



Government Product Accessibility Template (GPAT) Policy & Information

What is a GPAT?

GPAT (<http://impact.state.gov>) and the IT CCB Section 508 web page.

A GPAT is a product accessibility statement that provides relevant information on how a government in-house developed product or service claims to conform to the Section 508 Standards.

The GPAT was designed by IMPACT to provide information on how a product or service conforms to the Section 508 Accessibility Standards (from the U.S. Access Board) for Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) in a consistent fashion and format. GPATs need to be generated for software developed within the Department; the developer must prepare a GPAT, with the Project Manager being responsible for ensuring that this is done. The GPAT must be version-specific for both hardware and software. In each GPAT, the developer is expected to make specific statements, in simple understandable (recommended) language, about how their product or service meets the requirements of the Section 508 Standards (section by section, and paragraph by paragraph).

The criteria by which IMPACT reviews GPATs presented are exactly the same as those that are suggested by Information Technology Industry Council (ITIC) in their VPAT (Voluntary Product Accessibility Template) Best Practices, using the GPAT Review Checklist.

What are DEVELOPERS supposed to do?

The IT CCB supports the Department of State policy to adhere to the mandate of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which requires all Federal agencies to ensure that Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) which agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use is accessible to persons with disabilities to the extent it does not pose an “undue burden” on the agency or meet one of the “General Exceptions” under CFR 36 1194.3. The law applies regardless of the lack of the presence of persons with disabilities in the work environment.

All assessment and change request (AR & CR) submissions to the IT CCB must address this law. Program managers should consider this statutory requirement in the design phase of a project and throughout the Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC). Custom (in-house developed) software requires a Government Product Accessibility Template (GPAT). Failure to address this requirement may result in delay or disapproval of a CR or AR approval during the IT CCB process.

IMPACT's Responsibilities

Using IMPACT's own 'GPAT Review Checklist', our responsibility is to review each GPAT provided to us by the IT CCB Originator, Technical Reviewer, procurement official or other Federal IT Professional for completeness of information and proper formatting. As resources/schedules permit, we review GPATs in conjunction with reviewing the associated IT products, in order to assess whether the products meet the Section 508 requirements. Also, we review GPATs to ascertain if they are submitted as recommended in the **GPAT Best Practices**.

IMPACT responds to the requestors on its review of each GPAT and review of any associated product, reporting issues and making appropriate recommendations/suggestions.

The criteria by which IMPACT reviews and accepts customer GPATs are based on those recommended by the Information Technology Industry Council (ITIC) in their VPAT Best Practices guidance and, when an associated products are reviewed for level of conformance, based on the assessments of validity between GPATs and associated products.

IMPACT is always ready to assist you with any further questions that you may have. Our contact information and location are available below.

IMPACT Outreach Center

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