

Helijet

Accessibility Plan and Feedback Process 2023-2026

N



Helijet

Our commitment

For over 35 years, Helijet has provided vital air transportation across British Columbia. We take pride in supporting British Columbia's vibrant economy and providing safe, secure, and dependable transportation between Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, Prince Rupert, and Haida Gwaii.

The safety of our passengers and employees is top priority. Helijet is committed to enhancing services and facilities without compromising safety. This commitment extends to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to equal access across our network, facilities, and services.

In 2023, Helijet engaged InterVISTAS Consulting to evaluate its barriers and develop a plan to enhance accessibility for passengers and employees with disabilities. This plan focuses on a three-year period from 2023 to 2026 and outlines how Helijet will continue identifying, removing, and preventing barriers from being introduced into its operating environment for both passengers and employees.



Daniel Sitnam
President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

1. General

Helijet welcomes feedback from passengers, employees, and disability advocacy groups. We encourage feedback on this Accessibility Plan, progress reports, and our feedback process.

A. Designated person

To submit feedback or request alternative formats for these documents, please contact the designated person below:

Carla Kovacs
Director, Client Relations
Phone: +1-604-231-3510
Email: carlakovacs@helijet.com



B. Feedback process

In addition to Helijet's Director of Client Relations, Carla Kovacs, individuals can also contact Helijet via our website, social media, toll-free number, mail or in-person at any of Helijet's facilities.

- Telephone (Toll-Free): +1-800-665-4354
- Email: accessibility@helijet.com
- TTY Relay Service:
 1. Dial 711
 2. After the operator confirmation, type in +1-800-665-4354
 3. The operator will dial the number for you and act as interpreter.
- Fax: +1-604-273-5301
- Mailing address:

Helijet International Inc.
5911 Airport Road South
Vancouver International Airport
Richmond, BC
V7B 1B5

Feedback may be provided anonymously by any and all of the previous methods of communication. We will acknowledge that we received feedback and will respond to it in the format in which we received it.

C. Alternative formats

Helijet will provide materials in alternative formats upon request. For braille or audio formats, Helijet will provide information in 45 days. For large print, physical copies, or a format that is compatible with adaptive technology, Helijet will provide documentation in 15 days.



2. Our understanding of barriers to accessible transportation

Helijet is committed to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessible transportation in everything we do. This includes the products, services, and facilities we offer both passengers and staff.

We categorize barriers into five (5) categories. These categories are:



Attitudinal barriers

These barriers result when people think or act based on false assumptions.



Systemic barriers

These barriers include policies, procedures, or work instructions that result in some people being excluded from activities, employment, or other services.



Technological barriers.

These barriers occur when technology, such as a smartphone application, cannot be accessed by people with disabilities.



Information and communication barriers

These barriers are created when information is offered in a format that suits some of the population, but not all people.



Physical/architectural barriers

These are physical obstacles that prevent access to a facility, room, or other location.

3. Employment

As of January 2024, Helijet currently employs 165 people based in several locations across British Columbia. These locations include Richmond, Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, Prince Rupert, and Haida Gwaii.

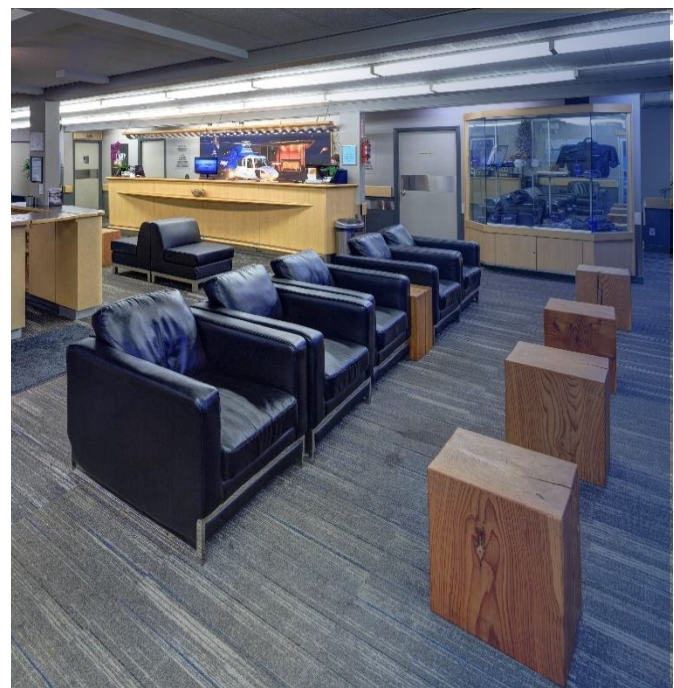


We take great pride in providing our staff with a safe, fulfilling, and rewarding environment in which to work every day. Helijet's core values center on customer dedication, safety, professionalism, mutual respect and trust. We prioritize individual determination and value the diversity of our team.

Helijet currently has a *Discrimination, Violence, and Harassment Policy*. This policy highlights that we are committed to providing everyone with an environment that is free from any form of discrimination or harassment under the BC Human Right code or the Canada Human Rights Act. The policy reflects our commitment to ensure that all those who work at Helijet can do so in a workplace that supports their diversity while fostering an environment of respect, inclusivity, and safety.

Barriers Identified

- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) training and awareness is uneven across the organization.
- Job advertisements and job descriptions are not always barrier-free or support assistive technology.
- Communication about workplace accommodation processes are not always consistent.
- Internal and employee-facing systems are not always compatible with screen readers or other assistive devices.



Actions and Timelines

- Review job descriptions for completeness and incorporate language on roles, responsibilities, and reasonable accommodations (2025)
- Review job advertisements to ensure they are compatible with assistive devices (2025)
- Continue and expand disability-awareness training across the organization and including senior leadership (2025-2026)
- Establish an internal accessibility committee that includes all levels of Helijet's organization to address any barriers identified by employees or passengers (2024)

4. Information and communication technologies (ICT)

As part of our commitment to serve communities across much of British Columbia, Helijet relies on information and communication technologies for both internal, employee communication and information-sharing with our passengers. Information and communication technologies (ICT) are critical in safely and efficiently operating aircraft.

Helijet leverages its website to promote and highlight some of the products and services offered to the public. As a result, the corporate website is a critical part of our ICT offering. In addition to our website, Helijet is active on all major social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.



Barriers Identified

- Website pages are not always accessible to people who use adaptive/assistive technologies or devices
- Announcements in terminal(s) are not always barrier-free or provided in alternative formats
- Uneven awareness of telephone relay system and functionality
- Employee-facing systems and applications not always compatible with assistive devices

Actions and Timelines

- Engage third-party to audit Helijet's external website against WCAG 2.1 (Level AA) standards (2025-2026)
- Amend existing process for how in-terminal announcements are made to provide more barrier-free communication
- Promote accessible means of communication to broaden engagement between the travelling public and Helijet (e.g. TTY and other)

5. Communication, other than ICT

Respect is a core value at Helijet. This applies to how staff interact with one another, as well as how staff interact with the travelling public. All public-facing staff receive training for how to interact with passengers with disabilities.

Helijet operates a call center for reservations and customer inquiries. All agents are trained to and use customer service best practices to speak in plain language and to ensure that information is available and communicated in a way that meets the needs of the particular customer.



Barriers Identified

- Terminology about disability and barriers are not used consistently
- Passenger briefings on board aircraft are not always accessible to passengers with disabilities depending on the nature of the disability
- Staff not always able to adopt strategies to provide information that is barrier-free (such as modifying communication or provide plain language instruction).
- Unclear process for providing information in alternative formats (both for employee-facing materials and for the travelling public)

Actions and Timelines

- Expand accessibility awareness training for all staff with a focus on barrier-identification, language/terminology, and mitigating solutions to barriers (2025)

- Conduct more lived experience exercises with local disability advocacy groups (2025-2027)
- Review options to make closed captioning default on applications used by Helijet employees, such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams (2025)

6. Procurement of goods, services, and facilities

The procurement of goods, services, and facilities is managed by Helijet’s central office in Richmond. Where possible, we prioritize vendors, contractors, and suppliers who are based locally, and this applies to all of Helijet’s terminals and office locations. While Helijet does not currently have an accessible procurement policy, we are committed to developing one within one year from the time this Plan is published. This will ensure that goods, services, and facilities are procured in a barrier-free way and to prevent barriers from being introduced into our business.



Barriers Identified

- No formal accessible procurement policy
- Uneven understanding of barrier prevention in procurement, services, and facilities
- No regular consultation process with people with lived experience and disabilities

Actions and Timelines

- Develop accessible procurement policy (2024)
- Incorporate accessibility as a criterion in all procurement processes for the provision of goods and services, as well as any construction that Helijet initiates (2025-2026)
- Continue reviewing employee-facing systems, processes, and facilities to ensure Helijet provides staff with a barrier-free workplace (ongoing)
- Engage with people with lived experience and disability advocacy groups to ensure products and services are barrier free (2025-2026).

7. Design and delivery of services and programs



Helijet actively engages with the communities in which we serve and operate. We regularly review all communication, compliments, suggestions, and feedback for ways we can continuously improve the services and program we offer. This includes any feedback related to barriers or issues related to the accessibility of our services and programs.

We will continue to engage with people with lived experience and continue to work with staff who identify barriers in the products, services, and

programs we provide the travelling public.

Barriers Identified

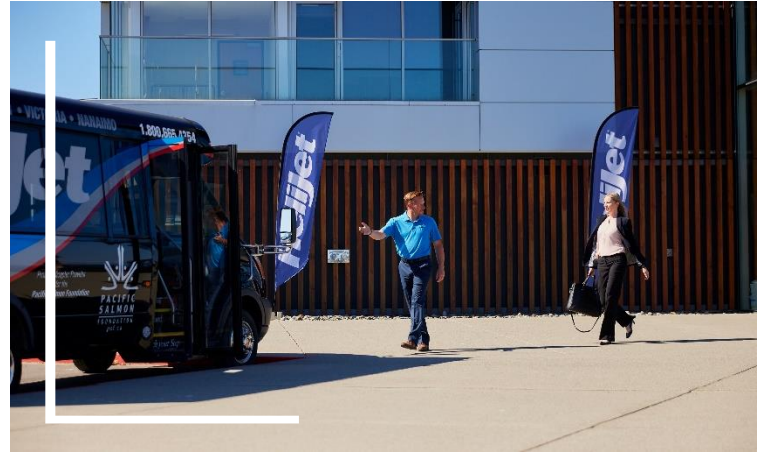
- Currently, there is no mechanism or system to identify barriers for both employee- and passenger-facing services, programs, and facilities
- Barriers to equal access are not always explicitly mentioned in internal processes, standard operating procedures (SOPs), or employee-related policies
- Currently, there is no formal way to solicit feedback from people with disabilities and lived experience

Actions and Timelines

- Develop an internal feedback mechanism for employee-related feedback on barriers to equal access in the workplace (2025)
- Implement a feedback process for all accessibility-related (2024)
- Conduct a comprehensive review of internal standard operating procedures (SOPs), plans, and policies to identify barriers and to remove them. This applies to employee-related policies and processes, as well as passenger-facing policies and procedures (2024-2027).

8. Transportation

Helijet is proud to offer transportation services to and from a variety of locations in British Columbia. We engage with our passengers at various points along the travel journey, which includes as early as making a reservation, check-in at our terminals, and providing service to and from our fleet of aircraft. Safety remains our top priority in the movement of all passengers, baggage, aircraft, and crew.



While all our staff and crew are trained to support passengers throughout the entire journey, we acknowledge that some of the physical constraints of our aircraft fleet create barriers for some people with disabilities.

Barriers Identified

- Some information about passenger process could be provided in advance of a passenger's journey to familiarize themselves with the aircraft and process (e.g. social stories or information to pre-plan a trip)
- Hidden or non-apparent disabilities not always recognized in relation to seating next to emergency exits
- Configuration and physical dimensions of aircraft can be challenging for some people with muscular, mobility, or dexterity-related disabilities

Actions and Timelines

- Explore opportunities to share pre-planning information about what to expect, including "sensory guide" and social stories (2025).
- Review other opportunities to provide federally-regulated safety briefings (e.g. different locations) while remaining compliant with Transport Canada regulations (2025-2026)
- Review of Helijet's *Scheduled Domestic Tariff* (2019), particularly Section G "Services to be Provided" related to services provided to passengers with disabilities (2026-2027)
- Continue to work with manufacturers of aircraft on accessible design and feasibility related to barrier-free cabin configurations (2027)

9. Built environment

Helijet owns, operates, and maintains its terminal facilities. This also includes all areas in which employees operate. We have engaged a third-party consultant to help identify barriers to equal access and to provide insight into how best to remove and prevent barriers from being introduced into the built environment.

Helijet's terminal facilities incorporate some basic elements of universal design and provide sloped ramps to access the public side of terminals. We recognize that boarding positions at some of our locations, such as Vancouver Waterfront, do not have sloped ramps at boarding positions. To ensure that passengers can board safely and easily, Helijet provides an alternative boarding process for those passengers with mobility-related disabilities and passengers with reduced mobility (PRM).

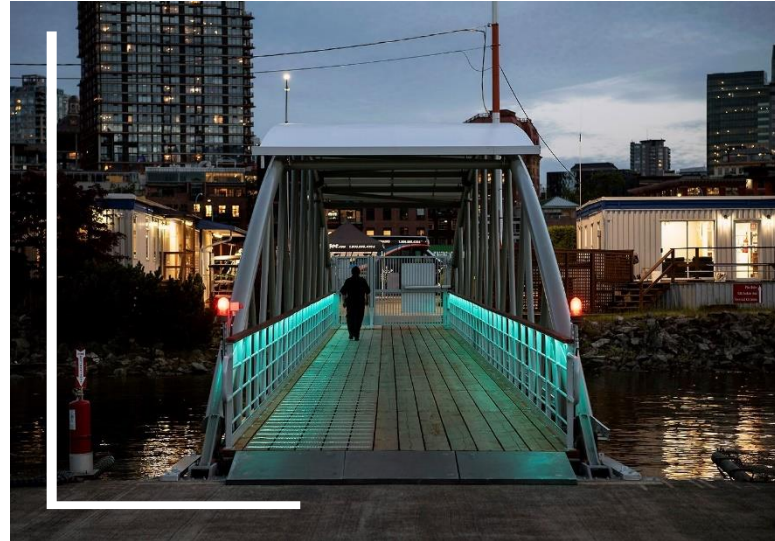
Our airline's fleet consists of 9 Sikorsky S-76 helicopters. Helicopters are very different compared to airplanes, known as "fixed-wing aircraft." Helicopters are compact, versatile aircraft that often have a dense seating configuration. This can sometimes create barriers for people with disabilities. In particular, we recognize that seating configurations and internal space can be challenging for people with service dogs, for example.

Barriers Identified

- Cargo door at Victoria's terminal does not have a sloped ramp for people with reduced mobility or people who use mobility aids. The door is used by both employees and public.
- Boarding positions at Vancouver (Waterfront) include stairs only.
- Toilets for both employees and passengers at Victoria terminal do not have sufficient turning radius for persons with reduced mobility or wheelchair users.
- Signage and wayfinding in terminals are limited and does not incorporate tactile and braille characteristics (as indicated in CSA/ASC B651:23)

Actions and Timelines

- Design and introduce sloped ramp to cargo door at Helijet's Victoria terminal (2027)
- Review signage and wayfinding at all terminals (2026)



- Review shuttle buses and other vehicles associated with transporting Helijet passengers and employees to and from terminal facilities (2024-2025)



10. Provisions of CTA accessibility-related regulations

Helijet is subject to Part VII of the *Air Transportation Regulations (ATR)* and *Personnel Training for the Assistance of Persons with Disabilities Regulations (PTR)*. Our compliance with Part VII of the ATRs is captured in our Domestic Tariff and includes provisions related to the service and transportation of passengers with disabilities across our network.

Additionally, Helijet provides its staff with appropriate training to support a barrier-free passenger experience at facilities across our network. We are subject to the *Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulations (ATPRRs)*, which outlines how Helijet plans on delivering on commitments to improving the passenger experience for people with disabilities.

11. Provisions of federal employer-related regulations

As a federally-regulated employer, Helijet is subject to the *Accessible Canada Regulations (ACRs)*. We strive to create a workplace that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.

12. Consultations

Consultation forms a key part of Helijet’s products and services. We are committed to ensuring that the perspective of people with disabilities is incorporated into our services. For that reason, Helijet adopts a collaborative approach to consult persons with disabilities and lived experience. This includes both passenger-facing and employee-facing areas.

To understand the types of barriers people may encounter, Helijet hosted a “lived experience exercise” in early 2024 in which we partnered with Pacific Autism Family Network (PAFN). This exercise involved inviting twelve (12) people with cognitive, intellectual,

or developmental disabilities to take a flight with Helijet. This consultation involved soliciting feedback from people with lived experience and their caregivers about our services, facilities, and products. The twelve participants experienced all aspects of the flight, from reservation to boarding and deboarding an active flight.

Following the flight, participants and their caregivers provided feedback about information and communication, pre-travel preparations, and some elements of the terminal experience. They recommended provided more information about what to expect in the form of social stories and plain language. They met with Helijet staff to explain their experience and some of the barriers that affected their travel experience. This feedback has been incorporated into our Accessibility Plan and we are committed to continuous improvement.

Additionally, Helijet has solicited feedback on this Plan from select disability advocacy groups in British Columbia. We have requested feedback about the types of barriers that people may encounter while travelling with Helijet and potential solutions to mitigate them.

We have also consulted a sample of employees to ensure that Helijet continues to support a safe, empowered, and barrier-free workplace for employees with disabilities.

We recognize that we have a lot more work to do regarding consultation and we are committed to hearing more and working with members of the community to identify and remove barriers. To accomplish this, we are committed to establish an accessibility advisory committee at Helijet within 30 days from publishing this Plan.

