

**GTS**  
Government Technology Services

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# **New Zealand Government Web Standards 2.0**

March 2009

[www.webstandards.govt.nz](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz)

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# Introduction

The New Zealand Government Web Standards 2.0 were released in March 2009 and replace the New Zealand Government Web Standards 1.0.

See the New Zealand Government Web Standards site at [www.webstandards.govt.nz](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz) for guidance, compliance and coverage information.

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## Strategy and operations standards

### 1. Web strategy

Agencies must have a formal web strategy.

### 2. Tendering and contracts

When outsourcing web development, agencies must include a requirement for compliance with the New Zealand Government Web Standards in all relevant RFPs, RFIs and contracts.

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## Technical standards

### Overview

The W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG2.0) have been adopted as the New Zealand Government's technical standards. These include New Zealand-specific standards, as described in "2. New Zealand-specific requirements", below.

#### WCAG2.0 resources

Note that the New Zealand Government has adopted level AA (including A).

- **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Overview (W3C)**. Background, an introduction to WCAG2.0, and links to additional information.  
[www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php](http://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php)
- WebAim offers a **summarised checklist**. <http://webaim.org/standards/wcag/checklist>
- **Web guides:**
  - New standards transition web guides ([www.webstandards.govt.nz/new-standards-transition](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/new-standards-transition)). Compares the old and new standards.
  - Technical web guides ([www.webstandards.govt.nz/technical-web-guides](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/technical-web-guides))

# Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0

Websites must meet WCAG2.0's five conformance requirements ([www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/#conformance-reqs](http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/#conformance-reqs)).

Note that two of these, "**1. Conformance Level**" and "**4. Only Accessibility-Supported Ways of Using Technologies**", have been set for agencies in the following points (the latter being re-named below as the "New Zealand-specific requirements").

## 1. WCAG2.0 conformance level

Agency sites must meet all WCAG2.0 success criteria, level AA (including level A).

## 2. New Zealand-specific requirements

The following requirements adjust WCAG2.0 for the New Zealand government and comprise the second part of the Technical standards. They equate to the "Only Accessibility-Supported Ways of Using Technologies" ([www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/#conformance-reqs](http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/#conformance-reqs)) conformance requirements in WCAG2.0.

### 2.1 Technologies and techniques which must be used

- **UTF-8 character** encoding must be used. This is to help ensure consistency of data across government and to best enable multilingual support.
- **Validation.** All pages must validate to a published grammar.
- **Language codes.** Where English is the language of the page (WCAG2.0 3.1.1) or the language of part of the page (WCAG2.0 3.1.2), use the language code en-NZ. Where the language is Māori, use mi. For other languages, see the updated list ([www.iana.org/assignments/language-subtag-registry](http://www.iana.org/assignments/language-subtag-registry)) at the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority.

### 2.2 Technologies which may be used but not relied on

- **Scripts, applets and other programmatic objects.** Information or services in webpages or applications must be available without scripts, applets and other programmatic objects. This includes Flash, Silverlight, Java and Javascript.
- **Do not provide content in document formats other than HTML** (such as PDF, RTF, Word, Excel, Flash, etc) except when:
  - content is already provided in HTML format, or
  - content originates in software formats for which there are no accessible alternatives (eg, CAD, some financial and economic modelling tools), in which case you must provide a summary, file format and file size and a method by which the user can contact your agency for assistance in accessing the content, or
  - content was created before 31 October 2009, in which case you must provide a summary, file format and file size and a method by which the user can contact your agency for assistance in accessing the content.

- **Stylesheets.** Sites must work properly (be navigable, present information intelligibly) with stylesheets disabled.

## 2.3 Technologies and techniques which must not be used

- The **Frameset** doctype must not be used.
- **Underlining** must not be used for headings or non-link text.
- **Mark-up redirects** must not be used to mark-up (META or scripting) to automatically redirect pages. Instead, configure the server to perform redirects.
- **Server-side image maps** must not be used.

## 2.4 Browser testing standard

All new or significantly redeveloped websites must be browser tested as per the Yahoo! Graded Browser Support table (<http://developer.yahoo.com/yui/articles/gbs/>). A-grade testing must be thorough. Testing on one or two representative browsers is enough for C-grade testing.

Note that the best way to ensure browser compatibility is to code to web standards and to use the progressive enhancement web development approach.

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# Content and design standards

## 1. Required pages or sections and their content

### Overview

Agency websites must contain the following pages or sections, and the respective minimum content as specified.

#### Notes

- Page or section names may vary from those below, but must convey the same meaning.
- Only corporate (or "main" sites) are required to supply the content under "Publicly available reports" and "Media releases and other public information".

### Homepage

Homepage content must include the following information, or link directly to it.

- **Contact information.** See Contact information below for content details.
- **About this site.** See About this site below for content details.

The homepage must also contain the following.

- A link to the website [newzealand.govt.nz](http://newzealand.govt.nz)
- The name and/or logo of the agency primarily responsible for the website.

### Example

- See the homepage at [www.webstandards.govt.nz](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz)

## About this site

Agency sites must provide a page or section called "About this site", or similar, which acts a convenient container of (or an index to) all site information.

The content of this section or page must contain as a minimum:

- **Site owner.** Clearly specify the site owner. Where the site is not the main agency site, link back to the main agency site.
- **Copyright.** Provide copyright information here, or provide a link to copyright information. See the Copyright standard.
- **Copyright of third parties.** Provide copyright of third parties information here if relevant, or provide a link to copyright of third parties information. See the Copyright of third parties standard.
- **Privacy.** Provide privacy information here, or provide a link to privacy information. See the Privacy statement standard.
- **Contact details.** Provide contact information here, or provide a link to contact information. See the Contact information standard below.
- **Disclaimer.** If a disclaimer is required, provide information here, or provide a link to disclaimer information. See the Disclaiming content standard.
- **Terms of use.** Provide terms of use (terms and conditions) information here if required, or provide a link to terms of use information. See the Terms of use standard.

### Example

See the About this site page from the web standards website:  
[www.webstandards.govt.nz/about-this-site](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/about-this-site)

## Contact information

Agencies must provide clear contact information.

### Email addresses

Agency websites must create the email addresses listed below. It is at the discretion of the agency whether these email addresses are published on the site.

- [info@<domain>](mailto:info@<domain>)
- [postmaster@<domain>](mailto:postmaster@<domain>)

- webmaster@<domain>
- privacy@<domain>
- complaints:
  - complaints@<domain> or
  - abuse@<domain>
- general enquiries by at least one of:
  - enquiries@<domain> or
  - enquiry@<domain>

The agency must ensure email is monitored and, if requests for information are received, responded to in a timely way.

### **Physical location and telephone contact details**

Agency websites must provide the following contact details for all offices, except where there are strong security or business reasons not to do so:

- Telephone numbers
- Street locations

### **Additional contact information**

Additional contact information may include:

- TTY numbers for people who are deaf or have a hearing, speech or communication impairment. These should be included with primary contact information or the relevant program contact information.
- Referrals to other programmes or agencies for common misdirected enquiries.

### **Example**

See the Contact page from the web standards site: [www.webstandards.govt.nz/contact](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/contact)

## **Legal and policy information**

Agency websites must provide information on privacy, copyright, etc as required by the Legal and Policy standards. Note that this information may be provided on the "About this site" page, or on individual pages.

### **Example**

See the About this site page from the web standards website:  
[www.webstandards.govt.nz/about-this-site](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/about-this-site)

## **Publicly available reports**

Agency websites must provide any publicly available reports that the agency is statutorily required to produce. This includes, but is not limited to, annual reports, statements of intent, service charters and budget statements.

*Note: only corporate (or "main" sites) are required to supply publicly available reports.*

## Media releases and other public information

Agency websites must provide all agency media releases, and other public information such as public notices, warnings and advice. These must be published online as soon as they are formally released.

*Note: only corporate (or "main" sites) are required to supply media releases and other public information.*

## Site owner is clearly identified

It must be clear which agency is administering a website.

An agency's main site must clearly contain links to other sites it owns, administers, or hosts, including any co-owned sites. These links must also include short-term sites used for promotional and marketing activities and agency sites that are not on the .govt.nz domain.

Administered, hosted, or co-owned sites must clearly link to the main agency site (or the main sites of all co-owners).

### Example

See the About this site page from the web standards website:  
[www.webstandards.govt.nz/about-this-site](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/about-this-site)

## 2. Linking to non-HTML files

Agencies must provide format and size information for links to non-HTML file types.

### Examples

[Getting a ship into a bottle \(PDF, 1.3 MB\)](#)

[Getting a ship into a bottle \(PDF, 1.2 MB\)](#)

## 3. Printing webpages

A webpage's core information (usually the main page text) must be able to be printed in whole on standard sheets of paper.

Note that the following non-core content should be excluded from printing:

- Primary content navigation
- Secondary content navigation
- Department/agency/programme or thematic banner
- Breadcrumbs
- Search box

Pages should also print as black text on a white background.

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# Legal and policy standards

## 1. Copyright

### Minimum requirements

Every website under ownership of an agency must contain a copyright statement which states (as a minimum) that:

- the material on the website is protected by copyright; and
- anyone can utilise any of the material available on the website free of charge and without permission of the agency provided that the source and copyright status of the material is acknowledged.

### Optional content

Agencies may also wish (but are not required) to:

- state, as a further condition of use, that the material should not be altered; the desirability of such a condition will depend on the nature of the information and the ways in which it may be utilised; and
- consider whether to regulate or prohibit any or particular forms of commercial use; there is no absolute position or presumption on this issue, the position taken on individual sites depending on the circumstances, and bearing in mind that certain forms of commercial use (e.g., mash-ups and other value-added services) can be beneficial not only to the corporate taxpayers concerned but to government, the public and the overall economy.

### Use of "Crown copyright"

Where the agency concerned is part of the Crown as defined in section 2(1) of the Copyright Act 1994 (in essence, government departments and certain offices of Parliament), references in the above requirements to "copyright" should be amended to read "Crown copyright".

### Mixed copyright ownership

Where an agency's website contains content or downloadable items in which the agency does not own copyright:

- that should be specified in reasonable proximity to the items; and
- any general copyright statement on the website will need to be qualified (e.g., "Unless otherwise indicated, copyright in material available on this website is owned by...").

*Note: The copyright statement, or a link to it, must be placed on the About this site page.*

## Guidance

- See the Guide to the Copyright Standard:  
[www.webstandards.govt.nz/guide-to-the-copyright-standard](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/guide-to-the-copyright-standard)

## 2. Copyright of third parties

Any agency that has a website containing third party copyright material must have permission from the copyright owner(s) to reproduce that material.

The source and copyright status of such material must be stated in an appropriate place on the agency's website so as to avoid ambiguity as to which content items are subject to third party copyright.

The agency's website must also contain a statement (eg, in its copyright statement) that permission to utilise such material cannot be given by the agency.

### Note

- *The copyright of third parties statement, or a link to it, must be placed on the About this site page.*
- *The copyright of third parties statement may be combined with the copyright statement, or exist separately.*

## Guidance

- See the Guide to the Copyright of third parties standard  
[www.webstandards.govt.nz/guide-to-the-copyright-of-third-parties-standard](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/guide-to-the-copyright-of-third-parties-standard)

## 3. Privacy statement

All agency sites must carry a privacy statement. The statement must cover (as a minimum):

- the scope of the statement (eg, "This privacy notice applies to personal and other information collected on [the agency's] website: [www.agency.govt.nz](http://www.agency.govt.nz)");
- the circumstances in which personal information is collected, by whom it is held (eg, your agency and/or third party agencies or web services) and any choices users may have as to whether such information is collected in the first place;
- the uses to which collected personal information may be put by the collecting agency and the circumstances in which it may be disclosed;
- the collection and use of statistical information, including users' IP addresses;
- a statement that cookies are used if that is the case and relevant implications of that (if any);
- users' rights to request access to or correction of personal information held by the website's owning agency; and
- contact details for such purposes.

*Note*

*The privacy statement, or a link to it, must be placed on the About this site page.*

**Guidance**

- See the Guide to the Privacy statement standard:  
[www.webstandards.govt.nz/guide-to-the-privacy-statement-standard](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/guide-to-the-privacy-statement-standard)

## 4. Disclaiming content

Agencies should consider whether it is desirable or otherwise appropriate to include a content disclaimer on their websites.

Whether to include a content disclaimer depends on a risk/benefit analysis, by reference to the kinds of content on the site, which takes into account:

- the risk of claims against the agency for content which may prove to be inaccurate; as against
- the potentially negative message that a content disclaimer may send to users of the site, bearing in mind that members of the public may reasonably expect a government agency to stand behind what it says online and that all-embracing disclaimers may detract from public trust and confidence in the agency concerned.

In some instances, it may be appropriate to include a limited disclaimer, one which only disclaims responsibility for third party content and/or data which the agency knows the public wants but which the agency has not been able to verify.

**Minimum requirements**

Where a disclaimer is included, it should state as a minimum that the information to which it relates is true and accurate to the best of the agency's knowledge (if that is the case) but that the agency cannot accept any liability for its accuracy or content.

If the agency has not considered the accuracy of the information (eg, because it is user-generated content which the agency cannot reasonably be expected to check) then it should not say that the information is true and accurate to the best of its knowledge.

*Note*

*If it is required, the disclaimer statement, or a link to it, must be placed on the About this site page.*

**Guidance**

- See the Guide to the Disclaiming content standard:  
[www.webstandards.govt.nz/guide-to-the-disclaiming-content-standard](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/guide-to-the-disclaiming-content-standard)

## 5. Terms of use

Agencies must provide terms of use on interactive websites and on websites that require authenticated access, as outlined below. Agencies are encouraged to consult their legal teams when developing such terms of use.

### Placement of terms of use

Terms of use must be available on, or linked to from, both of the following:

- the About this site page, and
- the point of registration (if applicable).

## 1. Interactive websites

An interactive website is one which enables users to contribute content which may be published on the website. Examples of interactive websites are blogs, wikis, online fora, social networking sites, photo-sharing sites and video-sharing sites.

Depending on the nature of an agency's site, terms of use may need to deal with some or all of the following:

- registration and credential obligations if there is be registration and authentication of users (see further below);
- warranties on the part of site users contributing third party copyright content that they have the right to use such material;
- indemnities in favour of the agency to protect it against loss if such warranties are breached (note, however, that thought should be given to whether inclusion of such an indemnity is appropriate by reference to the likely audience of the website and the potentially adverse message it could send to users of government services);
- ownership or licensing of users' contributions;
- unacceptable use and the agency's right to remove offending material;
- moderation of user-generated content;
- how the agency deals with instances of repeat copyright infringement by users;
- banning of abusive commenters;
- co-operation with authorities in the event that material breaching other parties' rights, or that is otherwise unlawful, is posted to the site;
- to the extent that State Services staff may contribute content to the site, a reminder of, or a term requiring compliance with, the Standards of Integrity and Conduct for the State Services ([www.ssc.govt.nz/display/document.asp?DocID=7049](http://www.ssc.govt.nz/display/document.asp?DocID=7049));
- if the website will allow users to sign up to email notifications and if such notifications may include commercial messages (which may or may not appear on the site itself), a term dealing with such a prospect (drawn to users' attention at the time of their subscribing for email
- the right to amend the terms of use.

While terms governing the copyright and licensing of the agency's own content may also appear in a website's terms of use, those terms are discussed under the Copyright and Copyright of third parties standards.

Similarly, while terms disclaiming liability for content on the site and/or for links to third party sites may appear in the terms of use, they are discussed under the Disclaiming content standard.

### Example

- Terms of use for the State Services Commission's In Development blog (<http://blog.e.govt.nz/index.php/about/terms-of-use/>)

## 2. Websites requiring authenticated access

The terms of use for an agency website that requires authenticated access must contain terms dealing with the following:

- protection of the customer's computing environment;
- any lifecycle requirements for the authentication key (password, token, etc);
- user responsibilities;
- processes and procedures relating to compromise or suspected compromise of the authentication key; and
- the agency's responsibilities to its online service customers.

### More information

- Note that authentication itself doesn't fall under the web standards. See Identity Management and Authentication Standards (<http://gts.ssc.govt.nz/identity-management-and-authentication-standards-2/>) at the GTS website.

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# Appendix: Meeting the standards

The New Zealand Government Web Standards 2.0 were released in March 2009 and replace the previous version, the New Zealand Government Web Standards 1.0.

### *Which version should you use?*

In order to ease transition to the new standards, version 1.0 may still be used in development until 31 October 2009 (see Compliance dates, below). This is to allow developers to come up to speed.

However, it is highly recommended that websites are built or redeveloped to the new standards as soon as possible.

In most cases, the new web standards are no more difficult to meet, and are in some cases easier to meet, than the previous ones. In a few cases, such as the multimedia standards, the bar is now higher.

***What's changed in the standards and why?***

See the New standards transition guides: [www.webstandards.govt.nz/web-guides](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/web-guides)

***How to comply***

To comply, websites must meet each of the requirements in each of the sections of the New Zealand Government Web Standards.

If using version 2.0, agencies must meet the W3C's WCAG2.0 standards, level AA, which have been adopted as our technical standards, as well as the New Zealand-specific requirements. See the Technical standards section for how to do this.

***Who must meet the standards***

Both versions of the standards apply to any website intended for the public and financed by the public through the Crown or through public agencies. This includes:

- All Public Service Departments
- New Zealand Police
- New Zealand Defence Force
- Parliamentary Counsel Office
- New Zealand Security Intelligence Service

***Compliance dates***

- The New Zealand Government Web Standards 2.0 come into effect from 18 March 2009. These new standards may be used from that date.
- The New Zealand Government Web Standards 1.0 may still be used until 31 October 2009, after which time all new web development must use and meet version 2.0.
- All applicable government websites must meet the version 2.0 standards by 1 July 2010.

***Testing your site***

Each WCAG2.0 standard has links to "Sufficient Techniques" for meeting the standard. These techniques contain examples and resources for testing and development. For an overview of how this works, see the Overview of the Technical standards and the Technical web guides: [www.webstandards.govt.nz/web-guides](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/web-guides)

***Website assessment***

An agency must conduct standards assessments of all the websites for which it has responsibility at least once a year, the results of which must be submitted to Government Technology Services (GTS). The first assessment is not due until 1 October 2010.

***Guidance and examples***

See the Web guides section for help and advice on a growing range of web development topics, including moving to the new standards.

***Contact and training***

Contact the web standards team with questions and training requests ([www.webstandards.govt.nz/contact/](http://www.webstandards.govt.nz/contact/))