



**TIDEWATER**  
**CANADA**

# **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

**JUNE 2023**



# Table of Contents

- Message from the President..... 2
- About Us..... 3
- General ..... 3
- Feedback ..... 3
- Executive Summary ..... 4
- Consultation ..... 5
- Employment ..... 5
- The Built Environment ..... 8
- Information and Communication Technology ..... 9
- Communication, Other Than Information and Communication Technologies ..... 10
- Procurement ..... 11
- Design and Delivery of Programs and Services ..... 11
- Transportation ..... 13
- Training ..... 13

## Message from the President

Tidewater Canada's Accessibility Plan is a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to make our workplace a more welcoming and inclusive place for people with disabilities. We believe it is our duty to provide a secure and welcoming environment that accommodates the diverse needs of all our employees.

Our efforts to improve opportunities, services, and experiences for people with disabilities are part of a larger movement to promote equity for all groups who face systemic and attitudinal barriers. Today 22% of Canadians report they have some form of disability; however, when considering intersections of disability with other identity factors such as age and race, the proportion of disabilities is even higher. It is crucial that we recognize these facts and shift our collective mindset towards inclusivity.

To achieve our goals, we must integrate accessibility into every facet of our management, processes, and culture. This means ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities are considered in all aspects of our work. We believe that taking an "accessible-by-design" approach is key to making meaningful progress towards our goals. Over the next few years, we plan to close representation gaps in hiring and retention for people with disabilities, track and report on workplace accommodation wait times, and more. Our Accessibility Plan is not just about meeting the requirements of the Accessible Canada Act; it is about creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

Accessibility is not a one-size-fits-all solution. We all have a role to play in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers. It is important that we all join the conversation and keep the momentum going. As the representation of people with disabilities in the Canadian population continues to rise, it is vital that we work together to create a more accessible future. We fully recognize the limitations to those with disabilities to our seagoing positions and many of our maintenance functions and these challenges are very difficult to resolve today; however, we will still endeavor to make these jobs as accessible as possible, and as technology improves, review these positions to continually improve their accessibility.

Our Accessibility Plan is for everyone, regardless of their current experience with a disability. It is not only about improving the world today, but also about making life better for anyone who may experience a disability in the future. We appreciate your support and hope that our efforts will resonate with you as we work towards a more inclusive culture.

Adrian Samuel - President

## About Us

Tidewater Transportation Canada, Inc. (TWC) is West Coast's largest Canadian Flagged transporter of refined petroleum products. Services include bulk fuel transportation, specialty towing, and marine logistics.

With proven expertise in the transportation of specialized cargoes, a state-of-the-art fleet and over fifty years of experience, TWC is the marine transporter of choice for some of the world's leading multi-national oil companies. In addition to marine transportation Tidewater Subsea Inc. is Western Canada's only subsea cable service providing assets and experience in variety of subsea applications such as subsea cable laying and recovery, subsea construction, and Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) services.

TWC's workforce can be divided into three categories: Office, Shop, and Seagoing. The Office group currently comprises 22 employees who manage administrative, planning, and managerial functions. The Shop consists of 13 mechanics, painters, millwrights, and laborers who ensure the smooth maintenance of the vessel fleet and facility. The Seagoing group, which includes 70 employees working as masters, mates, cook/deckhands, and barge operators, are responsible for overseeing the vessels' operations. We continue to add more employees as our business grows. It is important to note that each group faces unique accessibility challenges based on their job requirements and workspace.

## General

The Accessibility Committee at Tidewater Transportation Canada Inc. (TWC), chaired by the QHSE (Quality, Health, Safety, Security & Environmental) Specialist and the HR Administrator, are responsible for the development and coordination of this Accessibility Plan for TWC, in accordance with regulations under the *Accessible Canada Act*. The committee chairs are also responsible for the feedback process and progress reporting on this Plan.

## Feedback

Your feedback is important to us.

If you are facing a barrier to accessibility and would like to contribute to enhancing and promoting accessibility, please reach out to us via any of the following means.



**Email:** [qhseteam@ca.tidewater.com](mailto:qhseteam@ca.tidewater.com)



**Mail:**

Tidewater Transportation Canada, Inc.

800 Glasgow Ave  
Burnaby, BC  
V5C 0C9



**Telephone:** (604) 877-2364



**Anonymous Accessibility Feedback Form:** <https://forms.office.com/r/CQuqqSZhir>

## Executive Summary

The purpose of the *Accessible Canada Act* is to make Canada barrier-free by January 1, 2040.

Federally regulated entities are required to produce a plan to address any barriers or limitations they find in these areas:

- Employment
- Built environment
- Information and communication technology
- Communication, other than information and communication technologies
- Procuring goods, services, and facilities
- Designing and delivering programs and services.
- Transportation

The term "barrier" refers to any obstacle that hampers the complete and equal participation of a person with disabilities in society. These hurdles may be physical, architectural, technological, or attitudinal in nature, or they may arise from information or communication issues, policies, or practices.

The term "disability" refers to a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment, or a functional limitation, whether it is permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature, and whether it's visible or not. A disability, when combined with a barrier, can impede a person's full and equal participation in society.

Some examples of disabilities are:

- vision impairment
- deaf or hard of hearing
- mental health conditions
- learning disability
- physical disability

The following plan details the initial measures we will take to establish an accessible and barrier-free environment. At Tidewater Transportation Canada, Inc., we are dedicated to collaborating with our senior management and staff to foster a workplace that consistently applies an accessibility perspective to all facets of our operations.

## Consultation

To help create this plan, TWC formed an accessibility plan committee which included employees with disabilities. The accessibility plan committee will meet regularly to help guide the consultation process as well as the development of the plan.

During the consultation process, an accessibility survey was distributed to all TWC employees to find out more about their awareness of potential barriers at the company and their personal experiences with any such barriers. The survey was met with enthusiastic engagement from all employee groups.

Based on the results of the survey, the primary barriers identified by TWC employees were physical or architectural in nature, with 60% of respondents noting their awareness of such barriers. This was followed by information and/or communication barriers (53%) and attitudinal barriers (27%).

Regarding physical or architectural barriers, employees cited a lack of wheelchair accessibility in many areas, including washrooms, stairs, hallways, and boats. With respect to communication, onsite alarms were often audible only and did not feature a visual component.

In the following sections, we will examine the input provided by the survey, the accessibility committee and department managers and explore potential corrective actions to address these identified barriers.

## Employment

At TWC, our objective under the Accessible Canada Act is to provide equal access to employment opportunities and an accessible workplace for all. We recognize that our employees are essential to the success of our organization and are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace. To achieve this goal, we implement fair and ethical practices in our recruitment, hiring, and retention processes. One approach we employ is the practice of non-unconscious bias during recruitment and hiring.

Unconscious bias is a learned stereotype that occurs outside of our conscious awareness, resulting in automatic and unintentional actions. Its effects can be so deeply ingrained that they can alter our behavior and interactions with others. Bias can exist towards various

characteristics, including gender, physical disabilities, weight, sexual orientation, religion, and more.

TWCs Human Resources (HR) department and senior managers promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by applying best practices in the hiring process. TWC hires based on skills, knowledge, and expertise. Our hiring process is standardized, which reduces unconscious bias by focusing on the factors that have a direct impact on performance. Additionally, our application, interview and onboarding procedures are simple and straightforward, increasing the ease of accessibility.

TWC currently has a pre-employment physical medical exam and a drug and alcohol test, which is required in accordance with our contracts with oil companies and Transport Canada.

Transport Canada requires all mariners to hold a marine medical certificate that proves that a seafarer meets the required medical and physical standards required by Canadian Law. Seafarers must hold either a Marine Medical Certificate or Provisional Medical Certificate and show it when asked.

To get a certificate the following apply:

- Meet the marine medical standards related to vision and hearing
- Meet the general physical and mental fitness requirements including:
  - being able to lift and carry 22 kg,
  - wearing breathing apparatus and personal life-saving equipment while climbing ladders,
  - being able to fight fires and abandon a vessel in an emergency,
  - working in tight spaces and moving through openings that are 600 mm by 600 mm or less, and
- meet the specific physical and mental fitness requirements for a position that one wants on a vessel.

The aim of the medical examination is to ensure that the seafarer being examined is medically fit to perform their routine and emergency duties at sea and is not suffering from any medical condition likely to be aggravated by service at sea, to render them unfit for service or to endanger the health of other persons on board. We acknowledge that this pre-employment physical medical exam could exclude people with disabilities from working in our seagoing group of employees.

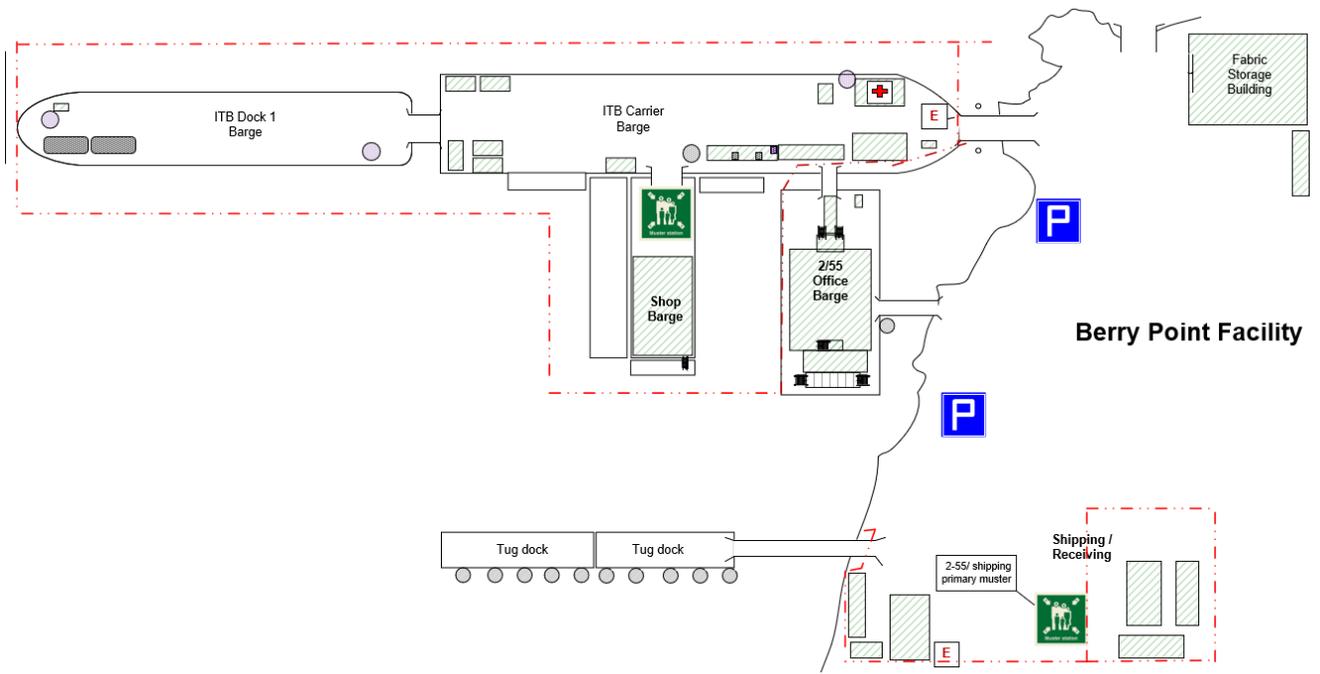
In addition, TWC has an employment equity and self-identification questionnaire which allows us to evaluate and remove any barriers in hiring, training, promoting, and retaining all employees.

TWC also has a return-to-work program, which allows workers who are unable to perform their usual job duties to work in a limited or temporary light-duty capacity. These are often referred to as modified duties.

Our aim is to establish a culture of accessibility at TWC, where inclusivity and respect are integrated into all facets of the workplace, enabling every employee to reach their full potential. We prioritize the provision of a safe and respectful work environment for all staff members and uphold a strict policy against workplace bullying, harassment, and violence. Additionally, we ensure that all newly hired employees receive diversity and inclusion training, empowering them to contribute positively to our workplace culture.

<b>Identified Barrier</b>	<b>Corrective Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
TWC does not specifically mention that it welcomes applications from people with disabilities in their job postings	Add a sentence to the job postings, welcoming people with disabilities to apply	Q2 2023
Employees might not speak up about accommodation needs	Add a slide to the “New Employee Orientation” PowerPoint that speaks to the Accessibility Plan and TWCs goal to make the workplace accessible to all	Q2 2023
Self-identification questionnaire is only completed once during hiring – if circumstances change, TWC might not be made aware of them	Send out self-identification questionnaire to all employees every 5 years	Q2 2023
Harassment policy is outdated	Review and update harassment policy with the latest information from WorkSafe BC	Q2 2023
A need for respectful workplace training	Create a training program for a respectful workplace	Q2 2023

# The Built Environment



We are committed to ensure that Tidewater Canada’s office located in Burnaby, British Columbia is a welcoming and accessible work environment. While we have accessibility in mind when building or modifying the site, we recognize that there are barriers in place that may limit an employee’s ability to access certain worksites. Our Berry Point facility consists of three separate work units that sit on top of three separate barges, located on the Burrard Inlet.

- 1) Office Barge
- 2) Shop Barge
- 3) Seagoing docks (for access via gangways to tugs & barges)

Our office currently has large parking stalls in front of the entrance which are reserved for those with a significant mobility or visual impairment disability. We have an elevator in the building, washrooms that can be converted to accommodate those in a wheelchair and floor plans that are open/wide enough for wheelchairs to maneuver.

Identified Barrier	Corrective Action	Timeline
Ledge in front of doorways to main office is too high - wheelchair cannot enter	Install a small ramp	As required

Office doors do not have automatic door openers	Install automatic door openers	As required
Designated parking spot for those in a wheelchair in front of office are currently not marked	Mark the spots as reserved parking spots for those with disabilities	Q1 2023
Create a wheelchair accessible washroom	Dedicate one of the lower-level bathrooms in the office as accessible, install grab bars	As required

Though our primary office can be easily accessible, we fully recognize the limitations of those with disabilities to our seagoing positions and many of our maintenance functions and these challenges are very difficult to resolve today. We will still try to make these jobs as accessible as possible, and as technology improves review these positions to continually improve their accessibility.

### Information and Communication Technology

At TWC, technology plays a crucial role in our daily operations, as we rely on digital communication and information sharing to facilitate our work. As such, we strive to prioritize accessibility at every stage of our projects, ensuring that our digital content and information communication technology (ICT) products are accessible to all employees, regardless of ability.

We recognize that accessibility is a key component of digital communication, software, and hardware, and we are committed to ensuring that our digital resources can be accessed and utilized by everyone, including those with disabilities.

At TWC, we are committed to providing barrier-free access to our information and communication technology resources. To achieve this goal, we have implemented a series of measures, including:

- Conducting regular assessments of our existing software, hardware, and other tools to ensure that they are accessible and compatible with adaptive technology as needed.
- Providing our employees with accessibility guidance training to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to build and procure accessible ICT resources.
- Consulting with employees with disabilities to determine their specific needs and requirements when developing new ICT solutions, to ensure that accessibility considerations are integrated into the business requirements from the outset.
- Providing occupational therapist for those employees in need of an assessment of their workspace

- Procuring specialized hardware and other devices for those employees in need of assistance to execute their jobs which is further detailed in *Procurement* below.

Through these efforts, we are working to create a more inclusive and accessible workplace, where all employees have equal access to the tools and resources they need to succeed.

<b>Identified Barrier</b>	<b>Corrective Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Wheelchairs may not fit under tables and desks	Accommodate wheelchair users with desks that can be easily adjusted	As required
Some employees may not be able to use regular IT equipment (e.g., mouse, keyboard, phone, radios)	Find accessible equipment depending on their needs	As required
Emergency alarm (muster horn) is only audible and not visible	Conduct regular muster drills, implement fire wardens that check each office in case of an alarm. Review response to alarm drills and install visual components as necessary	Q2 2023

## Communication, Other Than Information and Communication Technologies

When asked, we commit to providing these alternates formats as soon as possible within the time frame listed in the *Accessible Canada Regulations*:

- Print
- Large Print
- Braille
- Audio Format
- An electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology meant to help people with disabilities.

Generally, documents should be written in plain language.

## Procurement

Our aim is to equip our employees with the necessary tools and resources they require to perform their jobs effectively. We use two online procurement platforms, HELM and Workplace, to manage procurement requests. Our shop and seagoing employees submit their requisitions through HELM where they can easily specify their requirements and link products. If an employee needs assistance, their supervisor, or the Master/Mate on a vessel will help them fill out the form. Office requisitions are made through Workplace, and if an employee does not have access to the program, they can request their supervisor to submit the requisition on their behalf. Safety and disability-related purchases can be directly requested through the QHSSE Department.

All procurement requests are carefully reviewed and approved by our Purchasing Manager, who has received training on incorporating accessibility requirements into the procurement specifications when applicable, to ensure the deliverables meet necessary accessibility features. Our updated "TWC Purchasing and Subcontractor Policy" reflects our commitment to accessibility throughout the entire procurement process, making it more efficient and streamlined.

Identified Barrier	Corrective Action	Timeline
Purchasing does not have guidelines for accessible purchasing	Include guidelines in the TWC Purchasing and Subcontractor policy	Done
Purchasing does not have an overview of which disabilities to include in the process	Send out a memo stating that accessibility requirements can be brought up and discussed directly with the Purchasing Manager	Q2 2023
HELM does not currently allow employees to add in accessibility requirements	Add a section in HELM to indicate accessibility requirements	Q2 2023
Identify the barriers that may be preventing employees to effectively add in requests	Send out a survey/poll requesting more information on which disabilities require more accommodation	Q2 2023

## Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

At TWC, we are committed to ensuring that all of our programs and services are designed and delivered with accessibility in mind, especially for people with disabilities. While we do not offer any programs or services to the public, we understand the importance of accessibility for our internal training programs, such as Safety in Motion, MOXIE, and Shell Partners in Safety. These

programs are either delivered online through a training platform or in person by the QHSSE Department. If any accessibility challenges arise with the online platform, in-person training will be provided to ensure everyone has access to the same information.

Furthermore, we strive to make our internal publications such as incident reports, safety reports, MEMOs, and safety alerts easily understandable for all employees. These publications are written in plain language and distributed via email to ensure that all employees have access to them. We also discuss them in person during safety meetings to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to ask questions or clarify any information.

Designing and delivering programs and services at TWC, is guided by the following principles:

- Understand the types of challenges learners may face
- Design with the end in mind - Start the design of programs and services with an understanding of who will be using them and their accessibility requirements
- Imagining oneself as the learner
- Think about font
- Avoid drag-and-drop prompts and activities
- Use appropriate labels, headings, alt text, and captions for images and video
- Keep an eye out for new technology
- Provide access to assistance
- Measure accessibility

Other programs TWC runs are annual Drug and Alcohol testing for all Seagoing crew. Employees need to organize an appointment through one of the testing sites and drive there outside their work hours.

Additionally, TWC does internal Mates, Master, Deckhand, Barge Operator, shop crew and for administrative training to advance employees in their career. This training is on-the-job and conducted by senior employees as well as the Port Captain as it pertains to the seagoing crews as well as by external contractors if required.

<b>Identified Barrier</b>	<b>Corrective Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Access to computer program and quiet environment to complete training courses	Install computers in the new seagoing crew building. Make laptops available for all crew members to sign out and use	Q2 2023
Training in large groups can leave a few people behind/ afraid to ask questions	Have smaller training groups of 10 or less	Q2 2023
Programs and training platforms may not be user friendly	Review current and future programs and platforms to follow the accessibility guide	Q2 2023

Drug and alcohol testing accessibility	Review to have doctor come onsite to test everyone at the same time	Q2 2023
Employees who are slow with responding to online learning content might have difficulties accessing the content	Compliance and Operations Administrator to follow up with employees.	Q2 2023
Internal training programs to become a Mate to Master may not address employees with learning difficulties	Review to ensure different learning styles are incorporated and trainer is aware of possible learning difficulties	Q2 2023
Ensuring that training rooms are all accessible for all employees	Hold programs and training meetings in accessible places and use appropriate IT equipment to ensure material is easily visible and audible	Q2 2023

## Transportation

Transportation is the seventh pillar of accessibility under the Accessible Canada Act. We list it in this plan as required by the Act, but TWC does not provide transport services to the public or employees.

## Accessibility Plan Training

As part of developing our accessibility plan, we consulted with our department managers and provided them with essential information on accessibility and effective communication with individuals with different types of disabilities. While we ensured that they received the necessary information, we acknowledge that further training is still required.