



Section 508 and WCAG: Beyond the Federal Sphere

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Presentation Outline

- Who is the Access Board? What does the Access Board do?
- Overview of 508 and the “ICT Refresh”
- What are the big changes with the new 508 requirements?
 - What do Web Content Accessibility Guidelines have to do with it?
 - What is WCAG and how does it related to 508 and the ADA?
- Understanding WCAG:
 - What is Level A and Level AA?
 - What is the relationship between WCAG, W3C, and WAI?
 - I heard there is a new version? 2.0 and 2.1?

Access Board Overview

Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, 1973

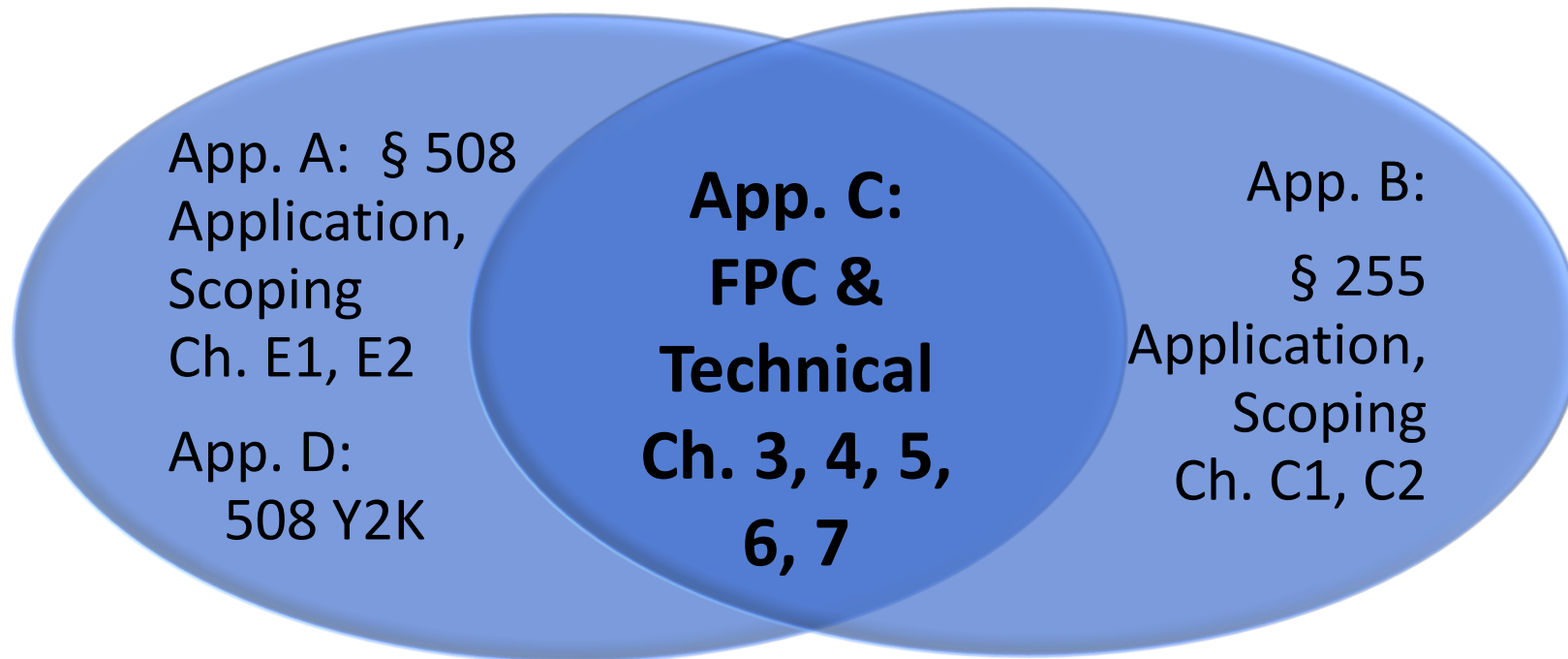
- Independent Micro-Agency (28 staff)
- 25 Board Members
 - 13 Public Presidential Appointees
 - 12 Senior Federal Agencies Representatives

Develop and maintain design criteria

- Built Environment
- Transit Vehicles
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
 - Telecommunications Equipment
 - Electronic and Information Technology

Provide Technical Assistance and Training

Illustration of Structure and Organization



508 Scoping

From E203.1: “...**agencies** shall ensure the following”

- A. That Federal employees with disabilities have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access and use by Federal employees who are not individuals with disabilities; and
- B. That members of the public with disabilities who are seeking information or data from a Federal agency have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to that provided to members of the public who are not individuals with disabilities.

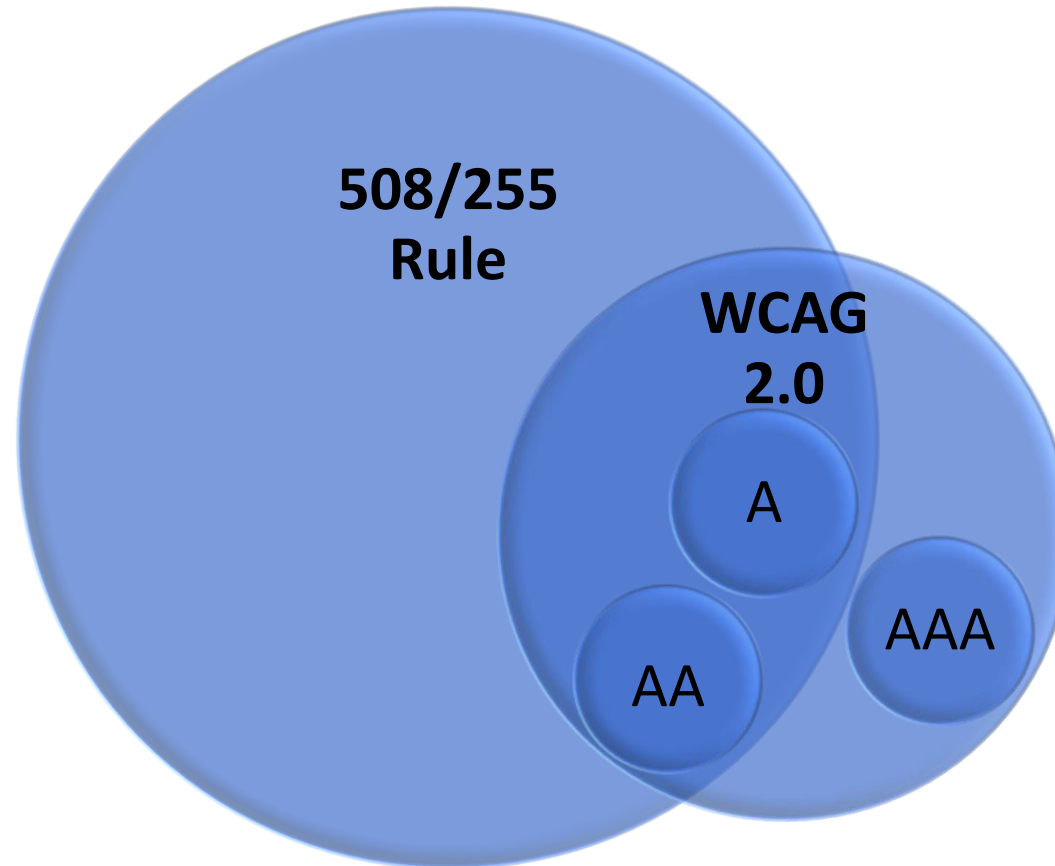
E203.2 User Needs. When **agencies** procure, develop, maintain or use ICT...

Revised 508 Standards: Broad Application of WCAG 2.0

WCAG 2.0 Level A and AA Success Criteria and Conformance Requirements applied to:

- Web content (e.g. online instructional materials)
- Covered non-Web documents (e.g. instructional materials)
- Software user interfaces (e.g. learning management systems)

WCAG 2.0 Incorporation By Reference (IBR)



WCAG 2.0 Incorporation By Reference

Revised 508 Standards citations to WCAG 2.0:

- 508 Chapter 2
 - E205.4 Accessibility Standard (under E205 Electronic Content)
 - E207.2 WCAG Conformance (under E207 Software)
- Chapter 5: Software
 - 504.2 Content Creation or Editing
- Chapter 6: Support Documentation and Services
 - 602.3 Electronic Support Documentation

What does 508 say about PDFs?

- Revised 508 Standards citations to WCAG are of the form:
 - “...shall conform to Level A and Level AA Success Criteria and Conformance Requirements in WCAG 2.0 (incorporated by reference, see 702.10.1).”
- **Mostly**, the Revised 508 Standards do not specify file format.
 - WCAG 2.0 was developed with PDF in mind

Revised 508 Standards Applicable to PDF:

508 Chapter 2, E205 Electronic Content

- E205.2 — PDFs that are public facing (e.g. on websites)
- E205.3 — PDFs that are Agency Official Communications
 - Not public facing (e.g., email attachments)
 - Exceptions for “non web documents” from four SC

Chapter 5: Software

- 504.2 Content Creation or Editing
 - 504.2.2 PDF Export (next slide)

Chapter 6: Support Documentation and Services

- 602.3 — PDFs used for Electronic Support Documentation

Revised 508 Standards:

504.2.2 PDF Export

- Authoring tools capable of exporting PDF files that conform to ISO 32000-1:2008 (PDF 1.7) shall also be capable of exporting PDF files that conform to ANSI/AIIM/ISO 14289-1:2016 (PDF/UA-1) (incorporated by reference, see 702.3.1).
- Plain language version:
 - If software can create “modern” PDFs, then must have the option to create PDFs that are accessible.

WCAG 2.0: An International Standard

[World Wide Web Consortium](#) (W3C) Web for All mission

[Web Accessibility Initiative](#) (WAI) guidelines and standards

WCAG 2.0 background and development

- Represents an international, multi-stakeholder consensus
- Adopted or referenced by many countries and organizations
- Also endorsed by International Standards Organization (ISO)
- One of three complementary W3C WAI guidelines
- Why standards harmonization advances accessibility

WCAG 2.0: Multiple Audiences

- Web Content Accessibility *Guidelines*
 - They are *standards*, and they might be requirements!
- Organizational Structure:
 - Principles
 - Guidelines
 - Success Criteria
 - “WCAG 2.0 success criteria are written as testable statements that are not technology-specific.”

WCAG 2.0 Levels

- Success Criteria are rated as A, AA, or AAA:
 - Level A, minimal amount of basic accessibility
 - E.g., Alt Tags (1.1.1) and keyboard functionality (2.1.1)
 - Level AA, good amount of accessibility, but may be more work
 - E.g., captioning of videos (1.2.2)
 - Level AAA, higher degree of accessibility, but might not be applicable to all technology
 - E.g., using section headings to organize content (2.4.10)

WCAG 2.0 Conformance

- Must satisfy all Success Criteria (SC) at a given level
- If an SC is not applicable, then it is satisfied
- Some SC are specific to a page within a set of pages
- Conformance applies to the entire page
- For multi-page processes, all pages must conform
- Requirement for non-interference

Conformance at AA, or even AAA, does not equal 100% accessibility!

Getting Started Using WCAG 2.0

Start with the [WCAG 2.0 Overview](#)

- The full standard is [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0](#)

WCAG 2.0 [layers of guidance](#):

- principles, guidelines, success criteria, techniques
- Each success criterion has contextual links for “Understanding” and “How to Meet”

Be mindful of what WCAG says about [conformance requirements and claims](#)

- Maybe [read more about conformance](#) from “Understanding WCAG”

Understanding WCAG 2.0

What else “[Understanding WCAG 2.0](#)” can tell you about success criteria:

- intent
- examples
- related resources
- techniques and failures
- key terms

Techniques for WCAG 2.0

[Techniques for WCAG 2.0](#)

- Check for “latest version” link
- Very large volume of technical implementation resources
- Updated periodically
 - You might need to check that you are looking at the most recent version
- Success criteria are “technology agnostic”
- Techniques are technology-specific
 - General, HTML, CSS, scripting, SMIL, text, ARIA, etc.
 - Info, applicability, description, examples, related techniques, tests
 - Why “failures” are important

Developers’ view of WCAG techniques is better to work from!

- [How to meet WCAG 2.0](#) (also known as “WCAG 2.0 Quickref”)

WCAG Development

WCAG 1.0: Published in 1999. Incompletely incorporated into original Section 508 rules.

WCAG 2.0: Published in 2008. Incorporated by reference into Section 508 rules, as well as incorporated into many rules around the world.

WCAG 2.1: Published in June 2018. Backward compatible with WCAG 2.0, but incorporates improvements for touch UI, low-vision users, and users with cognitive disabilities: 5 A, 7 AA.

Bruce's favorite aspects of WCAG 2

The table of contents *is* a top ~~ten~~ twelve list

— in plain language no less!

The built-in prioritization plan:

1. The four SC associated with CR5 for Non-Interference
2. Then the other Single A SC
3. Then the AA SC
4. Add 2.1 SC as resources allow
5. Add AAA SC as resources allow

Are non-federal websites required to comply with the Revised 508 Standards?

Section 508 applies only to federal agencies when they procure, use, develop, or maintain ICT

- Section 508 itself does not apply beyond the federal government

State and local governments and private-sector organizations may be required to make their websites accessible

- The 508 Standards can serve as useful guidance in achieving that goal
- In some cases, compliance with the 508 Standards may be required by other rules and regulations

What if an entity receives federal funds?

Accessibility is often a condition of federal assistance

- Accessibility includes program access and effective communication, so that would include websites

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination based on disability by federal agencies and recipients of federal assistance

- Each Federal agency publishes and enforces its own 504 regulations
 - those applicable to its own programs and services (federally conducted)
 - those applicable to its recipients (federally assisted)
- Recipients of Federal assistance should consult its funding agencies
 - regarding any obligation to make their websites and other communications accessible

Examples of Other Laws or Regulations that may be Applicable

The State of California requires its ICT and that of entities receiving assistance from the State to comply with the 508 Standards.

- CA Code § 7405

Health and Human Service (HHS) awards grants to States to maintain comprehensive statewide programs of technology-related assistance and requires that activities comply with the 508 Standards

- Assistive Technology Act (29 USC § 3003(d)(6)(G))

Medicaid managed care regulation requires all managed care programs receiving federal Medicaid funds to ensure that information provided to enrollees and potential enrollees is “readily accessible”

- From 5 C.F.R. § 438.10:
 - *Readily accessible* means electronic information and services which comply with modern accessibility standards such as section 508 guidelines, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA and successor versions.

ADA and Web Accessibility

DOJ has provided guidance that the ADA requires covered entities to communicate effectively about their programs, services, and activities

- including information provided through the Web

DOJ 2016 Supplemental Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (SANPRM) on “Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability: Accessibility of Web Information and Services of State and Local Government Entities”

- considered proposing WCAG 2.0 Level AA as the accessibility standard for websites
 - www.ada.gov/regs2016/sanprm.html
 - Withdrawn 12/26/2017, see: www.federalregister.gov/d/2017-27510

More recently (9/25/2018), DOJ Affirms ADA’s Coverage of Websites

- LF Legal provides good coverage:
 - www.lflegal.com/2018/09/doj-cut

ADA and WCAG

Until DOJ adopts specific technical requirements for Web accessibility in a final rule...

- state and local governments, as well as businesses, subject to the ADA have a degree of flexibility in determining how to comply with the ADA's general requirements of nondiscrimination and effective communication with regard to their websites

Precedents are not insignificant!

- Lainey Feingold settlement agreements (50+):
 - www.lflegal.com/negotiations
- Brown Goldstein Levy
 - www.browngold.com/category/disability



Resources

USAB Resources

www.Access-Board.gov

- Section 508 Standards and Section 255 Guidelines, including technical assistance
 - ICT Final rule (2017)
 - Regulatory Impact Analysis
 - Overview and Press Release
 - More material under development

www.adaconferences.org/CIOC/Archives

- Archives of Section 508 “Best Practices” Webinar series (2013-2017)
 - Sponsored by the U.S. Access Board and CIO Council (CIOC)
 - For 2017, focus has been on the Revised 508 Standards

GSA Resources

www.Section508.gov

- GSA website with 508 technical assistance
 - FAQs
 - Best Practices, including practical guidance for how to make documents accessible in different formats: Word, PDF, Excel

www.section508.gov/refresh-toolkit

- Revised 508 Standards Toolkit:
 - 508 Transition Guidance — ***New Material!***
 - Program Management
 - Policy Updates
 - Training

W3C Robust Technical Assistance:

Web Accessibility Initiative homepage: [w3.org/wai](https://www.w3.org/wai)

- WCAG Overview: [w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php](https://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php)

W3C Resources:

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0: [w3.org/tr/wcag20](https://www.w3.org/tr/wcag20)
- How to Meet WCAG 2.0: [w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref](https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref)
- Understanding WCAG 2.0: [w3.org/tr/understanding-wcag20](https://www.w3.org/tr/understanding-wcag20)
- Techniques and Failures for WCAG 2.0: [w3.org/tr/wcag20-techs](https://www.w3.org/tr/wcag20-techs)
- Guidance on Applying WCAG 2.0 to Non-Web Information and Communications Technologies (WCAG2ICT): [w3.org/tr/wcag2ict](https://www.w3.org/tr/wcag2ict)

Related Implementation Resources

- [Finding your WAI to new resources](#)
- [Annotated list of WAI resources](#)
- [Tutorials](#)
- [Perspectives videos](#)
- [Tips for Getting Started](#)
- [Evaluation Tools](#)
- Revisit [WAI website](#) for new information
- How WAI resources are developed
- Thanks to support from [HHS NIDILRR](#) and [Access Board](#)

Adobe Accessibility Homepage

- Information about Adobe products
 - By product
 - Compliance (VPATs)
 - Resources
 - Feedback
- adobe.com/accessibility





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