



Uniting Communities & Improving Lives



Van-Kam Freightways Ltd. Accessibility Progress Report 2024

A message from Melanie Evans, Director of Talent and Culture

As Van-Kam Freightways Ltd. (Van Kam) completes 77 years of operations in the transportation industry servicing B.C. and Alberta we strive to create an inclusive environment where any individual whether an employee, vendor, lease operator, or customer has access to any of our 8 facilities or any resources required.

Accessibility refers to the design of devices, services, environments that are accessible to people with disabilities. This includes physical disability such as wheelchair ramps and digital accessibility such as screen readers. In the workplace, accessibility is essential to creating an inclusive environment where all employees can contribute and succeed. Accessible workplaces are essential to creating a diverse workforce. Trucking companies that prioritize accessibility will be able to attract and retain employees with disabilities, as well as employees with diverse backgrounds and experiences. This can help the transportation industry build a stronger and more resilient workforce.

As a company that looks forward to prioritizing accessibility, Van Kam will be able to provide a better service to customers with disabilities. We can do this by ensuring that customers have access to our loading docks, restrooms, and any other necessary facilities. Providing excellent customer service to all our customers that is expected of us helps us in building strong relationships with clients and gain a strong reputation in the industry. By prioritizing accessibility Van-Kam can tap into new market opportunities. By ensuring that our facilities and services are accessible to individuals with disabilities, we can tap in the market of consumers with disabilities. Additionally, some contracts with government agencies or other organizations may require accessible services.

In conclusion, accessibility is critical to our company's success. By prioritizing accessibility, we can comply with regulations, provide better customer service, attract a diverse workforce, tap into new market opportunities.

Sincerely,

Melanie Evans

Melanie Evans, CPHR
Director of Talent and Culture



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General

Organization Overview

Van-Kam Freightways Ltd (Van Kam) is one of the largest regional carriers in Western Canada specializing in less-than-truckload (LTL) transportation. With 8 terminal locations across British Columbia, we fulfill shipments to communities within 1-3 days throughout BC and Alberta. Between our own resources and our partner network, our coverage extends beyond Western Canada into the U.S. and Eastern Canada.

Van Kam was founded more than 75 years ago in 1947 by Robert Henry Sr. To this day, Van Kam remains family owned and operated with the third generation leading into the future. Headquartered in BC with over 550 dedicated staff members, our continuous success is rooted in acknowledging every customer's unique needs and applying our understanding of supply chain challenges to develop custom solutions to overcome them.

Our purpose is to unite communities and improve lives. It's the root of what makes us tick and is central to our actions. Whether it's our employees, customers, or the citizens within the communities we serve, we have a lasting impact on their lives, and it is "why" we exist. Van Kam Freightways Ltd. is a socially responsible freight carrier that continues to DEVELOP its team members for success, practices CARE for communities and helps local businesses ACHIEVE their goals.

The Accessible Canada Act

The Accessible Canada Act (the ACA) is federal legislation requiring all federally regulated organizations, such as Van Kam to develop and implement accessibility plans meeting the legislated standards.

Van Kam is committed to providing an accessible workplace and removing barriers for people with disabilities. A barrier (as defined in the ACA) includes anything – means anything — including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of 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. Through internal audits and consultations Van Kam has developed an accessibility plan to reduce and prevent barriers experienced by employees, clients, vendors, and the public.

This plan will be evaluated and published every three years outlining short- and long-term goals. Van-Kam must remove barriers in the seven priority areas outlined.



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Plan Summary

Feedback

Van Kam welcomes feedback on our Accessibility Plan from the public, employees, and our stakeholders. This feedback is valuable to us as it helps us break down accessibility barriers and build on our commitment to accessibility and inclusion. If you have an inquiry or feedback, please use one of the contact methods below. We will respond to all feedback in a timely manner. If you require support while providing feedback let us know and we will do our best to accommodate your needs

The Talent and Culture department in consultation with staff is responsible for the development and coordination of the Accessibility Plan for Van Kam. The Talent and Culture Department is also responsible for receiving feedback from the public about accessibility barriers and Van Kam's accessibility plan. To provide feedback on accessibility barriers or request copies of Van Kam's accessibility plan or a description of our feedback processes contact us at the following.

Email: accessibility@vankam.com

Phone: 604-587-9768

Mail:

ATTN: Talent and Culture Department
Van-Kam Freightways Ltd.
10155 Grace Rd.
Surrey, B.C. V3V 3V7

Website: www.vankam.com

Internally: employees are encouraged to use the virtual suggestion box, which can be accessed the following ways:

- For office employees by accessing the Intranet
- For City drivers by accessing through the handheld
- For Linehaul drivers by accessing through the onboard tablet
- For Warehouse staff by accessing through the tablet



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Accessibility Statement

Van Kam is dedicated to providing an atmosphere free from barriers in order to promote equity and diversity. Van-Kam has a strong commitment to accommodation, accessibility, and inclusion. All Canadians have the right to benefit from our services equally and those who work with us have the right to perform their jobs free of barriers. Van-Kam is committed to ensuring employment, services, and communication are accessible and that persons with disabilities are consulted during the development of these strategies and programs.

Reporting our Plan

As required by the Accessible Canada Act, we will publish a status report every year that measures our progress against our commitments. We will also review and update our Accessibility Plan every three years. Progress Reports and updates to our Accessibility Plan will be shaped by consultation with persons with disabilities.



Consultations

As part of our consultation process, we conducted an online survey using the SurveyMonkey platform, which was distributed to all employees and was accessible for a period of three weeks. SurveyMonkey was chosen due to its proven track record of effectively capturing feedback from both union and non-union employees. To ensure equitable participation, union employees were provided with alternative means to access the survey, such as scanning QR codes or utilizing company-provided tablets or handheld devices. Another key factor in our choice of SurveyMonkey was its accessibility feature, which assessed the accessibility of our survey and confirmed that it met all accessibility criteria.

During our consultations, employees identified various barriers that have hindered their full participation in departmental activities. Although feedback was obtained from a subset of employees, including those with disabilities, it was found that a number of individuals faced challenges. Among the employees with disabilities, some experienced limitations in daily activities due to emotional, psychological, or mental health conditions, while others faced difficulties with physical tasks. Additionally, there were employees that faced challenges in learning, remembering, or concentrating due to a long-term health problem. Furthermore, it was revealed that there are employees that have hearing difficulties despite using a hearing aid or cochlear implant.

Among the employees without disabilities, a noteworthy proportion also reported facing obstacles. Some individuals experienced emotional, psychological, or mental health conditions, while others had long-term health problems or difficulties performing physical activities. Vision impairments and hearing difficulties were reported by a few employees, even with corrective measures in place.

Using the insights we gained from the survey, we developed an action list to address the barriers identified by employees. As we have eight locations across the province, we recognize that we may not be fully aware of the day-to-day challenges that our current or future employees could face. To gain a more complete understanding, we consulted with the terminal managers at each location, who provided valuable input to help us identify and address any additional barriers.



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Addressing Areas Identified in the Accessible Canada Act

Area 1 Employment

Van Kam's goal is to facilitate career opportunities for individuals with visible and invisible disabilities by implementing recruitment, retention, and promotion practices that support people with disabilities, and creating an inclusive work environment.

To achieve this objective, we plan to implement several measures including:

- Conducting an evaluation of our current hiring practices to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent people with disabilities from accessing career opportunities.
- Providing training and guidance to management involved in the hiring process, specifically regarding hiring and supporting individuals with disabilities.
- Offering training in alternative formats to accommodate diverse learning needs.
- Improving our employee onboarding process to ensure that all new employees are aware of the tools and resources available to them.
- Developing clear guidelines and resources for managers to support employees and clients with disabilities and identifying expert advisors to provide guidance when needed.
- Updating our internal web content to include information on accessibility and support for people with disabilities.
- Providing career advancement opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Helping managers understand their responsibilities in the accommodation process and providing support in implementing suitable workplace adjustments.
- Establishing an accommodation budget to provide assistive equipment, such as lifts, steps, and enhanced audio, to accommodate the needs of employees with disabilities.

Progress

Over the past reporting period, we have made great headway in our accessibility endeavors, with a focus on enhancing both digital and physical accessibility within our organization. One of the primary initiatives undertaken involved updating our internal web content to ensure it provides comprehensive information on accessibility features and support mechanisms available for individuals with disabilities. By embedding accessibility considerations into our digital infrastructure, we aim to create a more inclusive online environment where all employees can access information and resources with ease.

In addition to our digital enhancements, we have taken proactive steps to address physical accessibility barriers within our workplace. We have allocated an annual budget of \$500 for accessible accommodations, provided they do not pose any safety



concerns. Providing accommodation is pivotal in ensuring equitable access to our physical spaces, fostering a more inclusive work environment where all individuals can participate fully and contribute their talents.

Area 2 The Build Environment

Van Kam’s objective is to provide access to career opportunities to persons with both visible and invisible disabilities by recruiting, retaining, and promoting persons with disabilities and fostering an accessible workplace.

Van-Kam Freightways operates in 8 locations throughout B.C. and the following are physical barriers we plan to work towards removing. We will be creating an accessibility committee to allow us to be able to consult with employees that identify as a person with disabilities to help prioritize the following list of action items identified:

Terminal	Push Buttons	Ramp	Stair Lift	PA SYSTEM OR SPEAKERS	Narrow Doorway and/or Hallways	No proper Seating	Washrooms not wheelchair accessible	Flashing Fire Alarm
Surrey								X
Kelowna	X							
Kamloops	X	X	X		X			
Castlegar	X		X	X				
Prince George	X	X						
Victoria	X	X						X
Nanaimo	X	X			X	X (Lunchroom)	X	
Campbell River	X	X			X	X (Customers)	X	

Our short-term goals are to remove 20-25% of the indicated barriers within 2 years and our long-term plan is to remove 30-40% of the indicated barriers within the 3-year period according to budgets and feedback to the committee on which tasks to prioritize.

For our Nanaimo terminal we will not be removing any physical barriers as our short-term plans to make our terminal more accessible is that we plan to rebuild a new terminal. Van Kam has purchased new property that we plan to build on. We are working with the local community and governing members of Nanaimo to get the appropriate permits and approval to rebuild the terminal. The long-term plan for our Nanaimo terminal is to



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rebuild the entire terminal and ensure we create an accessible physical environment for our current and future employees.

Progress

In our ongoing efforts to enhance accessibility within our facilities, we are pleased to report significant progress in collaboration with our accessibility committee. At our Campbell River terminal, we have installed seating to ensure comfort and accessibility for both customers and employees visiting our facility, fostering a welcoming environment for all. In Nanaimo we have added additional chairs to the current table in the lunchroom to allow for an accessible dining space for all our union employees. Regarding our plans to rebuild the Nanaimo terminal, we have taken several steps to facilitate the acquisition of the appropriate permits. Despite our efforts, we are currently still facing difficulties obtaining the necessary permits to commence the reconstruction. As a result, we are uncertain whether we will be able to proceed with the construction on our current property.

Furthermore, recognizing the importance of inclusive safety measures, we have proactively engaged with our suppliers to obtain quotes for Flashing Fire alarms, a crucial accommodation for individuals with hearing impairments, at our Surrey and Victoria terminals. These initiatives underscore our commitment to fostering inclusive environments across all our locations, prioritizing the needs and comfort of everyone who interacts with our facilities.

Area 3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Considering the growing reliance on digital sharing and communication, we are committed to ensuring that our information and communication technology (ICT) products, services, and digital content are accessible and usable by all individuals. As part of this commitment, we will engage in consultations with persons with disabilities to gain insight into the specific barriers they encounter in accessing ICT.

Moreover, we will actively involve persons with disabilities in the procurement and development of new information technology solutions to ensure that accessibility requirements are included in the business specifications. This approach will enable us to identify and address accessibility issues at an early stage, making our products and services more inclusive and accessible to a broader range of users.

Progress

We are committed to ensuring the accessibility and usability of our information and communication technology (ICT) products, services, and digital content for all individuals. We are engaging in consultations with individuals with disabilities to gain valuable insights into the specific barriers they encounter when accessing ICT.



Area 4 Communication

- When asked, we commit to providing these alternate formats as soon as possible and within time frames listed in the accessible Canada Regulations:
 - Print
 - Large Print
 - Braille
 - Audio Format
 - Electronic format that's compatible with adaptive technology meant to help people with disabilities.
- Review policies, procedures, and other forms of communication for plain, clear, concise language.
- Review accessible formats when publishing communications.

Progress

We are dedicated to promptly providing alternative formats of communication upon request. Additionally, we continually review our policies, procedures, and communications to ensure they are written in plain, clear, and concise language. Before publishing, we make sure our communication formats are accessible to everyone. This year, we have also provided interpreters for our deaf employees to better support their communication needs during meetings with management and their union representatives.

Area 5 The Procurement of Goods, Services, and Facilities

- Conduct a comprehensive accessibility review with relevant decision makers prior to procuring goods, services, and facilities to ensure that accessibility requirements are met.
- Incorporate accessibility considerations into procurement templates to guide the selection of external vendors, products, and services, and to ensure their compliance with the Accessible Canada Act requirements.
- Our ultimate objective is to enable our employees and customers to fully engage with us by providing accessible tools and resources that meet their diverse needs.

Progress

We are dedicated to our commitment to promptly providing alternative formats of communication upon request. Additionally, we continue to review any current and new policies, procedures, and communications to ensure they use plain, clear, and concise language. Before publishing, we're also ensuring the accessibility of our communication formats to cater to the needs of all individuals.



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Area 6 The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Van Kam's commitment to accessibility includes reviewing and developing all of our programs and services through an accessibility lens. To achieve this goal, we will:

- Consult with people with disabilities during the development or review of new programs or services.
- Conduct training sessions to educate others on existing accessibility standards.
- Create and implement standard templates to ensure that all information is as accessible as possible.

Progress

We have made great strides in implementing standard templates. These templates will ensure that all information distributed by our organization is accessible. They incorporate best practices in accessibility, such as legible fonts for improved readability, clear and logical layouts for easier navigation, and descriptive alternative text for images to aid screen reader users. This initiative marks a crucial step towards making our communications more inclusive and accessible to a broader audience.

Area 7 Transportation

Based on the feedback we received from our consultations, it appears that our current equipment/vehicle offerings have not presented any significant barriers for our employees. However, we are committed to continuously improving the accessibility of our workplace processes, particularly as they relate to rental equipment or hired cartage. To that end, we are exploring various strategies to ensure that our facilities and equipment are as accommodating as possible for employees with varying physical abilities. This may include providing tools such as foldable steps and swivel chairs to help mitigate any potential accessibility challenges that may arise in the future.

Progress

Van Kam stands by our original commitment to accessibility and will continue to make accommodation wherever possible to support our employees. We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive workplace and will keep striving to enhance accessibility in all aspects of our operations.



Accessibility & Culture

Van Kam's Culture

- Building an inclusive and diverse work forces where everyone and the environment are respected.
- Encouraging employees to self-identify as members of equity groups, including persons with disabilities, to ensure accurate representation of our workforce.
- Encouraging participation in internal and interdepartmental equity networks, such as our people with disabilities network.
- A zero-tolerance approach towards disrespectful behavior, and a catch people doing the right thing program.

Steps we will take going forward:

- Consulting with people with disabilities when introducing new practices and providing education to employees about the barriers they face.
- Ensuring that all communication, discussions, and engagement with employees are accessible.
- Making sure that all company events are fully accessible to everyone.
- Addressing any barriers or limitations that hinder the full participation of people with disabilities in our department.
- Conducting a thorough evaluation of our current hiring practices and identifying and eliminating any barriers that may negatively impact persons with disabilities.
- Providing specialized training and guidance for management personnel involved in the recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities, to ensure that they have the knowledge and tools necessary to facilitate a fair and accessible hiring process.
- Making training available in alternative formats, such as audio or braille, to accommodate diverse learning needs.
- Enhancing our employee onboarding process to ensure that all new hires are fully informed about the tools and resources available to support them in their roles.
- Developing clear guidelines and resources for managers that outline their responsibilities in supporting employees and clients with disabilities and providing them with access to expert advice and support as needed.
- Updating our internal web content to include comprehensive information on accessibility and support for persons with disabilities.
- Providing opportunities for career advancement and development for all employees, including those with disabilities, and ensuring that accommodations are made as needed to facilitate their success.



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Accessibility related information for employees and customers

Van Kam is dedicated to providing accessibility-related information and accommodations to both our employees and customers. Any individual requiring accommodations due to a disability may request them through our Talent and Culture Department.

Alternate Formats

Van Kam will provide upon request our accessibility plan in the following formats upon request.

- print (within 15 days)
- large print (within 15 days)
- braille (within 45 days)
- audio recording (within 45 days)
- electronic (within 15 days)

Reporting

This plan represents Van Kam's continual commitment to accessibility and marks the beginning of a regular monitoring, planning, and reporting cycle that will meet the requirements of the Accessible Canada Regulations.



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Glossary

Accessibility: Refers to the needs of persons with disabilities being intentionally and thoughtfully considered when products, services and facilities are built or modified so they can be used and enjoyed by persons of all abilities.

Barrier: The Accessible Canada Act defines a barrier as “anything—including anything physical, architectural, technological or attitudinal, anything that is based on information or communications or anything that is the result of 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.”

Disability: The Accessible Canada Act defines a disability as “any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment—or a functional limitation— whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society.”