

Reviewing The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

June XX, 2009

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act became law on June 13, 2005. Under the act, the Lieutenant Governor must appoint someone to conduct an independent review of the legislation within four years of it coming into force.

Charles Beer has been appointed by the province to conduct this independent review, which will take approximately six months to complete. The purpose of this review is to make sure the legislation is effective for people with disabilities, businesses and organizations.

Beer will consult with people across the province and then submit a report to the government of Ontario. The report may include recommendations to improve the legislation and a strategy to repeal the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001.

Beer's previous professional experience includes:

- Member of the Ontario Legislature as an elected MPP for the riding of York Mackenzie from 1987 to 1995
- Minister of Community and Social Services from 1989 to 1990
- President of the Canadian Executive Service Organization from 1998 to 2003
- Principal with Counsel Public Affairs since 2005

THE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Under the act, Ontario is making the province accessible by 2025 through accessibility standards. These standards are the mandatory rules that businesses and organizations will have to follow in:

- Customer service
- Transportation
- Information and communications
- Employment
- The built environment.

Accessibility standards, which will be phased in over time, are developed by people from the business and disability communities.

The first standard — for customer service — is now law. Public sector organizations need to comply with the standard by January 1, 2010. Private sector and non-profit organizations need to comply by January 1, 2012.

The remaining standards will be finalized in the coming months.

For more information on making Ontario accessible, visit www.ontario.ca/AccessON.