



# Progress Report

2024

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# GENERAL

## Summary

Western has made significant progress toward the majority of the goals set in our Accessibility Plan. Our Accessibility Plan consisted of 14 goals with 40 associate actions, of these we have:

- Completed 7 action items
- Made progress on 16 action items
- Have 18 pending action items

We did have to discontinue 2 action items and have worked with our consulting partners and the accessibility working group to establish compensatory actions.

## Provisions of the CTA Accessibility-Related Regulations

Further to the requirements in the ACA, Western Stevedoring is required to meet the applicable provisions of the CTA requirements made under subsection 170(1) of the CTA, which includes the Accessible Transportation of Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR)(SOR/2019-244). Part 1 and Part 4 Divisions 1 and 2.

This plan outlines Western Stevedoring's current and future actions to comply with these regulations regarding:

- Communications of information to persons with disabilities
- Terms and conditions with respect to the transportation of persons with disabilities
- Modifying and posting signs in and around facilities or premises used in the transportation of persons with disabilities
- Training of personnel employed at facilities or premises used in the transportation of persons with disabilities.

Together, the ACA, the CTA and the ATPDR represent a significant step towards creating a more inclusive and accessible society for all Canadians, including those with disabilities. By complying with these requirements, Western Stevedoring can help ensure that we are providing equal access and opportunities to all members of society.

## Accessibility Working Group

WSCL, on behalf of Western Stevedoring, will establish an accessibility working group within a broader Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Our current Accessibility Plan working group is led by:

**Jessie Rai**  
Director, Human Resources  
Western Stevedoring

## Feedback Process

Western Stevedoring is committed to providing an open and transparent feedback process. For more information, to provide feedback, or to request alternative formats of this Plan, please contact Western Stevedoring through one of the following methods:

- Point of Contact: Jessie Rai - Director, Human Resources
- Website: [www.westeve.com](http://www.westeve.com)
- Email: [DEI@westeve.com](mailto:DEI@westeve.com)
- Mail: #15 Mountain Hwy, North Vancouver, British Columbia, V7J 2J9
- Telephone: 1 (604) 904-2800
- Anonymous feedback form: <https://www.westeve.com/contact/>

## Alternative Formats

Western Stevedoring's Progress Reports and Accessibility Plan are available in the following formats:

- Print
- Large Print
- Electronic
- Audio

A Braille copy of Western Stevedoring's Accessibility Plan may be requested:

- By email at [DEI@westeve.com](mailto:DEI@westeve.com)
- By phone at 1 (604) 904-2800 or
- Through our online form <https://www.westeve.com/contact/>

# PRIORITY AREAS

## Area 1: Employment

**Goal 1:** Western Stevedoring will implement additional candidate attraction and recruitment strategies that promote employment opportunities and growth for individuals with disabilities by:

- 1.1 Reviewing policies to ensure that accessibility is fully incorporated into an Anti-Discrimination policy and have it clearly articulated on all job ads and associated job activities by December 2023.

**Status:** Complete

**Action:** We have updated Western's Violence and Harassment Policy to incorporate anti-discrimination and accommodation principles. The Policy has been reviewed and approved by the joint Health & Safety Committee.

- 1.2 Including a statement that encourages applicants to request accommodations during the application process by December 2023.

**Status:** Complete

**Action:** Western added the following statement to all job ads and job postings: "Western Stevedoring is committed to Employment Equity. We welcome and embrace applicants with diverse experiences, abilities, backgrounds and perspectives. If you have preferred pronouns, please let us know when you apply."

Furthermore, we are committed to providing an inclusive and accessible environment. If you require accommodation during the recruitment process, please let us know, and we will work with you to support your request."

- 1.3 Expanding our candidate outreach program to include accessible job boards geared towards underrepresented groups, including people with disabilities, by December 2023.

**Status:** Complete

**Action:** The recruitment team at Western has expanded the reach of our job ads to ensure further visibility and to encourage people with disabilities to apply. We have included the following job boards for our job ads: Wounded Warrior, BC Centre for Ability, Work-Able, Able and Accessible, Work BC, Steps Forward - Inclusion Faculty at UVic, Jobs Ability, Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, Inclusive Employers Hiring Hub.

- 1.4 Creating an annual internship program through British Columbia's Work-Able Internship program and applying in March 2024.

**Status:** Discontinued

As part of Employment Goal 1, Western had committed to creating an annual internship program through British Columbia's Work-Able Internship program and applying in March 2024. However, upon further discussions with Work-Able, Western is not eligible to participate in this program.

As an alternative, we have included Work-Able's job board in our standard list of job boards for all recruitment activity and have begun work with local universities to engage students with disabilities. We hope that we will expand the reach of employment opportunities at Western and we will continue to look for opportunities to bring in staff with diverse abilities.

- 1.5** Establishing at least three community partnerships, such as associations and post-secondary institutions to further promote employment opportunities within the disability community by 2026.

**Status:** In Progress

**Actions:** Western has begun working with two associations and a post-secondary institution to further promote employment opportunities within the disability community:

- The Victoria Disability Resource Centre (VDRC) – Western is working with the VRDC on providing ongoing training opportunities for all our Victoria Cruise employees related to provide accessible services and accommodations.
- The BC Centre for Ability (BCCFA) – Western is working with the Team Lead, Vocational Services at the BCCFA to review job descriptions to ensure plain language, accessible design, and accessibility consideration in our postings.
- The University of Victoria (UVic) – Western has partnered with UVic to identify and provide meaningful work experience for students from underrepresented groups, including those with disabilities.

We will continue to work with the VDRC, BCCFA and UVic to promote accessible employment opportunities while seeking additional partnership where possible.

**Goal 2:** Provide a safe, welcoming, and barrier-free environment for employees with disabilities by:

- 2.1** Providing allyship and unconscious bias training to all managers through the Blue Ocean Brain Platform and other means (as deemed appropriate) starting in 2023.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** We have introduced a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Foundational Training program through Blue Ocean Brain. This program, We Belong: Western's DEI Program aims to provide training and education to help our employees understand and address bias and discrimination in the workplace. The program is designed to help everyone understand and recognize the impact of bias and discrimination and provide them with the tools and skills needed to create a more inclusive and equitable workplace. Our focus is on ensuring that the training is relevant, interactive, and includes diverse perspectives and voices. The training provided was self-paced lessons on a variety of themes including DEI topics as well as personal growth and development.

Additionally, our leadership team and managers participated in a DEI training provided by the Humphrey Group focused on leadership communication skills to facilitate positive interactions between groups of employees and grow the skills, knowledge, and motivation of people to interact with diverse groups. Humphrey Group provided four 1.5-hour highly engaging lessons across the span of 4 weeks, on top of self-paced learning modules and a one-on-one coaching session for each of the participants.

. Our goal is to continue to provide additional opportunities for employees and leadership to participate in training that focuses on promoting an inclusive environment free of bias and barriers.

## 2.2 Collecting feedback from employees on DEI, including accessibility, starting in 2023.

**Status:** In Progress

Our focus has been to first understand the demographics of our employee base. Western is a member of the BC Maritime Employers Association's (BCMEA) Waterfront DEI Council. The DEI Council launched a DEI Dashboard as part of its commitment to measure DEI progress transparently and accurately across the waterfront. The DEI Dashboard contains demographic information about the waterfront workforce and is used as an internal tool to track DEI progress as an industry. Through the DEI Dashboard, Western has access to industry-wide demographic data about the waterfront workforce composition. Data collected is based on the following variables: Sex, Visible Minority, Aboriginal, and Persons with Disabilities.

In late 2021, the BCMEA launched a confidential survey (2021 Diversity Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I) Survey). This survey has been developed in partnership with the DEI Waterfront Council and is being facilitated by Envol Strategies, an HR consulting firm. The survey is expected to run again in 2025.

Going forward, we will look at combining this goal with 2.4 below to better understand the overall employee experience as it relates to DEI.

## 2.3 Establishing a policy to provide employees with disabilities accommodations for training and development opportunities to ensure equal access to career advancement by December 2023.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** Our plan to set up training to support employees who need accommodations at work has been pushed to 2024. The BC Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA) has provided an industry-standard accommodation policy and process that Western will be implementing this year. Although this delayed our policy rollout, we believe having an industry-wide standard will provide a more consistent experience for all employees working on the Vancouver waterfront.

## 2.4 Assess the effectiveness and impact of past manager training related to accessibility and inclusion training programs starting in 2024.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** We began the assessment of our accessibility and inclusion training by surveying employees on their level of satisfaction with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) program provided by Blue Ocean Brain. Roughly 88% of Western's employees have participated in at least

one Blue Ocean Braining course and we received 52 responses to the survey. Overall, the results were very positive with 90% of employees reporting that they found the core lesson to provide moderate to extreme insight into creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment.

25% of employees have requested additional topics related to DEI. We will continue to examine the effectiveness of these programs and look for more ways for our employees and managers to further the understanding of DEI.

- 2.5** Conducting an audit of employee-facing human resources systems and tools to identify barriers and develop a barrier removal plan by 2026.

**Status:** Pending

**Goal 3:** Launch a comprehensive employee communication campaign starting in 2023 to inform them of new accessibility policies and services available to them. Communications will include awareness of disability definitions and common barriers to accessibility.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** We have begun rolling out communication to our employees regarding our accessibility initiatives. We have started with defining disability and common barriers in the workplace to help inform our internal communication standards. This work is closely linked to our initiatives in “Area 4: Communications.”

## Area 2: Built Environment

### Actions

**Goal 1:** Create a physical environment that is free from barriers and provides safe access to all employees by:

- 1.1** Completing the addition of an accessible ramp to the North Vancouver office building by June 2023.

**Status:** Complete

**Action:** A new ramp into Western’s office in North Vancouver was added to the facility in the first half of 2023.

- 1.2** Implementing training for all new employees during onboarding on the proper use of accessibility features throughout the facilities by December 2023.

**Status:** Complete

**Action:** We have completed the “Accessibility Technology Guide” and posted it for employees on the SharePoint Hub. The Guide will be shared with new hires during onboarding to ensure all new employees are familiar with the accessibility features throughout the facilities. Further details on this are provided in “Area 3: Information & Communication Technologies.”



- 1.3** Allocating and communicating a designated quiet space at all work locations for employees by December 2023.

**Status:** Amended & Complete

**Action:** We explored ways to create a quiet space for our employees, but because of limited space, we did not find a suitable location. Therefore, we had to amend the goal. We aimed to ensure that employees could access resources to support a healthy work-life balance and manage stress. As such, we have expanded the coverage of our Employee and Family Assistance Program to provide employees with additional resources.

- 1.4** Conducting a formal inventory and list of upgrades for all common spaces by June 2024, including but not limited to, lunchrooms, washrooms, shower facilities, common areas, access points, and parking spaces that will need to be upgraded with accessibility features.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** Our facilities team has engaged the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) to perform a full assessment of all Western's locations. We are currently in the process of getting a quote from RHF for the assessment and gap analysis to identify best practice measures for accessible facilities.

Once the gap analysis has been completed and we understand what work will need to be done at each of our locations, our on-call contractors will provide a quote to complete the work. This will help us figure out the budget and timeline for making our buildings more accessible.

- 1.5** Establishing a priority list, budget and approvals for all accessibility upgrades by June 2025.

**Status:** Pending

**Action:** Once we have completed the consultation with the Rick Hansen Foundation, we will be able to provide an update on the anticipated budget and timeline for additional upgrades throughout the facility.

**Goal 2:** Provide a barrier-free environment for members of the public travelling through the Victoria Cruise Terminal by:

- 2.1** Establishing designated service animal relief areas outside the terminal, inside the terminal on the path of travel, and in restricted access areas beyond security checkpoints by December 2023.

**Status:** Complete

**Action:** Designated service animal relief areas were added inside and outside the terminal, as well as in the restricted areas beyond security checkpoints at the Victoria Cruise terminal in the first half of 2023.

- 2.2** Conducting a formal inventory and list of upgrades for all areas accessed by the public, including but not limited to washrooms, access points, and parking spaces that will need to be upgraded with accessibility features by June 2024.

**Status:** Pending

**Action:** The Victoria Cruise Terminal will be included in the gap analysis assessment with the Rick Hansen Foundation.

**2.3** Establishing a priority list and budget for all accessibility upgrades by June 2025.

**Status:** Pending

**2.4** Obtaining approval and establishing a timeline for the implementation of all accessibility upgrades by June 2026.

**Status:** Pending

### **Area 3: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

#### **Actions**

**Goal 1:** Ensure that all employees have access to the tools and systems they need to perform their job duties by:

**1.1** Consulting with professionals with lived experience of disability to develop a formal process for employees to request adaptive technology for interpretation and accessibility by January 1, 2024.

**Status:** Complete

**Action:** Western's IT Onboarding Checklist form now includes a section for accessibility. The form is completed by HR and the new employee's manager in consultation with the new employee to ensure any IT-related accessibility tools are provisioned in advance of the employee's first day. Additionally, a new accessibility section has been added to the "IT Policies and Standard Operating Procedures" which will be shared with employees during orientation.

**1.2** Establishing an understanding of employees' need for adaptive technologies, then creating a budget for securing and implementing adaptive technologies requested by employees starting in 2024.

- Identifying government programs that offer employers subsidies to provide adaptive technologies starting in 2024.

**Status:** Complete

**Action:** The IT team at Western has included adaptive technologies including Microsoft native software (Narrator/screen reader, Magnifier, Voice Access, Live Captions, Virtual Assistant) and accessible input devices (adaptive keyboards/mice) in their budget. These tools and systems can be made readily available for all our employees upon request.

**1.3** Amending guidelines for fonts and colour schemes for all digitally published and broadcast communication materials by December 2024 and implementing the guidelines starting in 2025.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** Western works with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor to develop and maintain our website. The vendor conducted a full accessibility audit in 2023 to ensure that we meet Web Content Accessibility Guide 2.1 AA standards. We continue to update our branding guidelines as needed and review them on an annual basis. Additionally, we have implemented standards on LinkedIn, our primary social sharing platform, to ensure alt tags are added to any image or attachment associated with a social post.

**Goal 2:** Further understand the barriers that exist in our ICT infrastructure and ensure plans are in place to remove barriers where possible and upgrade our standards to WCAG 2.2 by:

**2.1** Creating an internal ICT Accessibility Assessment tool by December 2023.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** Our objective to create an internal ICT Accessibility Assessment tool has been delayed slightly to allow Western to work with the BC Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA) and other leaders in the maritime industry to establish industry-wide standards for ICT Accessibility. The BCMEA published an industry-wide assessment tool in early 2024 which will allow us to remain on track for the other two elements of this goal.

**2.2** Conducting an Accessibility Assessment of all ICT systems by December 2024.

**Status:** Pending

**2.3** Establishing actionable goals to address any barriers identified during the assessment by December 2025.

**Status:** Pending

## **Area 4: Communication, other than ICT**

### **Actions**

**Goal 1:** Develop and incorporate a communication standard designed to eliminate barriers and ensure accessibility from the outset by:

**1.1** Establishing a best practice manual that incorporates accessible design principles and communication standards (e.g., plain language) for creating documents, presentations, memos, etc. for all published and broadcast communication materials by December 2024.

**Status:** Pending

**1.2** Providing regular training for key stakeholders on effective communication strategies for accessible communication starting in 2024.

**Status:** Pending

- 1.3** Collecting feedback from employees and the public regarding our overall communication strategy and the level of accessibility starting in 2026.

**Status:** Pending

**Goal 2:** Ensure that all employees have access to training opportunities and career advancement by:

- 2.1** Establishing a process for employees to request accommodations in advance of training sessions to ensure that training platforms and materials are accessible by December 2023.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** Our plan to set up training to help employees who need accommodations for training has been pushed into 2024. As mentioned in “Area 1: Employment,” Western is collaborating with the BC Maritime Employers Association and other employers on the Vancouver Waterfront to create a standard for accommodations across the industry. Although this delay affects our policy rollout, we think having an industry-wide standard will provide a more consistent experience for all employees working on the Vancouver waterfront.

## Area 5: Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

### Actions

**Goal 1:** Incorporate accessibility as a key component in the procurement of goods, services and facilities by:

- 1.1** Including accessibility consideration in the development of a Responsible Procurement policy by December 2026.

**Status:** Pending

**Action:** Western is in the process of establishing a new Enterprise Resource Planning tool that will need to be taken into consideration when revising our Procurement Policy.

- 1.2** Establishing a formal process to re-evaluate agreements with existing vendors to address barriers that exist in the procurement process and delivery of those goods, services and facilities by December 2026.

**Status:** Pending

## Area 6: Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

### Actions

**Goal 1:** Ensure customers and passengers travelling through the Victoria Cruise Terminal are aware of and have access to information about the services and facilities available to them by:

- 1.1** Publishing the following information on our website and in multiple formats by December 2024:

- a. hours of operation
- b. location of the designated parking area
- c. location of designated drop-off and pick-up areas
- d. passenger assistance information, including telephone numbers for accessibility information
- e. wheelchair or electric cart services
- f. location of designated relief areas for service animals
- g. accessible inter-terminal transportation
- h. accessible ground transportation
- i. complaint resolution services
- j. escort passes; and
- k. any other relevant information.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** As the operator of The Breakwater District Cruise Terminal in Victoria, we have posted the following information on our website:

- Passenger assistance information, including telephone number/email for accessibility information
- Wheelchair availability
- Availability of service animal relief areas
- Complaint resolution email/phone number provided

This information can be found on our [Cruise Services Website](#). To further progress toward providing passengers with clear, details information about the services provided at the cruise terminal, Western is working with the Victoria Cruise team to collect the missing information and ensure it is posted to the website. The following information still needs to be added:

- hours of operation
- location of designated parking area
- location of designated drop off and pick up areas
- Information about accessible inter-terminal transportation
- Information about accessible ground transportation
- Information about escort passes
- Map of the terminal identifying key accessibility features, including service animal relief areas.

- 1.2** Conducting an audit of the Victoria Cruise Terminal to assess opportunities to implement accessibility safety measures, such as tactile and high contrast markers on walkways, by 2026.

**Status:** Pending

**Goal 2:** Provide a barrier-free experience for our customers and passengers travelling through the Victoria Cruise Terminal by:

- 2.1** Providing regular accessibility training informed by subject matter experts for public-facing employees starting in 2024.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** Our employees can take part in Disability Inclusion & Awareness Training (DIAT) provided by the Victoria Disability Resource Centre. Additional information has been provided below in the section on “Personnel Training” in “Area 7: Transportation

For more information about the DIAT and the Victoria Disability Resource Centre, visit <https://drcvictoria.com/services/dat/>.

- 2.2** Establishing a point of contact (e.g., an existing customer service desk) at the Victoria Cruise Terminal where travellers can inquire about accessible facilities, request assistance, and/or submit recommendations for improvements to accessibility by 2026.

**Status:** Pending

## Area 7: Transportation

### Area 7.1: Signage

**Goal 1:** Provide cruise passengers with barrier-free access to the Victoria Terminal by:

- 1.1** Establishing priorities, timelines, and budget and securing approvals from GVHA and Western in 2023 for accessibility enhancements (e.g., incorporating Braille on washroom signage).

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** The Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA) had provided Western with a budget to begin sign upgrades at the Victoria Cruise terminal. Upgrades to all ‘wayfinding’ signage have begun on a priority and approval basis. Additional information on the upgrades is provided in the next section.

Tactile signage was previously installed for washrooms and service animal relief areas.

- 1.2** Implementing signage accessibility enhancement priorities throughout the Victoria Terminal by June 2026.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** The GVHA has contracted a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor to design the signs, and Western has contracted a local sign company to fabricate and install the signs. The GVHA’s design was made available to Western on April 1, 2024, and sign installation began shortly thereafter.

### Area 7.2: Personnel Training

**Goal 1:** Ensure the passengers with disabilities have access to the services and support to travel through the Victoria Terminal by:

**1.1** Providing training informed by subject matter experts to all staff who may interact with people with disabilities from the public starting in 2024. The training will include best practices for communicating with travellers, what services to offer people with disabilities, how to provide physical assistance, and how to handle mobility aids and other special equipment including service animals.

- Establishing a timeline for when new employees will receive training and a regular schedule for refresher courses.
- Keeping employees and management accountable for maintaining records of when employees have been trained.

**Status:** In Progress

**Action:** Our employees can take part in Disability Inclusion & Awareness Training (DIAT) provided by the Victoria Disability Resource Centre. This training, also called Anti-Ableism Training, is specifically designed for those working in customer service. It teaches, trains, and offers resources to help create and sustain a fully inclusive business or organization. The initial session was held in April 2024, and we're collaborating with the Victoria Disabilities Resource Centre to schedule more sessions in the future.

For more information about the DIAT and the Victoria Disability Resource Centre, visit <https://drcvictoria.com/services/dat/>.

### **Area 7.3: Terms and Conditions**

Terms and Conditions are a priority area outlined in the Transportation Canada Act. Western Stevedoring is dedicated to ensuring barrier-free access to the Victoria Cruise Terminal for all passengers but is not responsible for establishing tariffs, rates, fares or charges concerning the transportation of people with disabilities.

Where we work with GVHA, carriers, and other entities of WSCL, Western Stevedoring will facilitate, promote, and encourage high standards of accessibility and the removal of barriers.

## FEEDBACK

In the first year following the publication of Western's Accessibility Plan, we have not received any feedback from employees, customers, or the general public. As such, we have been unable to incorporate any feedback into our first Progress Report.

We will continue to work with our accessibility working group to ensure we are actively seeking feedback whenever possible.



# CONSULTATIONS

## Summary

Understanding the lived experience of people with disabilities is a key factor in the development of our Accessibility Plan and our first Progress Report. The Government of Canada's Accessibility Strategy starts with the guiding principle, "Nothing without us"; these Plans and Strategies cannot meaningfully progress accessibility without input and guidance from people with disabilities. Western Stevedoring worked with the British Columbia Centre for Ability (BCCFA) in the review and development of our Progress Report.

## Consultation Process

We provided the BCCFA with a draft of our Plan for their review. We followed this with a live session to discuss the impact and significance of our goals towards creating an accessible workplace and experience for our employees, customers and the public.

The session was hosted via Teams on April 18, 2024, with two members of the BCCFA team present. We inquired about any accommodations that could be made to support the full engagement and participation of the BCCFA consulting team in advance of the meeting.

During the consultation session, each priority area of the Plan was discussed and was accompanied by a presentation visible to all participants. Each of Western Stevedoring's goals and corresponding actions that have been taken over the last year to progress our Accessibility Plan forward were discussed. We asked the members of the BCCFA team the following questions about each action:

1. Is the action written clearly and easy to understand?
2. What are your initial impressions of the actions we have taken?
3. Do you feel that the actions adequately address the needs of people with disabilities?
4. Will the action taken have a positive impact?
5. Is there an alternative action that would have a better impact?
6. Are there any additional actions that you would suggest we take at this time?

## Results

Overall, the BCCFA provided feedback that our Report is well-written using concise and plain language. The BCCFA identified that the Plan follows a logical sequence of actions and that we have made significant progress on our commitments.

The BCCFA also identified a couple of grammatical and language inconsistencies that have been corrected throughout the Report.

## Future Consultations

To truly exemplify the notion of "Nothing Without Us", Western Stevedoring aims to conduct a more robust consultation process. Our goal is to work with additional organizations, collect testimonials and feedback

from our employees and customers, and survey the public (where applicable) for future updates and republications of our Accessibility Plan.