Hueristic Evaluation Report
GPSTC

Overall, the new Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC) website is an improvement from the last version of the website, and scores well with our heuristic evaluation.
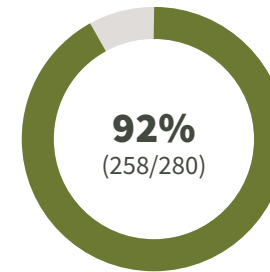
High-priority issues:

- Different color for visited links

- Indication of what a user should expect after submitting a form

- Distinct footer with contact information and important policy links

92%
(258/280)

Mid-priority issues:

- Consistent navigation throughout site

- Internally-linking main menu links only

- Confirmation page after submitting a form

- Large enough search bar for users to see what they type

Category Breakdown:

Homepage	100%	(15/15)
Navigation	80%	(16/20)
URLs	100%	(10/10)
Content	100%	(70/70)
Links	83%	(29/35)
Forms	90%	(54/60)
Errors	80%	(4/5)
Trust and Credibility	100%	(30/30)
Help and Feedback	100%	(5/5)
Search	87%	(13/15)
Page Element Locations	80%	(12/15)

Low-priority issues:

- Easily recognizable links

- Clear hover state for links

- Helpful 404 page, attempting to redirect users

Digital Services
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#	Category	Criteria	Score (1-5)	Comments
1	Homepage	Effectively communicates organization's purpose and what the site does.	5	
2	Homepage	Guides users to the site's most important tasks and content.	5	
3	Homepage	Displays alerts and other critical messages prominently and recognizably.	5	
4	Navigation	Breadcrumbs should allow users to keep track of their location on the site, and easily navigate within sections.	5	
5	Navigation	Navigation is consistent on every page.	3	Within the site, yes. But some links take you away from the site to https://access.gpstc.org/ without warning so the navigation changes.
6	Navigation	Site logo should link back to the homepage.	5	
7	Navigation	Main menu links should only link to web pages within a site, not link to an external site, document, or to an email address (mailto:) .	3	Some URLs in the main menu redirect to an external page at https://access.gpstc.org/
8	URLs	Site URL works with or without www, and http:// and https://.	5	
9	URLs	URLs reflect page content title and information hierarchy (e.g. http://www.yoursite.gov/about-us/mission indicates to a user that they are on the Mission page, which is under About Us.)	5	
10	Content	Important content is displayed first and prominently on a page.	5	
11	Content	Content is written in plain language that users can readily understand, and avoids overuse of jargon.	5	
12	Content	Content is useful and up-to-date, helping users to accomplish important tasks or get answers to common questions.	5	

#	Category	Criteria	Score (1-5)	Comments
13	Content	Content is scannable. Site employs short paragraphs, descriptive headings, bulleted lists, and images to convey important information in an easy-to-digest format.	5	
14	Content	Uppercase words, underlines, or large amounts of italics in prose should be avoided unless necessary.	5	
15	Content	Uses meaningful images to convey tone, establish credibility, increase understanding, and foster inclusivity.	5	
16	Content	Images and videos used throughout the site are relevant and meaningful. No unrelated stock photos of models. There are high-quality screenshots, videos or photos of the products and services	5	
17	Content	Audio or video doesn't start automatically, unless user expects it.	5	
18	Content	Page content should be organized under headings that appear in hierarchical order (H2 followed by H3, H3 followed by H4)	5	
19	Content	Text is no smaller than 12px, of sufficient contrast, and has enough whitespace between lines and paragraphs to maximize readability.	5	
20	Content	Animation and animated graphics are avoided.	5	
21	Content	PDF files are used appropriately for large documents, such as reports or presentations. Important and timely content such as alerts, press releases, etc. are available as web content and not buried in PDFs.	5	
22	Content	Acronyms are spelled out when they first appear on a page (e.g. "Office of the Inspector General (OIG)"). Excessive use of acronyms is avoided.	5	
23	Content	Page content does not contain excessive amounts of links.	5	
24	Links	Links don't open a new browser tab or window. Special exceptions include documents such as PDFs, Word docs, etc.	5	

#	Category	Criteria	Score (1-5)	Comments
25	Links	Links use descriptive language and not "click here" or "read more."	5	
26	Links	Links are easily recognizable and look clickable. Items that aren't links don't look clickable, such as blue or underlined text.	4	I would suggest underlining links for color blind visitors for accessibility. Totally relying on color to indicate a link is not best practice.
27	Links	Text links should not be the same color as header text that is NOT linked.	5	
28	Links	Links should contain a hover state change to make it obvious when a user is hovering over a link. (e.g. changing the link color, adding or removing underline, etc)	4	The color changes on hover but it's very subtle and hard to tell if you have even slightly less than perfect vision. The contrast for the hover color needs to be more noticable. And again, links should be underlined.
29	Links	Links should appear as a different color when a user has already visited.	1	There's no "visited" state for links.
30	Links	Important commands are displayed as buttons, not links. For example "Buy" or "Pay" is a button, not a link.	5	
31	Forms	Forms are as simple and short as possible, and omit unnecessary fields.	5	
32	Forms	Required fields are visually distinct from optional fields.	5	
33	Forms	Help text is available for fields that require special formatting or instructions to complete successfully. Help text is also not only present on hover.	5	
34	Forms	Placeholder text is avoided for both accessibility and usability reasons.	5	
35	Forms	Reset and clear buttons are avoided, as they can often be mistaken for Submit.	5	

#	Category	Criteria	Score (1-5)	Comments
36	Forms	Long dropdown menus are avoided, particularly when a user must make a decision when selecting, not just find what they know is the right answer (such as when choosing their state from a list). Instead users can input text, which is validated on the backend. Also, long dropdown menus are error prone to users scrolling with the mouse.	5	
37	Forms	Fields are labeled with common terms, e.g. Name, Address (supports autofill).	5	
38	Forms	Fields appear in logical, sequential order (e.g. Last Name after First Name).	5	
39	Forms	Error messages are shown next to the input field, not just on top of the page.	5	
40	Forms	Error messages should be clearly visible and detailed enough for users to understand	5	
41	Forms	Form submission takes users to a confirmation page.	3	No confirmation page but there is a confirmation message that appears.
42	Forms	Upon submission, either confirmation message or email indicates what a user should expect next (i.e. a reply within a certain amount of time).	1	No next step message with the Contact form.
43	Errors	404 page describes error and attempts to re-direct users to other useful content.	4	Doesn't redirect but encourages users to use the Search to find what they're looking for.
44	Trust and Credibility	Site uses https:// to ensure user's privacy and security.	5	
45	Trust and Credibility	Site uses official logo or seal.	5	
46	Trust and Credibility	Site uses .gov in the URL.	5	
47	Trust and Credibility	Site looks professionally designed and up-to-date.	5	

#	Category	Criteria	Score (1-5)	Comments
48	Trust and Credibility	Site has a privacy policy that clearly states what user information is being collected, describes security measures in place to protect users, and guarantees confidentiality of information.	5	There's a policy but I had to use search to find it. No link to it is clearly displayed.
49	Trust and Credibility	Page layouts, design, and branding are consistent throughout the site.	5	
50	Help and Feedback	Contact information is provided or contact form is available.	5	
51	Search	Search is available on every page.	5	
52	Search	Search bar is wide enough and tall enough that users can see the terms they type.	3	The search box in the header is a bit short. You wouldn't be able to fully see a long phrase.
53	Search	Search results convey important information such as title, brief summary, and link to result.	5	
54	Page Element Locations	Site Logo should be in the top left corner of every page.	5	
55	Page Element Locations	Breadcrumbs should be located near the top of the page, above the page title and below the horizontal menu.	5	
56	Page Element Locations	Footer should be distinct at the bottom of the page and contain organization's contact information and important policy links (Accessibility, Privacy Policy, etc.)	2	The footer only contains a copy of the main navigation. No links to any of the agency's policies are easy to find and the footer is typically where you'd find them. No contact information either.