILITY AND TARGET AREAS OF INTERVENTION**

### **5.1 OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS**

A number of observations can be made from this report to guide further research and analysis on accessibility issues.

#### **5.1.1 Global Approach**

An important aspect of best practices is a global approach to accessibility issues. Rather than focusing on one particular element in isolation from others, the global approach addresses the problem within a larger context. For example, a successful accessibility project would focus not only on providing accessibility to one attraction, but would also provide links to other attractions by means of an accessible transportation system.

##### *Suggested Opportunities:*

- Develop accessible tourism in a context of national and regional strategies that would help organizations deliver accessible services;
- Develop tourist areas to meet the full range of consumer needs: transportation, accommodation, access to tourism sites and services;

#### **5.1.2 Partnership and Collaboration**

Multi-sector collaboration can generate creative responses to a problem, using resources and talents from the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

Partnerships between organizations can also improve coordination of services and resource utilization.

Partnership offers an opportunity to include all stakeholders in the planning and implementation of projects.

##### *Suggested Opportunities:*

- Identify organizations for persons with RPA and foster their participation in accessibility issues.

- Study, and if necessary, improve existing organizational networks for barrier-free tourism.

### 5.1.3 Gradual Implementation and Flexibility

The promotion of a barrier-free tourism requires gradual implementation, as human and materials resources must be mobilized for a new project. It takes time to implement change, create consensus and engage all stakeholders.

#### *Suggested Opportunities:*

- Develop master plans, with compliance timetables, to undertake the systemic change required to eliminate constraints to accessible tourism.

### 5.1.4 Research and Development

Research is the only way to define the size and features of the market of travellers with RPA and of tracking changes and progress.

#### *Suggested Opportunities:*

- Develop and adopt consistent terminology and criteria for national surveys, in co-operation with organizations representing persons with disabilities;
- Initiate, support and share research on social, economic and accessibility issues that affect the experience of travellers with RPA. Include studies on the population size, its economic value to tourism and the behaviours of such travellers.

### 5.1.5 Information and Promotion

General access is a cause of great concern for persons with RPA and relates to all tourism sectors.

#### *Suggested Opportunities:*

- Develop and disseminate accurate and readily available information on accessible tourism products;
- Provide information and guidance to tourism operators and service providers about how to better cater to tourists with RPA;

- Develop a recognition program, such as annual awards for best accessibility practices;

#### 5.1.6 Training

Education and training, with a focus on awareness and sensitivity, is another target area for future work to promote accessible tourism.

*Suggested Opportunities:*

- Develop educational programs aimed at tourism service providers on disabled persons' right to access and customer services for persons with disabilities;
- Invite the collaboration of organizations dedicated to disability concerns, the tourism industry and the education sector; facilitate the development of the required training programs.

#### 5.1.7 Participation of organizations for Persons with Restricted Physical Ability

The participation of various disability organizations is integral to the successful planning and development of projects.

*Suggested Opportunities:*

- Increase participation of organizations for persons with RPA as advisors to training institutions and policy-making bodies concerned with accessible tourism services.
- Foster partnerships on such activities.

## 5.2 TARGET AREAS OF INTERVENTION

### 5.2.1 Transportation

The transportation sector has improved over the last decade in providing services to persons with RPA. Additional effort, nonetheless, is required to remove the remaining obstacles. This will become increasingly important, as the world population will be aging rapidly in the years to come.

*Suggested Opportunities:*

- Establish accessibility regulations and standards on accessible transportation, working in collaboration with the industry and organizations representing persons with disabilities.

### 5.2.2 Physical Planning and Accessibility

Universal plant design will help travellers with RPA.

*Suggested Opportunities:*

- Initiate regulatory measures to remove obstacles to participation in indoor and outdoor physical environments.
- Offer the community of tourism operators and travellers with RPA information on disability policy and measures to achieve accessibility;
- Develop certification systems based on realistic minimum requirements.

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