# Training Links

Section 508 Introduction

April 12, 2012

## Standards Checklists

1. Section 508 Standards: Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT)

<http://www.itic.org/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=vpat>

The VPAT is used by Federal purchasing officers to identify accessibility issues in specific electronic and information technology products. All the standards are listed.

1. Web Accessibility In Mind (WebAIM) Section 508 Web Checklist

<http://webaim.org/standards/508/checklist>

This checklist is very straightforward, with simple pass-fail criteria for each standard. The scripting criteria are oversimplified.

1. Veterans Health Administration (VHA): Software Standards Checklist

<http://www.section508.va.gov/docs/checklist_1194_21.pdf>

The VHA has done a great job of gathering together software requirements, clarifying the vagueness of the language in the statute.

1. VHA Functional Performance Criteria Checklist

<http://www.section508.va.gov/docs/checklist_1194_31.pdf>

1. VHA Documentation Checklist

<http://www.section508.va.gov/docs/checklist_1194_41.pdf>

## Additional Guidelines

1. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Version 2.0, Quick Reference

<http://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/>

The language in the WCAG can be a bit opaque, but the Quick Reference links to specific issues, with clear examples and pass-fail criteria. Since the WCAG are likely to be adopted as the Section 508 standards once the Refresh goes into effect, it’s worth familiarizing ourselves.

## Testing and Testing Tools

Please note that there are other, similar tools available. For the purpose of this training, I will focus on the IE Toolbar because it is used at FSA and because IE is the most widely-used browser for screen reader users (although other browsers are gaining popularity).

1. Web Accessibility Toolbar for Internet Explorer

<http://www.visionaustralia.org.au/ais/toolbar/>

1. WebAIM: Using the Web Accessibility Toolbar for Testing

<http://webaim.org/articles/ais/>

<http://webaim.org/resources/ais/>

1. JimThatcher.com: Accessibility Favelets

<http://jimthatcher.com/favelets/>

These can be used as an alternate method when – for whatever reason – the toolbar won’t work within a specific system.

1. NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA)

<http://www.nvda-project.org/>

NVDA is a free, open-source screen reader for Windows. It’s not as widely used by individuals with disabilities (historically, it’s been more likely to be used for testing). Useful if you want to know how your pages render in a screen reader. As with any screen reader, there is a learning curve. If you have questions about support for a specific product or technology, please continue to request assistance and assistive technology testing.

1. Department of Health and Human Services: Testing Documents for Section 508 Compliance

<http://www.hhs.gov/web/508/testdocuments.html>

Please note that some of these requirements are specific to HHS. This is a good place to start if you have questions about testing electronic documents for compliance, however.

1. VHA: Testing Software for Accessibility

<http://www.ehealth.va.gov/508/sw/course.asp>

A lot of agencies pretty well ignore software development, although many require the inclusion of software standards for Web applications. VHA has provided some fairly clear guidance on testing, which should be useful for anticipating the types of questions that will be raised during compliance audits.

## UI Keyboard Behavior Documentation

1. Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) ARIA 1.0 Authoring Practices: Providing Keyboard Navigation for Widgets

<http://www.w3.org/WAI/PF/aria-practices/#kbd_generalnav>

This is a clear and concise discussion of methods of adding keyboard focus to widgets and other scripted elements.

1. WAI ARIA 1.0 Authoring Practices: Common Design Patterns

<http://www.w3.org/WAI/PF/aria-practices/#aria_ex>

This section of the document provides guidance on how specific widgets are expected to behave when navigated by keyboard.

## Writing Good ALT Text

Please note that there is some disagreement within the accessibility community about what constitutes a meaningful image. When in doubt, describe, being careful to focus on meaning within context of the page content. Where possible, avoid using images for text, bullets, and structural page elements.

1. WebAIM: Creating Effective Alternative (Alt) Text

<http://webaim.org/techniques/images/alt_text>

1. JimThatcher.com: Text Alternatives for Images

<http://www.jimthatcher.com/webcourse2.htm>

1. Royal National Institute of Blind People: ALT Text

<http://www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/webaccessibility/designbuild/wacimages/Pages/alt_text.aspx>

## Statistics

1. WebAIM 3rd Annual Screen Reader Survey: Results

<http://webaim.org/projects/screenreadersurvey3/>

WebAIM has conducted a semi-annual survey of screen reader users for several years now. The most recent data is from 2010. Very interesting reading, if you’re interested in learning more about preferences and how the screen reader audience uses the Web.