

# *Update and Revisions*

Electronic and Information Technology  
Accessibility Standards

Telecommunications Act Accessibility Guidelines

*Public Procurement of Accessible ICT in Europe*

# Goals in the Revision Process

- “We agree that what is needed are clear, consensus driven, testable, and reliable accessibility requirements. In this world of global scales, it is critical that accessibility requirements be harmonized throughout the world. Product manufacturers want to build to a single set of requirements – or at least not be faced with competing world wide requirements. We should do what we can to facilitate this, because ultimately if we can make the regulatory process easier to achieve – and by that I do not mean that we need to weaken the requirements that exist today – we will enhance accessibility for people with disabilities worldwide.”

*Marc Guthrie, Access Board public member  
International Workshop on Accessibility Requirements  
Brussels, Belgium -- October 21, 2004*

# Why Revisions are Needed?

- The Access Board shall periodically review and, as appropriate, amend the standards to reflect technological advances or changes in electronic and information technology (*section 508*)
- The Board shall review and update the Telecommunications Act Accessibility Guidelines periodically (*section 255*)
- Almost 8 years since the Section 508 standards were issued – 10 years for the Telecommunications Act Accessibility Guidelines

# Why Revisions are Needed?

- Frequent requests for clarification and technical assistance
  - what products are covered?
  - ambiguity
  - increase testability
- Technological changes
  - convergence of products
  - widespread adoption of wireless and VoIP
- International efforts are underway

# Why One Rulemaking?

- The telecommunications provisions in the section 508 standards are based on, and are consistent with, the Board's Telecommunications Act Accessibility Guidelines
- The “intended audiences” and “levels of effort” for each law will remain different

# Intended Audiences and Levels of Effort

- The Telecommunications Act Accessibility Guidelines apply to manufacturers
- A manufacturer of telecommunications equipment ...shall ensure that the equipment is designed, developed, and fabricated to be accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, if readily achievable

# Intended Audiences and Levels of Effort

- The Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards apply to Federal government agencies
- When agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, they must ensure that it is accessible to Federal employees and individuals with disabilities who are members of the public seeking information or services from a Federal agency unless an undue burden would be imposed on the agency

# Why an Advisory Committee?

- Advisory committees allow interested groups to play a substantive role in the development of rules which are then proposed for public comment



U N I T E D   S T A T E S   A C C E S S   B O A R D

# TEITAC Begins - July 2006

- Committee members recruited broadly
  - Federal agencies
  - ICT and AT industries and their trade associations
  - standards organizations
  - consumer advocates
  - researchers and developers
  - national and international experts

# TEITAC Members

- Adobe Systems, Inc.
- American Association of People with Disabilities
- American Council of the Blind
- American Foundation for the Blind
- AOL LLC
- Apple, Inc.
- Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
- Assistive Technology Industry Association
- AT&T
- Avaya, Inc.
- Canon USA, Inc.
- Communication Service for the Deaf
- CTIA - The Wireless Association
- Dell, Inc.
- Easter Seals
- European Commission
- Hearing Loss Association of America
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (Australia)
- IBM
- Inclusive Technologies
- Industry Canada
- Information Technology Association of America
- Information Technology Industry Council
- Japanese Standards Association
- Microsoft Corporation
- National Association of State Chief Information Officers
- National Center on Disability and Access to Education
- National Federation of the Blind
- National Network of Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers
- Panasonic Corporation of North America
- Paralyzed Veterans of America
- SRA International, Inc.
- Sun Microsystems, Inc.
- Telecommunications Industry Association
- The Paciello Group, LLP
- Trace Research and Development Center
- Usability Professionals' Association
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Social Security Administration
- WGBH National Center for Accessible Media
- World Wide Web Consortium – Web Accessibility Initiative

# TEITAC Process

- Bi-monthly public meetings (8)
- Teleconferences (20)
- Subcommittees (8)
- Editorial working group
- Extensive outside participation
- Wiki
- Consensus based

# TEITAC Recommendations

- “Product characteristics” rather than “product categories”
- Largely harmonized with WCAG 2.0 and ISO 9241-171
- Software, Web, other content, and interfaces now largely converged into “User Interface and Electronic Content”

# Subpart A

- Purpose
- Application
- General Exceptions
- Equivalent Facilitation
- Definitions

# Subpart B: Functional Performance Criteria

- Without Vision
- With Limited Vision
- With Color Vision Deficits
- Without Hearing
- With Limited Hearing
- Without Speech
- With Limited Reach, Strength, or Manipulation
- Without Physical Contact
- With Cognitive, Language, or Learning Limitations

# Subpart C: Technical Requirements

- General Technical Requirements
- Requirements for Hardware Aspects of Products
- Requirements for User Interface and Electronic Content
- Additional Requirements for Audio-Visual Players or Displays
- Requirements for Audio and/or Video Content
- Additional Requirements for Real-Time Voice Conversation Functionality
- Additional Requirements for Authoring Tools

# Subpart D

- Information, Documentation and Support
- Implementation, Operation, and Maintenance

# TEITAC Concludes – April 2008



Report presented to the Board on April 3, 2008

[www.access-board.gov/sec508/refresh/report](http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/refresh/report)

# What are the Required Rulemaking Steps?

- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
  - Regulatory assessment – costs and benefits
  - Submit to OMB – 90 day review period
  - Publish in Federal Register – minimum 30 day comment period
- Final Rule
  - Regulatory assessment
  - Submit to OMB – 90 day review period
  - Publish in Federal Register

# Is Rulemaking Lengthy?

- Past history indicates that the amount of time needed is about 2 years
  - Section 508 rulemaking took 19 months
  - Section 255 rulemaking took 13 months

# Revision Timeline

Proposed Rulemaking Timeline	
April 18, 2006	notice of intent to establish advisory committee
July 6, 2006	notice establishing advisory committee
September 27-29, 2006	committee meeting
November 7-8, 2006	committee meeting
February 6-8, 2007	committee meeting
May 22-24, 2007	committee meeting
July 16-18, 2007	committee meeting
September 4-6, 2007	committee meeting
November 13-16, 2007	committee meeting
January 7-9, 2008	committee meeting
April 3, 2008	committee presented recommendations to the Board
March 2009	Access Board NPRM (60 day comment period)
April 2010	Access Board final rule

# What About Other Agencies?

- Not later than 6 months after the Access Board revises any standards the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall revise the Federal Acquisition Regulations

# Conclusion

- Rulemaking will be lively
- Implementation issues involve other Federal actors
- Continued research and monitoring of harmonization is needed
- Follow [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov) for updates