

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS  
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2020  
ONLINE FORUM**

**Present:** John Graham (Chairperson), Scott Jocelyn, Dianna Scarth, Martin Harder, Josh Watt, Laurel Repski, Kris Cowley, Mary Bartolomucci and Colleagues (Accessibility Directorate of Ontario), John Wyndels/Colleen Watters (DIO).

**Absent:** Brad Robertson.

The chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and participants introduced themselves. Representatives from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario provided insights on the accessibility standard review process in Ontario that took place from 2015-2020. The major points were highlighted in a power point presentation, which will be sent to Council at a later date. Ontario conducted reviews of customer service, information and communications and transportation simultaneously, as well as developing new standards in Health Care, K-12 Education and Post-Secondary Education. Lessons learned in Ontario over the past five years included:

- Have good policies and governance structures in place for the committees doing the reviews. While the Ministry is the steward of the process, the recommendations are developed by the standard development committees. Committee roles are determined by the Minister mandate letters and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- Standard Development Committees should have strong policies, processes and terms of reference. Internal directives must also be followed.
- Ask about accessibility supports for committee members (including ASL and captioning), travel, etc.
- When conducting reviews remotely, choose a platform accessible to everyone. Ontario uses Teams.
- There are advantages and disadvantages to focussed and broad mandates. Experts can be brought in to inform discussions.
- Think about committee composition. Include persons with disabilities, representatives from various sectors, small and large organizations, cultural and geographic diversity, etc.
- In Ontario, the Accessibility Advisory Council provided guidance to the Minister on the progress of standard development but not recommendations to the SDCs.
- Ontario shared slides on review time lines. Consultations are mandated to be at least 45 days in length, but it is customary to allow 60 days. The initial report, but not the final report, must be posted on the AODA website. The Minister is required

to respond within 90 days, but this rarely happens. Instead, he or she acknowledges receipt of the report, but does not make a decision within that timeframe.

Council asked about the scope of the review and what sectors should be involved. Ontario said that it is important to:

- discuss long term objectives
- base the review on the legislation
- agree on the scope of work
- ensure committee members have sufficient time to take recommendations back to their communities
- revise measures, policies and practices associated with the review
- examine the number of issues to be discussed
- review time lines, base recommendations on stakeholder input and public feedback and
- have a final vote on the initial report before it is forwarded to the Minister.

The review should also look at the tools and resources developed to assist sectors to comply with the standards.

The AAC Secretary provided an update on the Disabilities Issues Office's webinar to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Awards are being presented to six organizations to recognize outstanding contribution in accessible customer service. Yvonne Peters, former chairperson of the Accessibility Advisory Council and trail blazer on Human Rights) will provide a pre-recorded presentation on the history of disability rights over the past forty years, and a new name for Disabilities Issues Office will be announced.

The chair guided Council members through the draft road map for the customer service standard review. The Council could begin with both targeted and formal outreach and then develop a document for public consultation. It will be important to involve a wide range of sectors. Public consultations will be online. EngageMB is just one tool to solicit feedback but consultation with a broad range of stakeholders is vital.

The original plan was to have EngageMB make a presentation at the December meeting, but Council agreed to put this on hold until January 2021. This would allow more time to refine the road map, discuss next steps and sector outreach.

**Agreement:** Council will delay the EngageMB presentation until January 2021.

The next Council meeting will take place on Friday, December 11, 2020 from 1:00-3:00 PM. The meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM.

