Accessibility Plan and Feedback Process

2024-2025

Cygnet Aviation Accessibility Plan

2024-2027

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Message from the President

On July 11, 2019, the Government of Canada enacted Bill C-81, the Accessible Canada Act (the Act). The Act recognizes accessibility as a human right and sets a goal of a barrier-free Canada by 2040. The Act establishes a framework for preventing and removing barriers in the built environment, employment, transportation, information and communication, and goods and services.

Cygnet Aviation, is committed to creating and fostering a culture of accessibility, working alongside the students, employees, and community members to make it happen. In 2024, Cygnet established an accessibility working group, held listening forums, and conducted employee surveys to help identify existing barriers and potential solutions. Through this work, we have developed a Plan that is informed and proactive, a process that is inclusive and open to receive and incorporate feedback, as well as transparent oversight and reporting commitments.

I am pleased to introduce and share Cygnet Aviation's first 3-year Accessibility Plan – a roadmap for creating a more inclusive and accessible workplace. It is consistent with our commitment to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

This Plan identifies goals and specific actions to be taken over the next three years. It is a living document that will continue to evolve as we learn how to ensure our work environments are inclusive and barrier-free. In this first plan, many of the actions focus on activities and items that will embed accessibility into our daily operations and organizational culture.

As we begin the actions identified in the Plan, we are committed to gathering feedback to learn, improve and update our Plan. On an annual basis over the next three years, we will share our progress: what we have achieved, learned, and updated in our Plan.

Achieving a fully accessible organization by 2040 is not just a legal requirement; it's the right thing to do, and we must all work together to ensure that our workplace culture supports and empowers all employees to reach their full potential in a work environment that is welcoming and supportive.

Sincerely,

Lynne McMullan,
President
Cygnet Aviation Academy LP

General Information

Cygnet Aviation Overview

Cygnet Aviation Academy LP is a professional flight training operation based in Kingston, Ontario. Cygnet's mission is to provide safe, state-of-the-art flight training preparing First Officer ready candidates for Canadian airlines. Cygnet partners with CAE to deliver ab-initio flight training utilizing a fleet of Diamond Aircraft supported by advanced flight simulation training. Working with CAE and Canadian airlines provides Cygnet with direct input on industry best practices and evolving technology to ensure graduates are prepared for direct entry positions.

Cygnet Aviation Academy's Integrated Airline Pilot License Program is approved as a vocational program under the Private Career Colleges Act 2005.

The Accessible Canada Act and Regulations

For federally regulated organizations, the *Accessible Canada Act* was legislated in 2019 with the intent to achieve a barrier-free Canada by January 1, 2040. The Act benefits all Canadians, especially persons with disabilities, by proactively identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility in seven priority areas:

1. employment
2. the built environment (buildings and public spaces)
3. information and communication technologies and communication (ICT)
4. communication (other than ICT)
5. the procurement of goods, services, and facilities
6. the design and delivery of programs and services, and
7. transportation

The Act is to be implemented in recognition of and in accordance with the following principles:

- everyone must be treated with dignity,

- everyone must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the life they are able and wish to have,

- everyone must be able to participate fully and equally in society,

- everyone must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire,

- laws, policies, programs, services, and structures must consider the ways that different kinds of barriers and discrimination intersect,

- persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures, and

- accessibility standards and regulations must be made with the goal of achieving the highest level of accessibility.

The Act defines what constitutes a 'barrier'. The legislation also defines what constitutes a 'disability.'

The Act tasks federally regulated entities with three important requirements to support accessibility:

- Create three-year accessibility plans, in consultation with persons with disabilities, that set out how they will identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility.

- Publish annual progress reports that describe how organizations are delivering upon their accessibility plans.

- Implement processes to collect, manage, and respond to feedback on accessibility, including accessibility plans and progress report.

The Act also establishes a framework for advancing accessibility through a combination of new and existing organizations and positions that administer and enforce the Act and monitor outcomes.

A summary of the *Accessible Canada Act* is available online.

The *Accessible Canada Regulations* operationalize the Act's accessibility planning and reporting requirements.

Accessibility Statement

Cygnet Aviation is committed to the intent of the Act of making Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040. Through this initial, as well as successive, accessibility plans, Cygnet will; identify, remove, and prevent barriers. We will work alongside our students, employees, accessibility working group, community members and partners to create and implement these plans. We are committed to creating and supporting inclusive, barrier-free, working environments to increase the participation of persons with disabilities.

Feedback Process for the Cygnet Aviation Accessibility Plan

The Cygnet Accessibility Plan contact is the Office Administrator. Cygnet employees and the public may provide feedback by;

Mail:
Attn: Office Administrator
685 Gardiners Rd Suite 202
Kingston, Ontario
K7M 3Y4 CANADA

Telephone:

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Telephone: Reception: 416-577-9529

Email: cygnetHR@cygnetaviation.com

Anonymous feedback can be submitted by mail to the address above. All feedback (except anonymous feedback) will be acknowledged within 72 hours of receipt via the method received. All feedback will be catalogued and retained for a period of not less than 7 years. All feedback will be included in regular assessments by the ERG - Accessibility Working Group, and the Disability Management and Attendance Specialist to determine next steps. Feedback received, actions, and plans will be included in the annual progress reports.

Cygnet Aviation commits to providing our accessibility plan in the following formats within 15 days of a request:

- **Print**

- **Large print** (increased font size and clarity)

- **Braille** (a system of raised dots that people who are blind or who have low vision can read with their fingers)

- **Audio** (a recording of someone reading the text out loud)

- **Electronic** (an electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology that is intended to assist persons with disabilities)

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting to employees and the public will be on an annual cycle, as required under the Act. Reporting will include an annual progress report to review achievements and revisions to the Accessibility Plan, as well as to report Plan feedback both from within and outside the organization.

The Human Resources Group will coordinate the monitoring and reporting process and lead the development of the annual progress report. Cygnet executives and managers will work with the Human Resources Group on these activities.

Monitoring and reporting will be informed by consultations with:

- Accessibility Working Group
- Students
- Employees
- Occupational Health and Safety officer
- External partners, as required

Decision-making concerning annual reporting resides with the President of Cygnet Aviation.

Consultations

The development of Cygnet's Accessibility Plan is based on information and findings from internal and external consultations.

Cygnet worked with community members, Trinity Fire, employees, students, and persons with disabilities to identify barriers to accessibility in the work environment. The process included virtual group discussions, phone interviews, online questionnaires, and phone and email submissions. The consultations took place from March to May 2024.

Through the consultation process, participants identified:

- Potential accessible barriers for hiring and onboarding, physical workspaces, communications, training, technology, digital access, and document handling.

- Potential solutions to the identified barriers, challenges, and potential financial impacts.

- Short-term and long-term actions in priority areas were determined.

Cygnet Aviation Action in Priority Areas

Organizational Culture

Goal 1: Create a culture of accessibility, where respect and inclusion are embedded in all aspects of the workplace, and where all employees are empowered and supported to achieve their full potential.

Action 1.1: Provide accessibility learning opportunities to employees and students and identify recommended and mandatory accessibility training in Cygnet's learning matrix.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2024 and ongoing

Action 1.2: Communicate our accessibility statement to students and staff.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2024

Employment

Biases and barriers in the recruitment process lead to persons with disabilities being underrepresented in our workforce and limiting the full participation of all employees.

Goal 2: Implement accessible practices to eliminate and prevent barriers to the recruitment, retention, and promotion of persons with disabilities.

Action 2.1: Ensure recruitment and onboarding processes and documents are fully accessible and supports are clearly communicated.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2025 onwards

Action 2.2: Provide training to all hiring managers to ensure an inclusive and barrier-free recruitment and onboarding experience for all candidates.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2025

Action 2.3: Launch an employee census to identify and collaboratively create appropriate employment programs.

Built Environment

Cygnet Aviation workspaces are leased and meet all building codes; however, these standards do not mean offices are accessible. For example, no doors are equipped with automatic door openers.

Goal 3: Create a workspace free of physical barriers to improve the working environment for all Cygnet employees and visitors.

Action 3.1: Create a Cygnet Workplace Condition Assessment (WCA) and incorporate accessibility findings and recommendations.

Lead: General Manager
Timeline: 2025

Action 3.2: Initiate a collaboration with the Airport management to identify accessibility barriers and create solutions. Cygnet to engage a contractor to identify priority accessibility areas and determine actions at the Cygnet airport location.

Lead: General Manager
Timeline: 2027

Action 3.3: Remove and update non-Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliant signage.

Lead: Office Administrator
Timeline: 2024

Action 3.4: Identify suitable locations and establish accessible workstations, offices, and cubicles, ensuring access to natural light.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2025-2027

Action 3.5: Initiate a collaboration with the building partners to identify accessibility barriers and create solutions.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2025-2027

Goal 4: Ensure all employees have a safe environment to work in.

Action 4.1: identify priority needs for smoke, fire, and other emergency alarms that have visual as well as auditory alerts.

Lead: Office Administrator
Timeline: 2024

Action 4.2: Incorporate an accessibility perspective into the investigation and identification of occupational safety and health issues.

Lead: Safety Officer
Timeline: 2024

Action 4.3: Review and update all emergency procedures to reduce barriers and support persons with disabilities.

Lead: Safety Officer
Timeline: 2024 (ongoing)

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The accessibility of the information and communication technology hardware and software has not been consistently assessed and optimized across the organization.

Goal 5: Provide accessible technology to ensure that all staff have access to the tools and platforms needed to perform work.

Action 5.1: Create an IT procurement checklist to ensure that the software and devices purchased meet accessibility requirements.

Lead: Office Administrator
Timeline: 2024

Action 5.2: Assess the accessibility of current software and devices to identify any barriers.

Lead: Office Administrator
Timeline: 2024

Goal 6: Optimize and/or update existing technology to improve accessibility, while ensuring that new technology and digital systems meet accessibility requirements.

Action 6.1: Provide employees with training on how to use, implement and support assistive and adaptive technologies, as well as the accessibility capabilities of the IT operating systems.

Lead: Office Administrator
Timeline: 2025

Goal 7: Ensure websites, web-tools and templates are designed to meet technical and functional accessibility requirements for all users.

Action 7.1 – Perform a comprehensive review of existing digital systems to identify and remove accessibility barriers. Ensure that all information platforms are compatible with current adaptive technology.

Lead:
Timeline: 2024

Action 7.2 – Ensure that Cygnet's website meets Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 standards.

Lead: Corporate Services – IT
Timeline: 2024-2025

Communications, other than ICT

We need to communicate in ways that ensure our messages are inclusive for all. This includes using plain language in our communications and consistently considering barriers to accessibility when selecting spaces and venues for meetings and gatherings.

Goal 8: Ensure information is fully accessible: communication systems, processes, products, and services are designed and implemented in accordance with accessibility standards.

Action 8.1: Introduce a new company intranet platform, ensuring accessibility.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2024-2025

Action 8.2: Ensure adaptive technology is available for order.

Lead: Office Administrator
Timeline: 2024

Action 8.3: Review website for WCAG compliance.

Lead: Office Administrator
Timeline: 2024

Action 8.3: Train content creators on accessible tools within various platforms.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2025

Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

The design and delivery of programs and services at Cygnet are not consistently informed by persons with disabilities, and relevant accessibility best practices are not consistently considered and incorporated.

Goal 9: Develop and deliver accessible and inclusive programs and services to ensure an optimal user experience.

Action 9.1: Develop a process to ensure meaningful consultation with persons with disabilities. Incorporate accessibility best practices where possible in the design and delivery of programs and services.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2024-2025

Action 9.2: Ensure job postings include an accessibility statement and is visible to potential applicants.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2024

Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

The procurement of barrier-free products and services, including adaptive and assistive technologies and devices, is currently done on a case-by-case basis. This potentially introduces variation in the accessibility of products and services, and it's difficult to consistently apply relevant procurement best practices.

Goal 10 – Make accessibility a key consideration when procuring products and services for employees.

Action 10.1: Identify and compile a list of products and services that have specific accessibility requirements.

Lead: Office Administrator
Timeline: 2024 (ongoing)

Action 10.2: Include an accessibility checklist in procurement process.

Lead: President
Timeline: 2024 (ongoing)

Transportation

Cygnet does not provide publicly available air transportation services.

Provisions of CTA Accessibility Related Regulations

Cygnet is a regulated entity in the Transportation Network under the Canada Transport Act (CTA). The Act requires regulated entities to comply with any provisions made under subsection 170(1) of the CTA and the annexed Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulation (ATPDR). Cygnet is not subject to the ATPDR.

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

a11y

Shorthand for "accessibility" as "a" followed by 11 more letters, followed by "y".

AAC

Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Access

A place that is easily reached, an environment that is easily navigated or a program or service that can easily be obtained.

Accessibility

The combination of aspects that influence a person's ability to function within an environment.

Accessible Canada Act

The Accessible Canada Act is a law passed in 2019 to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040.

Accessible Communications

Benefits all audiences by making information clear, direct, and easy to understand. It takes into consideration the various barriers to accessing information and provides opportunities for feedback.

Accommodation

The personalized adaptation of a workplace to overcome any barriers faced by persons with disabilities.

Adaptive Device

Any tool used to help an individual with a disability perform activities of daily living.

Alternative (Alt) Text

A short text that is used to describe images.

ASL

American Sign Language

Assistive Technology

Any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities.

Audible

Related to hearing or sensing sound.

Barrier

A physical, architectural, technological, or attitudinal obstacle, anything that is based on information or communications or resulting from a policy or a practice, that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or a functional limitation.

Braille

A reading and writing system for people who are visually impaired.

Built Environment

The human-made building and spaces that provide us places to live, work and play. Including homes, buildings, streets, sidewalks, open or green spaces, and the supporting infrastructure such as water or energy supply.

Camel Case

Capitalization of the first letter of each word in a multi-word hashtag. Without Camel Case, hashtags will be read aloud as one long, unintelligible word.

Caption

Captions convey not only the content of the spoken dialogue but also equivalents for non-dialogue audio information needed to understand the program content. It includes sound effects, music, laughter and speaker identification and location.

CART

Communication Access Real-time Translation.

Colour Contrast

The difference in saturation, brightness, and pigment of different elements relative to one another.

CSA

Canadian Standards Association.

Communication

The sharing or receiving of information through verbal or non-verbal ways, including speech or oral communication; writing or graphs, and signs, signals, and behaviours.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Partial or total inability to hear in one or both ears.

Decorative Image

An image that does not contain information and is used for visual appeal only. Decorative images do not require Alt Text.

Disability

A physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, sensory, learning or communication impairment, or a functional limitation, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.

Diversity

Diversity is how people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented.

Chorus Aviation defines diversity broadly to include all aspects of identity. This expanded definition of diversity includes race, religion, gender, disability, personality, learning styles, geography, and functional expertise.

Employee Advisory Committee on Accessibility

The purpose of the advisory committee is to share thoughts on how Public Services and Procurement Canada can remove barriers for departmental employees and how it can support an accessible and inclusive workplace.

Employment

A paid work agreement between an employer and an employee.

Equitable/Equity

A commitment to fairness. Equitable access is different from equal access. Equality means everybody is treated the same. Equity means everybody is treated fairly, based on their needs and abilities.

Inclusion

The act of recognizing, valuing, and building on differences in identity, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, experiences, and perspectives while respecting human rights.

Individual Accommodation Plan

The individual accommodation plan is transferable with the employee throughout their career, whether it is a lateral movement or promotion, within a department or to another department. Transferability eliminates the need for repeated reassessments and renegotiations for support to best perform the job.

Infrastructure

The "underlying structure" that makes a place livable and keeps its systems working (e.g., roads, sewers, clean water, electricity, and more).

Information and communications technology

Technologies that allow access to information through communication. These technologies include all mediums that can be used to record or store information, and broadcast or transmit information through voice, text, and video.

LSF

French Sign Language

Lived Experience

Lived experience is personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand (not through technology) involvement in everyday events rather than through examples given by other people.

Negative Bias

A tendency to register negative stimuli more often and to focus on these events. For example, you might be having a great day at work when a co-worker makes an offhand comment that you find irritating. You then find yourself stewing over their words for the rest of the workday.

Plain Language

Language a reader or listener can understand easily and completely.

Procurement

Purchasing or obtaining goods and services. Accessible procurement involves determining what is required for a product or service to be accessible, and either finding ways to procure something that meets those requirements or, documenting why this is not possible and what will be done if an accessible alternative is requested.

Program design and delivery

Removal of barriers that exclude people with a variety of physical and cognitive disabilities. Accessible design specifically considers the needs of people with disabilities.

Retrofit

To add features that were not included in the original design.

RHFAC

Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification.

Learn more at: www.rickhansen.com/become-accessible/rating-certification

Systemic barriers

A pattern of behaviour inherent in systems, policies, assistive devices, accessible communications, and accessible and utility design that creates or perpetuates disadvantage for persons with disabilities. It also includes individuals believing their identity will not be valued because they don't see it represented in the organization.

Transportation

To go from one place to another, as by car, train, plane, or ship; take a trip or journey.

Unconscious Bias

Favouritism toward or prejudice against people of a particular ethnicity, gender, or social group influences one's actions or perceptions.

Vision Impairment

Also known as blind, low-sighted, or vision loss is a decreased ability to see to the degree that causes problems not fixable by usual means, such as glasses. It also includes those who have a decreased ability to see because they do not have access to glasses or contact lenses.

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)

The World Wide Web Consortium sets web technology standards.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines define how to make web content accessible to persons with disabilities.