



Office for Disability

Standards for Web Access

Many people with a disability can experience difficulty accessing information on the web. People who have a vision impairment may rely on programs that read the web page to them. It is important that information is presented logically, links are clearly labelled, and video and audio files don't start playing automatically. A person with a physical impairment may not be able to use a mouse and may rely solely on the keyboard for navigation. Making web pages and emails more accessible enables more people to access the information you are providing.

The **Disability Discrimination Act 1992** (the Act) requires that websites be accessible to people with a disability. The Act recommends following the World-wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, Version 1.0 (WCAG 1.0).

The W3C is an international community for the development of web standards. It has developed two sets of standards for web accessibility, WCAG 1.0 and WCAG 2.0.

The Commonwealth Government is in a transition phase to ensure that all government agency websites comply with WCAG 1.0 to compliance with WCAG 2.0. Implementation is expected to be completed by December 2014. (Current at time of writing, March 2011.)

WCAG 2.0 is a change in focus from the technological and code-specific focus of WCAG 1.0 to a user-centric guidance, based on four principles of accessibility. These principles lay the foundation necessary for anyone to access and use web content. Anyone who wants to use the web must have content that is:

1. **Perceivable** – Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive. This could include using captions or alternatives for video and audio content.

2. **Operable** – User interface components and navigation must be operable. This could include making the website keyboard accessible and giving users enough time to read all of the content.
3. **Understandable** – Information and the operation of the user interface must be understandable. This could include ensuring text is readable.
4. **Robust** – Content must be robust enough so that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies. This means that users must be able to access the content as technologies advance.

WCAG 2.0 uses a three-level rating system to identify the level of accessibility: Single A (A), Double A (AA) and Triple A (AAA). Single A is the most basic. Triple A is the most technically difficult level but is also considered to provide the most accessible environment for a wider range of users. However, even at Triple A conformance, some users may still experience some difficulty in accessing content.

Further information

For information on the World Wide Web Consortium's web accessibility initiative, visit www.w3.org/WAI.

See also: Office for Disability's factsheet 'Web Accessibility'.
www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au.

If you would like to receive this document in an accessible format, contact the Office for Disability:

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