

## Just released

### **Independent Review of AODA by Charles Beer recognizes importance of AMCTO's role in information sharing on Accessibility**

Charles Beer, who conducted an independent review for the government, in the context of discussing the need for sharing examples from best practices from municipalities and Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committees says: "I believe that AMO and AMCTO can also play an important role in this regard through their annual meetings and the various conferences and roundtables they sponsor."

He couldn't have written better ad copy for our upcoming session at our conference on accessibility! Or for promoting the importance of this website where we now have more than 225 different resources, including samples and examples.

### **Important News as at May 31<sup>st</sup> about the Implementation of the Accessibility Standards**

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, Minister Meilleur indicated that the development of the **Information and Communications, Employment and Transportation Standards is currently underway**. Responding to the concerns of AMCTO and many others, including Charles Beer, who undertook an independent review of the AODA, that the requirements within the standards need to be aligned, the government indicated that it will combine these three standards into "one streamlined, proposed regulation".

The Ministry will post information about the harmonized standard for public feedback "in the coming months".

AMCTO is seeking details about this process to ensure our members' interests are heard. AMCTO's President Tony Haddad has also written (June 14<sup>th</sup>) to the Minister inviting the Minister to engage AMCTO in assisting her ministry to anticipate the issues and sort them out before releasing the daft regulations containing the harmonized standards. Click [here](#) for the letter and related correspondence.

Note that the "harmonization" is only going to go so far – it will only deal with the three standards that are currently being finalized - not the one that came before or the one that will come after; the government's "Backgrounder" indicates "When the Accessible Built Environment Standard is finalized and when the Customer Service Standard comes up for review in 2013, the government will consider how best to streamline those as well."

In terms of implementation, "Requirements for the next four standards will be phased in to give organizations time to plan. Deadlines will depend on the size and nature of the organization. The province will develop free tools and educational materials in advance of compliance deadlines to help organizations meet their requirements, and the Ontario Public Service will be the first organization required to implement the standards."

As far as appeals from organizations that have been issued an enforcement action that they wish to dispute, the government has selected the provincial Licence Appeal Tribunal for this purpose.

***See 'What's New' for the documents referenced here***