

# **Peace River Broadcasting Initial Accessibility Plan 2024**

## **Introduction & Executive Summary**

Established in 1954, Peace River Broadcasting (PRB) is an independently owned and operated Radio Network. PRB encompasses 2 radio stations based in Peace River, Alberta - CKYL and CKKX as well as a 3<sup>rd</sup> station based in High Level, Alberta – CKHL.

PRB is committed to the accessibility for persons with disabilities and meeting the obligations under the Accessibility Canada Act (ACA) and its regulations.

PRB is committed to the treatment of all individuals in a manner which provides them with dignity, respect, and independence. With this, we strive to identify and remove barriers for our employees, customers and community members through this Accessibility Plan.

Through internal consultation and the continuous invite of public feedback, the PRB Accessibility Plan includes an overview of policies, practices and objectives going forward to help remove barriers and prevent new ones.

## **Definitions**

**Barrier:** 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 a person with an impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, or sensory impairment, or a functional limitation.

**Disability:** Any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication, and sensory impairment, or functional limitation that is either permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature. It can be evident or not in interaction with a barrier to hinder a person's full and equal participation in society.

**Accessibility:** Greater accessibility is achieved through the design of products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies, and rules in a way that allows all people, including people with a variety of disabilities to access and use them, as independently as the person wishes.

## **Feedback**

PRB welcomes and appreciates feedback on any barriers to accessibility as well as its Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Plan can be found on our Company Websites – [RiverCountry.fm/accessibility/](http://RiverCountry.fm/accessibility/) and [KIX.fm/accessibility/](http://KIX.fm/accessibility/).

Feedback can be provided anonymously by any of the methods outlined below to Jonathan Babiy; PRB President, by...

**Mail:** Bag 300. Peace River, Alberta. T8S 1T5

**Phone:** (780) 624-2535

**Email:** [jon@RiverCountry.fm](mailto:jon@RiverCountry.fm)

## **Areas of Accessibility Under Section 5 of the ACA**

### **Employment Practices**

At PRB, we strive for a positive work environment free from discrimination and harassment. Our objective is to create and maintain an inclusive culture of respect for all – employees, customers and community members.

As part of this effort, our Employee Handbook details a business codes of conduct which includes Anti-Violence and Anti-Harassment Policies and complaint filing procedures. We continuously review and communicate our Employee Handbook and policies to employees to ensure best practices and encourage feedback at anytime.

### **Built Environment**

PRB has 2 offices. 1 in Peace River, Alberta which is owned by the company and another in High Level, Alberta which is leased. Both locations are open by appointment only. The majority of the time only our small staff occupy the space – very limited traffic.

Our Peace River owned office location is an older building which does impact accessibility. A barrier referenced, is people with limited ability may find challenges with navigating the stairwells as well as entering the building due to no ramp present. Upon analysis, the installation of systems to ease accessibility around the office were not financially viable. However, we have undertaken actions to reduce these barriers which includes:

~ The ability to perform tasks remotely through enhanced production software.

~ Meet customers outside our office space, if need be, at a location better accessible to their needs.

Given the broadcast scope of PRB, the company is prepared to invest in remote work equipment. This would be put in place should an employee be unable to navigate the current environment or we hire an individual unable to navigate the current environment. This would provide the ability to perform work tasks remotely due to any accessibility issues. Dollars have been earmarked.

Should there be a time where we re-locate our Peace River office, accessibility will certainly be addressed in our decision making.

As our High Level office location is leased, should there be a time where we re-locate, we will be mindful of the ease of accessibility for a potential future location. At this time, we have very limited staff onsite with no public access. So accessibility at this site is not an issue.

### **Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

PRB operates 2 company websites; RiverCountry.fm and KIX.fm, Apps for each radio station and Social Media platforms.

Our online content provider (websites and apps) continuously updates its portal to enhance ease and functionality for staff use with timely support in place.

Going forward, our next website redesign has ease of message delivery as a top priority to best match today's information gathering devices.

## **Information and Communication Other Than (ICT)**

Being a small independently owned and operated Radio Network, PRB has less than 20 employees. Our modest employee numbers provide the opportunity for consistent communication amongst all staff members.

Management has an open-door policy to timely address any concerns, answer questions and stay up to date with office proceedings. This helps to cultivate an inclusive work environment where all staff feel welcomed, comfortable and respected.

PRB operates in small communities. Being in business since 1954, we are a well established and recognized community member/supporter. Our business and team members are easy to connect with and are often very well known. PRB is continuously mindful of staying connected to the areas we serve through physical presence and positive contributions.

A barrier referenced is a reduced small town community connection with our Peace River office no longer open to the public – a change made out of necessity during the Covid Pandemic. The decision to continue being open by appointment only was carefully considered with many elements in play such as staffing, budget and safety due to an increase of homelessness, vagrancy, and crime in our office's downtown core. We felt best to keep on this path with the ability to change if it best fits business practices.

Throughout this change, we have adjusted to best maintain the same community accessibility as when the office was open to the public. This includes prizing being mailed or sent digitally, implementing a text line and messaging through our apps as added forms of contact. Our phone tree has also been recently updated for ease of navigation which includes a general voice message option. These messages are then relayed on to the appropriate person/department by staff and responded to in the timely manner. No need to go through multiple phone tree steps to connect with us. The public can also still access our Peace River office building by simply calling a number posted on the front door.

Going forward, we will continue our objective of maintaining our high level of engagement and ease of accessibility to the public.

## **Procurement of Goods and Services**

PRB buys products and services which support our business operations.

Currently, accessibility is not considered an issue. However, it will be monitored with measures put in place to overcome any related barriers which arise.

## **Design and Delivery of Services**

As a local media information provider, PRB strives to make its content as accessible as possible to our local coverage area. This includes delivering messaging through the following sources:

Audio – Over The Air and Online Streaming

Visual – Text, Video, Apps and Websites

At PRB, we ensure the representation of the local area, and its people are accurate, timely and entertaining.

As locally based information providers in smaller communities continue to decline, PRB recognizes its increased importance of providing reliable and timely content. With this, consistent awareness and adaptation will be made to best ensure ease of reception and communication with our local audience and community.

A communication barrier of note which will be addressed is Video postings not accessible to the hearing impaired. Addressing this barrier, we will be looking into closed captioning for Videos.

### **Transportation**

PRB has a company vehicle at each office site – Peace River and High Level.

Staff has access to these vehicles for company related activities such as remotes, news stories, client visits etc. This is based on having a valid drivers license and insurance coverage on the company policy or; if required, through their own insurance provider.

PRB provides the need for flexibility and allowances. Employees are welcome to use their own mode of transportation if it best accommodates their needs given a disability or otherwise. A policy is in place for compensation of personal vehicle use for company related travels.

### **Consultations and Feedback**

The above Accessibility Plan has been derived from information collected internally at PRB and invited feedback. Topics addressed and insight attained in the early 2024 information gathering process included...

- Stairs which require navigation to enter the building and access both levels.
- Video postings not accessible for hearing impaired.
- Phone tree system difficult to navigate.
- Heavy rear back door and high facility features provide difficulty for any children in the building. For safety adult supervision of all children in the building is required.
- Office being closed to the public, giving a reduced small town community feel.

In an ongoing effort to identify and remove barriers, PRB will continue to welcome feedback related to accessibility through the form found on its websites under “Accessibility”.

### **Conclusion**

PRB is committed to accessibility for its employees, customers and community members by implementing this Plan, continuing to examine practices and welcoming feedback to help address barriers when identified.

A hard copy/alternative format of the PRB Accessibility Plan can be attained upon request by contacting Jonathan Babiy – contact details in “Feedback” section.