

# Report on EIR Accessibility

## 2016 BIENNIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

This report addresses Government Code, Section 2054.055(b)(9), which requires DIR to provide a summary of agency and state progress in providing electronic and information resources (EIR) access to individuals with disabilities.



Texas Department of Information Resources

## BACKGROUND

More than 1.6 million Texans have disabilities, many with limitations that affect interaction with the internet, telephone and other electronic communications. Focusing efforts on making state agency electronic and information resources (EIR) accessible, citizens and state employees will be able to perform a myriad of functions independently, regardless of disability.

State accessibility laws require state agencies to develop, procure, maintain and use accessible EIR. DIR has set standards relating to the accessibility of state websites and technologies in Texas Administrative Code.

In addition, DIR collaborates with public and private organizations to drive progress in EIR accessibility at the state, national and international levels to:

- Drive elevated levels of accessibility across Texas agencies and its vendor community
- Identify and communicate best practices for EIR accessibility
- Evaluate and recommend revisions to statewide accessibility standards, rules and guidelines
- Provide input to federal government and national organizations in the development of accessibility legislation

## EIR Accessibility Initiatives

Over the past biennium, continued progress has been made in accessibility across state agencies with varied degrees of improvement. DIR recognizes the complexity and challenges in complying with accessibility rules and has developed several important initiatives to assist agencies in advancing EIR accessibility.

### DIR Web Accessibility Scanning Program

In 2015, DIR launched the second generation free web scanning program that assists state agencies to improve public facing website accessibility. This free service uses accessibility scanning to analyze websites for compliance to the Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, and find errors to assist agencies to identify and remedy accessibility related issues.

### Revisions to EIR Accessibility Rule 1TAC 213.

In FY 2015, DIR completed review and revisions to 1TAC 213, the primary EIR accessibility rule. Revisions focused on governance provisions in areas considered key to improving compliance.

#### Highlights include:

- The means to improve procurement of accessible products and services, request evidence that vendors'

products and services are accessible, and the requirement to implement an agency procurement accessibility policy.

- A requirement to test and produce test documentation on all major information resource projects.
- A requirement to establish goals and progress measurements as part of agency EIR planning.

## Accessible Products and Services in DIR's Cooperative Contracts Program

To address quality issues in the accessibility documentation submitted by vendors in response to cooperative contract solicitations, DIR implemented an evaluation system to assess the accessibility documentation on the completeness of the submission, and to determine if submission documents such as Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs) have been properly completed. Additionally, DIR introduced a new EIR Accessibility form for vendors that provide development services for IT such as websites, web applications, or other IT that contains customer facing user interfaces. Based on the results of the assessments, DIR procurement team will communicate the results with vendors moving to the negotiations phase, so that they can address issues identified in the assessment.

## Policy-Driven Adoption for Accessibility

In 2013, DIR launched a multi-state initiative to develop accessibility policy criteria for vendors that sell EIR products and services to the public sector. Accessibility policy maturity provides insight into vendors' ability to develop accessible commercial off the shelf (COTS) and non-COTS offerings, which can increase the confidence in accuracy of vendor's accessibility documentation. The completed form will establish a baseline for where a vendor stands on its accessibility policy, and be included in future solicitations so that progress can be assessed. Vendors can use the results as a roadmap for implementing their organization-wide ICT accessibility initiatives, which will help ensure that programs and processes are in place to facilitate the development of future accessible offerings. More information on Policy-Driven Adoption for Accessibility can be found on the National Organization of State CIOs (NASCIO) website.

## Outreach

Outreach continues to be an important aspect of EIR accessibility efforts. DIR continues to be committed to providing leadership in this arena at the national, state and local government levels. Some examples of outreach during the current biennium include:

- Presentations and panel discussion representation highlighting Texas state achievement in EIR accessibility at national IT conferences;
- Participation in federal sector policy activities related to accessibility;

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- Participation in the Public Electronic Services on the Internet group that has continued to expand and offers discussion forums, meetings and webinars on EIR accessibility issues.
- Continued consultation with agencies and the vendor community on a wide range of accessibility-related topics.

## Awards

DIR was recognized with two National Association of State Chief Information Officer (NASCIO) awards in the EIR accessibility arena:

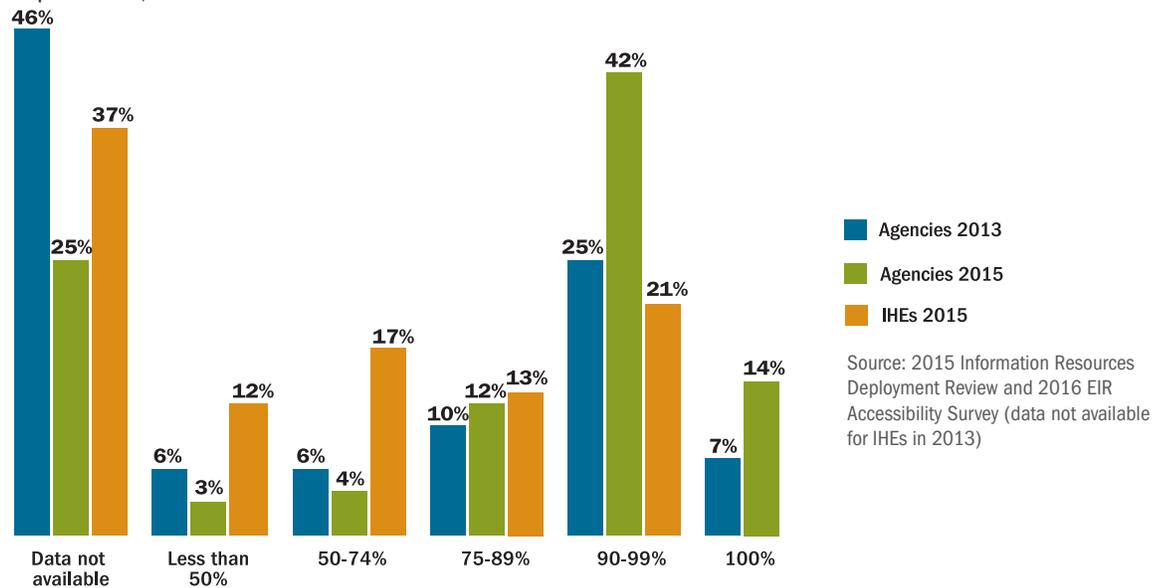
- Texas EIR Accessibility Coordinator, Jeff Kline was named the 2015 State Technology Innovator
- Texas DIR received the StateScoop 50 Award for EIR accessibility in the State IT Program category.

## Agency Progress

Based on submissions to the 2015 Information Resources Deployment Review, agencies continue to show progress and increased compliance levels in EIR accessibility requirements, but challenges remain. The following findings are based on an analysis of responses to recent surveys. Figures 1 and 2 compare 2013 and 2015 survey responses to questions regarding public web pages and applications that are accessibility compliant. The results show a general increase, which may be attributed to higher levels of accessibility program maturity. There are still significant numbers of state agencies that have not assessed applications or web applications. These are reflected in the “data not available” area of the charts.

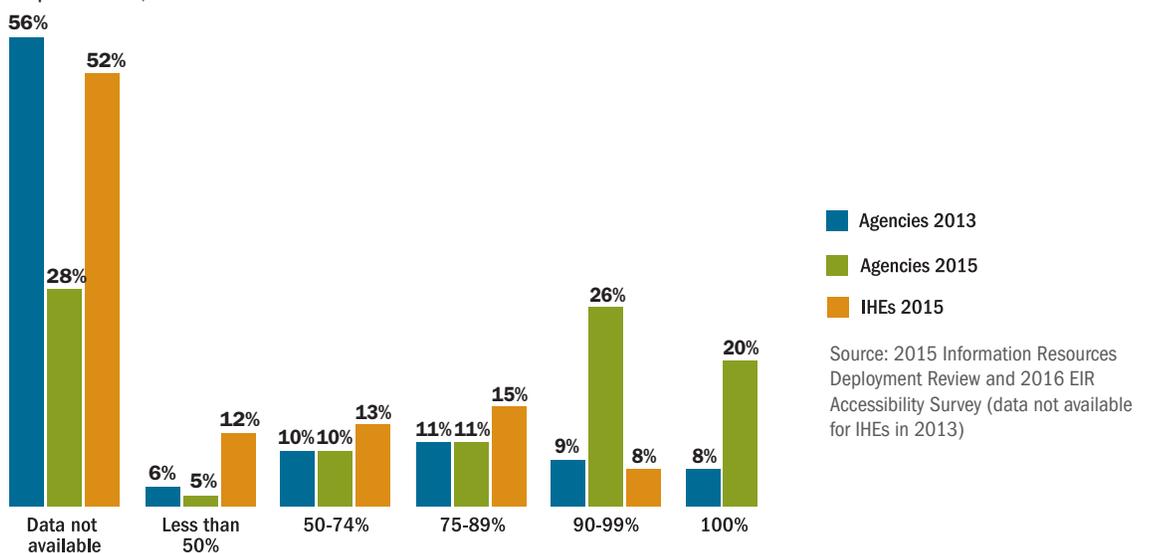
**Figure 1. State Agency Accessibility-Compliant Public Web Pages**

What percentage of the agency’s externally facing web pages are in full compliance with state accessibility requirements, 1 TAC 206 and 213?



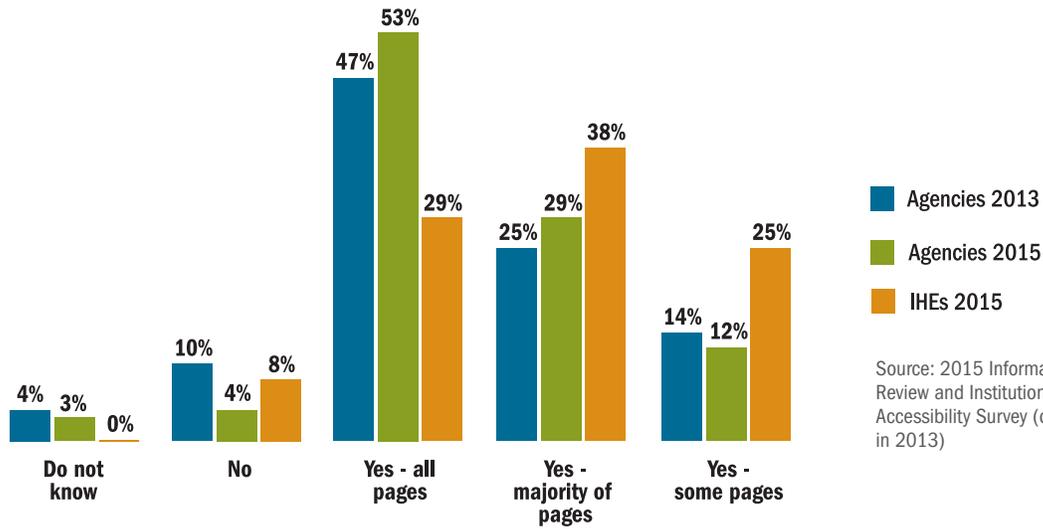
**Figure 2: State Agency Accessibility-Compliant Public Web-Based Applications**

What percentage of the agency’s external web-based applications, are in full compliance with state accessibility requirements, 1 TAC 206 and 213?



**Figure 3. Agency Testing: Web Page Compliance**

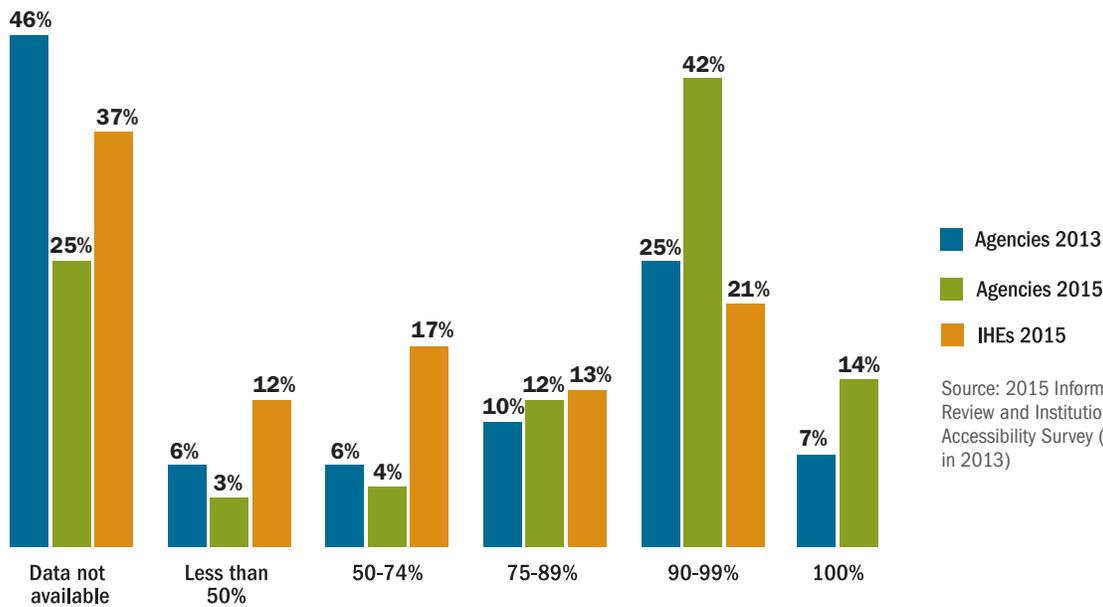
Does the agency test new and changed agency web pages and website designs for accessibility compliance?



Source: 2015 Information Resources Deployment Review and Institution of Higher Education EIR Accessibility Survey (data not available for IHEs in 2013)

**Figure 4. Agency Testing: Web-Based Applications Compliance**

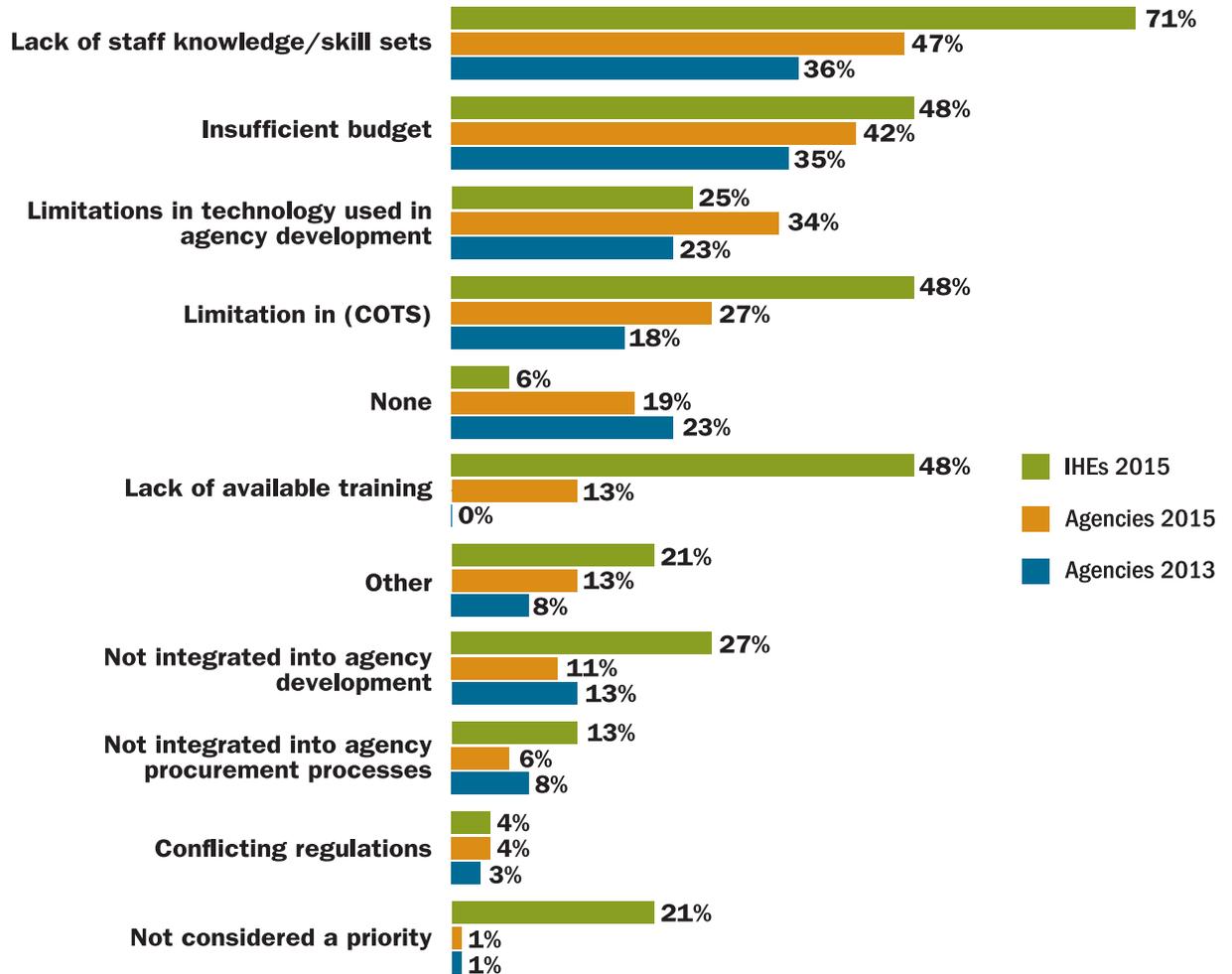
Does the agency test new and changed agency web-based applications for accessibility compliance?



Source: 2015 Information Resources Deployment Review and Institution of Higher Education EIR Accessibility Survey (data not available for IHEs in 2013)

**Figure 5. Challenges Identified by Agencies as Inhibitors to Full Compliance**

What types of challenges has the agency faced when attempting to achieve compliance with state accessibility requirements? Choose all that apply.



Source: 2015 Information Resources Deployment Review and 2016 EIR Accessibility Survey (data not available for IHEs in 2013)

### Next Steps/Recommendations

- Agencies should perform self-assessments of EIR policies and practices and take corrective actions as needed to improve compliance with accessibility laws and rules.
- Federal technical standards for accessibility will change later this year and agencies should begin technical training for this transition.
- Agencies should continue to ensure they have solid accessibility policies and use those policies to create metrics to track progress.
- Agencies should leverage DIR's EIR accessibility assessments of vendor documents in their procurement processes.
- DIR should utilize survey results, identify needs and challenges on the enterprise level and develop programs and policy recommendations to improve accessibility of EIR used by citizens and state employees.