# The Business Case for Accessibility within the Victorian Government

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# Standard - Accessibility

- The Victorian Government has accepted for some time that accessible websites are important

- IT&T Policy 39 has been around for more than 4 years now

- The Government is about to endorse an Accessibility Standard for Victorian inner budget sector agencies to comply with – 8 December 2004

- The business case is accepted – agencies must apply the standard to their websites

# The Standard

- Each standard which is now issued by the Government is prefixed with a "why are we doing this statement".

- This puts the standard in context for the implementer as to why they are doing it – not just they have to do it.

- For the Accessibility Standard - 8 reasons are provided as to why accessibility is important

# The 8 reasons

- 1. Assists people with disabilities

- 2. Assists other groups that may have difficulty using the web

- 3. Increases the usability of the site

- 4. Is cost effective

- 5. Provides best practice examples to other Australian websites

- 6. Improves the public perception of Government

- 7. State government has a duty to its citizens

- 8. It is the law

# Content of the standard

- Provides for websites to be accessible for:

  – People with disabilities

  – People using older technology

  – People with poor telecommunications infrastructure often in regional and remote areas

- Rationale

  – To give citizens ready access to Government websites, without discrimination

# Content of the standard

- Minimum requirement

  - All websites must be Level A compliant (W3C guidelines)

  - Where audience needs are specific, websites should become Level AA or AAA as appropriate

- Applicability

  - New websites – immediate implementation with reporting by June 2005

  - Existing websites – implementation and reporting by June 2005

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# How will be know if it is implemented?

- Agencies must report up via the Secretaries (CEOs) of their respective departments/agencies as to their compliance

- In essence the heads of departments will be accountable for the implementation of all website standards

- No one wants to say they have not complied

- Independent and random assessments of sites may or may not be implemented.

- In the interim a quality assessment of all websites in the inner budget sector will be organised from the centre.

# Questions??

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