



StudentAid BC Disability Program User Guide

Ministry of Advanced Education,
Skills and Training

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STUDENTAID BC DISABILITY PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

StudentAid BC (SABC) administers the British Columbia/Canada Integrated Student Assistance Program, which provides joint provincial/federal loans to British Columbia's full and part-time post-secondary students.

SABC also offers a suite of provincial and federal disability related programs to help students with disabilities achieve success in their post-secondary education.

The purpose of this document is to provide the Accessibility Coordinator community at post-secondary institutions with a guide to the most commonly encountered disability related programs, their policy intent and the administrative steps and procedures required to successfully deliver them.

CANADA STUDENT GRANT FOR SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH PERMANENT DISABILITIES (CSG-PDSE)

PURPOSE

The Canada Student Grant Program (CSG-PDSE) is available to full-time or part-time students with verified permanent disabilities who require exceptional education-related services and/or equipment.

FUNDING INFORMATION

Eligible students can receive up to \$8000 in grant funding for each program year that the student is enrolled in an eligible post-secondary program.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for the CSG-PDSE a student must:

- Have a current/active StudentAid BC application;
- Have a verified permanent disability verified through submission of an Appendix 8 document;
- Be enrolled in full or part time studies at a designated post-secondary institution in an eligible post-secondary program; and,
- Demonstrate financial need through the StudentAid BC full or part-time application assessment process¹

APPLICATION

- Students apply for the CSG-PDSE through submission of an Appendix 8 form (https://studentaidbc.ca/sites/all/files/form-library/appendix_8.pdf), to SABC;
- Appendix 8 applications must be mailed in to SABC with original ink signatures and medical documentation;
- Allow 4-6 weeks for processing;

¹ If the initial needs assessment does not result in at least \$1 of demonstrated financial need (ie: the student does not qualify for a student loan), then the estimated costs for the recommended equipment and/or services can be included in the needs assessment. If the financial need is then calculated at \$1 or more, the student is eligible for CSG-PDSE funding only. To include equipment and/or services in the needs assessment, please submit a service request form including the student's name and Student Loan application number to StudentAid BC outlining the equipment and/or services needed.

- Once eligibility for the CSG-PDSE is confirmed, an approval letter will be mailed to the student and emailed to the Accessibility Coordinator at their respective institution; and,
- If equipment/assistive technology are requested on the Appendix 8, Assistive Technology BC (ATBC) will contact the student/Accessibility Coordinator to determine the appropriate equipment/assistive technology.

SERVICE REQUESTS

Service requests are initiated by the institution Accessibility Coordinator using the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Disabilities – Service Request Form (<https://studentaidbc.ca/institution-officials>). Accessibility Coordinators and students should ensure that requests meet the following requirements.

- Provide an estimate from the service provider that includes the service provider’s contact information;
- Service Provider must have the appropriate qualifications to provide the service;
- A description of the service and information on service provision (including course name, course dates, hourly rate, and frequency of service);
- Service requests must be submitted by email to: dpu.studentfunding@gov.bc.ca; and,
- Subject line of email should read: Service Request for *name* (ex: Bob Smith).

Accessibility Coordinators and students should also be aware that:

- Service requests will be processed in received date order;
- Services not included in Table 1 will be assessed case by case and require an Accessibility Coordinator’s rationale illustrating how the service addresses an exceptional education related barrier;
- Family member MUST have prior approval from SABC before providing a service;
- Service Requests are processed term by term;
- Please include all the services for a student on one service request;
- SABC considers the services requested as being recommended by the Accessibility Coordinator;
- Once approved, an approval letter will be posted to the student’s SABC dashboard account and the requesting Accessibility Coordinator will be emailed a copy;
- A cheque payable to the student will be mailed to the care of the Accessibility Office at the post-secondary institution;
- Students will be notified the day after the study period end date to send in their receipts and/or unused funds, and will receive 30, 60 and 90 day reminders of outstanding receipts; and,
- In all cases, the CSG-PDSE funding will not be issued after a student’s study period end date.

To avoid delays in processing, it is highly recommended that Accessibility Coordinators access the ATBC ATWIS Portal to confirm there are no current outstanding receipts associated with the student’s file. Service Requests with outstanding receipts will not be processed until all receipts and/or unused funds are returned.

To access the ATBC ATWIS portal please contact ATBC@at-bc.ca

A Listing of eligible CSG-PDSE service types is available in Table I.

SERVICE PROVIDER RECEIPT FORMS:

Service Provider receipt forms confirm funding was utilized for its intended purpose and must:

- Be complete;
- Have signatures of both the Service Provider and student; and,
- Match the services that were indicated in the approval letter.

Unused funds must be mailed back by cheque or money order made out to:

MINISTER OF FINANCE
PO BOX 9173
STN PROV GOV'T
VICTORIA BC V8W 9H7

- Please ensure submission of unused payments are clearly marked “CSG-PDSE repayment” and include student’s first and last names;
- SABC will not process service requests if there are outstanding receipts from previous services; and,
- **Outstanding receipts or funds may impact the student’s future eligibility for funding.**

EQUIPMENT REQUESTS:

- The student/Accessibility Coordinator will contact ATBC to have a technology assessment plan prepared in consultation with the Accessibility Coordinator and the student;
- ATBC will identify and provide the equipment needed to address the identified disability related barrier(s) to education; and,
- Students will NOT be reimbursed for any technology and/or equipment purchases.

Listings of eligible CSG-PDSE equipment types are available in Table I.

STUDENTS IN MIXED PROGRAMS (POST-SECONDARY AND NON POST-SECONDARY COURSES)

- CSG-PDSE eligible students enrolled in both post-secondary and non post-secondary (Adult Basic Education [ABE], English as a Second Language [ESL] or Adult Special Education [ASE]) courses are considered to be in a post-secondary program and can access CSG-PDSE funds for equipment and/or services for both post-secondary and non post-secondary courses.

ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH PERMANENT DISABILITIES (APSD)

PURPOSE

The APSD is designed to supplement the CSG-PDSE program for those students with disabilities in post-secondary education programs that have exhausted their CSG-PDSE funding in a program year.

The APSD also provides access to exceptional education-related services and/or equipment to students with disabilities taking non post-secondary education programs (ABE, ESL, ASE) at a public or private post-secondary institution.

APSD funds can be used for all CSG-PDSE eligible services and equipment (with the exception of the Learning Disability Assessment Reimbursement) identified in Table 1.

FUNDING INFORMATION

The APSD is a block funded program from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training and is administered by public post-secondary institutions. Eligible students can receive up to \$10,000 (\$12,000 for attendant care) in grant funding for each program year that the student is enrolled in an eligible post-secondary and / or non post-secondary program.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Students in post-secondary programs who are eligible for the CSG-PDSE are eligible for the APSD once they have exhausted their CSG-PDSE funding in a program year;
- Students in non post-secondary programs can access APSD funding by applying to their respective public post-secondary institution. The non post-secondary APSD application form is available online at:
https://studentaidbc.ca/sites/all/files/schoolofficials/assistance_prog_student_disabilities.pdf
- The application form provides information on Gross Family Income levels that determine eligibility based on financial need, and outlines the medical documentation required to verify a student's permanent disability;
- The adjudication of medical documentation and financial need assessment are reviewed by officials at the post-secondary institution administering the APSD program;
- Students with disabilities attending private post-secondary institutions in B.C. can also access APSD funding by having their private post-secondary staff forward an email to dpu.studentfunding@gov.bc.ca providing the student's name and StudentAid BC application number; and,
- The requested assistive equipment and/or services must be described and supported in an attached Service Request Form.

ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- On August 31st of each year, public post-secondary institutions are required to report information on annual APSD use to SABC Program Planning Unit. The reports include information on student identification, service and/or equipment type and expenditures. Reporting packages are sent out in June.
- Please note that students engaged in post-secondary programs that include some non post-secondary (ABE, ESL, ASE) courses can utilize CSG-PDSE funding.

LEARNING DISABILITY ASSESSMENT BURSARY (LDAB)

PURPOSE

LDAB is a provincial bursary program that assist students who may have a learning disability access disability related student assistance programs. The LDAB is designed to provide students who have not already verified their permanent disability status with the resources to obtain a current learning disability assessment.

The LDAB is not intended for students who are already eligible for SABC disability related programs.

FUNDING INFORMATION

The LDAB is a block funded program from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training and administered by public post-secondary institutions. Students can receive a one-time bursary of up to \$1,800 towards the cost of a learning disability assessment.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Eligibility for the LDAB is assessed based on the Learning Disability Screening Tool, found at https://studentaidbc.ca/sites/all/files/school-officials/learning_disability_screen.pdf, and on the recommendation of the Accessibility Coordinator at the respective public post-secondary institution.
- Applicants must:
 - Be a full or part time student at a B.C. public post-secondary institution enrolled in a post-secondary program;
 - Demonstrate financial need through the Student Financial Assistance (student loans) application process;
 - Not be in default of a BC Student Loan; and,
 - Not have already qualified as a student with a disability with SABC.
- Students make application for the LDAB through the Accessibility Centre at their respective public post-secondary institution using the BC LDAB Application form:
- https://studentaidbc.ca/sites/all/files/school-officials/ldab_application.pdf
- Accessibility Coordinators should ensure that the Learning Disability Screening Tool is applied when screening potential candidates for the LDAB, especially in situations where there is no previous history or documentation of a learning disability being present;
- The Accessibility Coordinator can either approve or deny funding based on the eligibility requirements, the results of the screening tool or their assessment of the applicant;
- Accessibility Coordinators should ensure that the applicant signs both the Application Form Declaration (Section 2) and the Undertaking and Assignment (Section 3);
- The Undertaking and Assignment outlines the commitment by the student to apply for the Learning Disability Assessment Reimbursement through the CSG-PDSE. Students should only apply for the Learning Disability Assessment Reimbursement when the results of the learning disability assessment indicate a diagnosis of a learning disability;
- If the learning disability assessment returns a diagnosis of a disability other than a Learning Disability (e.g. Attention Deficit Disorder, etc.), the assessment can be submitted along with an Appendix 8 as medical documentation intended to verify the student's permanent disability status; and,
- Any CSG-PDSE Learning Disability Assessment reimbursement payments received by students who have accessed the LDAB are to be added to the institution's LDAB fund for use by eligible students.

ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- All Learning Disability Assessment Reimbursements the institution applies for through CSLP's CSGP-PDSE program and are approved and received, should be placed into the institution's LDAB account for future use;
- Public post-secondary institutions in B.C. are provided with annual funding by SABC. Each institution's annual funding disbursement is up to \$10,000 depending upon the previous year's reported program expenditures and CSG-PDSE Learning Disability Reimbursements received; and,
- On August 31st of each year, public post-secondary institutions are required to report information on annual LDAB use to SABC. The reports include information on student identification, study period, assessment cost, etc.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Where do I find SABC forms?

A: Forms for student use can be found here:

<https://studentaidbc.ca/form-library>

Forms for the institutions use can be found here:

<https://studentaidbc.ca/institution-officials>

Q: Does SABC issue T4A tax forms to students?

A: T4A's for all grant programs are issued by the SABC Directed Programs Unit. APSD blocked funded T4A's will be issued by the school. T4A's will be issued to clients who receive funds from the following programs:

- BC Access Grant for Student with Permanent Disability
- BC Access Grant for Deaf Students
- Canada Student Grants for Services and Equipment for Students with Permanent Disabilities
- Supplemental Bursary for Students with Disabilities
- Assistance Programs for Students with Disability for Private Institutions

Q: What happens if a cheque is lost or missing?

A: Cheques will stale date 6-months after the date of issue. If a cheque is lost, missing, or stale dated, please contact dpu.studentfunding@gov.bc.ca

SABC CONTACT INFORMATION

For any questions or inquiries regarding SABC-PD programs or services, please email:

dpu.studentfunding@gov.bc.ca

TABLE 1: APPROVED SERVICES FOR THE CSG-PDSE GRANT AND APSD PROGRAM

Note: Student Aid BC officers have discretion, on a case-by-case basis, to establish maximum admissible costs for education related services and equipment that related to a student’s permanent disability and to circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances may be reviewed on an individual basis.

ELIGIBLE SERVICES

SERVICE	FREQUENCY OF ENTITLEMENT	NOTES
Specialized Tutor	<p>A base of 2 hours per week per course or as otherwise recommended by a student’s assessor or Accessibility Coordinator at the school.</p> <p>The cost depends on the course subject, the level of specialized knowledge required to address cognitive barriers, type of disability, and the qualifications of the specialized tutor.</p>	<p>Specialized tutors should only be approved for courses in which a student has a demonstrated disability.</p> <p>For example, a student with a learning disability in math should not be approved funding for a specialized tutor for courses other than math.</p> <p>Students who require (1) an increase in specialized tutoring hours, or (2) a specialized tutor for courses that they do not have a demonstrated disability in, are required to provide additional medical or specialist (e.g., disability assessor or coordinator) documents noting the reasons for the changes and how the specialized tutor is helping with their disability.</p> <p>A portion of the funding provided for specialized tutors can be allocated to administration fees <i>only if</i> those fees are specific to the provision of the service (e.g., hiring and training of tutors, matching of tutors to students, etc.).</p>
Note Taking		<p>For service providers who take class notes for students with disabilities and who are not otherwise enrolled in the class.</p> <p>If an individual provides support as both a tutor and a note taker, they may charge two separate fees.</p>
Note sharing		<p>For students who share legible notes with the applicant for classes in which they are both enrolled.</p>

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Reader		<p>If reading technology is not available, students with low vision or learning disabilities may be approved funding for reading services for educational material.</p> <p>If an individual provides support as both a tutor or note-taker and a reader, they may charge two separate fees.</p>
Interpreter / captioning / oral sign language / deaf-blind intervenor		<p>For example, American Sign Language (ASL).</p>
Educational Attendant	<p>Number of hours will vary according to the recommendation of the assessor.</p>	<p>Funding is intended to pay for attendant care while at school (for education-related activities) only.</p> <p>Attendant care providers primarily provide physical assistance to students (e.g., help navigating classrooms or using lab equipment).</p> <p>Attendant care providers must be fully certified according to their provincial/territorial regulatory body.</p> <p>If an individual provides support as both a tutor/reader/note-taker and an educational attendant, additional rates may be considered.</p>
Behavioural Interventionist	<p>Number of hours will vary according to the recommendation of the assessor.</p>	<p>Funding is intended to pay for behaviour intervention while at school (for education-related activities) only.</p> <p>Interventionists primarily work with students with Autism Spectrum Disorder to facilitate communication and positive behaviour.</p> <p>Interventionists must be fully certified according to their provincial/regulatory body.</p> <p>If an individual provides support as both a tutor/reader/note-taker and a behavioural interventionist, additional rates may be considered.</p>
<p>Alternative Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-Text • Large Print or Braille • Taped lectures 	<p>Once from initial print format.</p>	<p>Some schools cover the costs of alternative formats as part of their duty to accommodate.</p> <p>If, however, a student’s school does not cover these costs, funding should be approved.</p>

TABLE 1: APPROVED SERVICES FOR THE CSG-PDSE GRANT AND APSD PROGRAM

<p>(if available through the school)</p>		<p>Textbooks are scanned into electronic format (e-text) for reading. The e-text can also be converted into digital audio files for listening.</p> <p>For reading difficulties, the most popular programs used are Kurzweil, Wynn, TextHelp, and Read: Out Loud.</p> <p>For visual impairments, the most popular programs are JAWS, Window Eyes, Zoomtext, and Kurzweil.</p> <p>Institutions may charge to have textbooks scanned into the required file format for students to use on their computers and/or digital media players.</p>
<p>Specialized transportation</p>	<p>Transport to the school address from the student's place of residence only.</p>	<p>Additional stops, including for co-op work terms and internships, should not be considered.</p>
<p>Academic strategy sessions</p>	<p>A base of 10 hours per term or as otherwise recommended by a student's assessor or Accessibility Coordinator at the school.</p>	<p>This service would be for students with learning disabilities, ADHD, and/or other mental health disabilities. ADHD coaching is a different service and is not eligible for funding.</p> <p>Funding should only be provided if the student's school does not provide academic strategists.</p> <p>It is recommended that the service provider's credentials include a teaching degree in special education.</p> <p>Students who require an increase in academic strategist hours are required to provide additional medical or specialist (e.g., disability assessor or coordinator) documents noting the reasons for this need and how the academic strategist is helping with their disability in the post-secondary environment.</p> <p>Group strategy sessions may be approved if specific rationale is provided as to how the session will address the student's identified functional limitation (e.g., time management, exam preparation).</p> <p>Academic strategists determine and implement</p>

TABLE 1: APPROVED SERVICES FOR THE CSG-PDSE GRANT AND APSD PROGRAM

		appropriate academic accommodations and help students develop key study skills (organization and note-taking, memory, vocational direction, interpersonal dynamics, and time management) to promote academic success.
Psychoeducational assessment		<p>Only students with learning disabilities are required to provide a psychoeducational assessment as proof of their permanent disability.</p> <p>Students are required to pay for their psychoeducational assessment upfront, and are only eligible for reimbursement once a permanent learning disability is confirmed.</p>

ELIGIBLE EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT CATEGORY	FREQUENCY OF ENTITLEMENT	NOTES
Complete computer systems, including peripheral devices (keyboard, mouse, printer), MS Office 365 (Student Edition), and warranty (if not included).	Once every 4 loan years (upgrade or replacement, whichever is less).	<p>Includes desktops and laptops.</p> <p>If funding is provided for a desktop or laptop, additional funding should not be provided for a tablet or mini-tablet.</p> <p>Computer system purchase price should include a warranty (strongly recommended).</p>
Laptop/tablet carry case	Once every 2 loan years (upgrade or replacement, whichever is less).	
All-in-one Printer (Printer/Scanner/Copier)	One time.	<p>Printers should normally be included as part of a complete computer system; however, if a student</p> <p>(1) already has a computer and only needs a printer, or</p> <p>(2) was previously approved a computer purchase without a printer, then a printer purchase should be approved.</p>
MS Office 365 (Student Edition)	Once every 4 loan years.	MS Office 365 should be included as part of a complete computer system; however, if a student

TABLE 1: APPROVED SERVICES FOR THE CSG-PDSE GRANT AND APSD PROGRAM

		<p>(1) already has a computer and only needs MS Office 365, or</p> <p>(2) was previously approved a computer purchase without MS Office 365, then the software purchase should be approved. This software includes automatic updates for four years.</p>
Operating System	Once every 2 loan years.	All computers should come with an operating system; however, if a student uses (or intends on using) disability assistive software that requires an updated or specialized operating system, then the upgrade should be approved.
Large Screen Monitor (over 19 inches)	One time.	Large screen monitors should only be approved for students with low vision.
TABLETS		
Tablet or mini-tablet and warranty (if not included)	Once every 4 loan years (upgrade or replacement, whichever is less).	<p>Tablets or mini-tablets that run computer software and other applications may be recommended to perform a number of functions, including note-taking, time management, digital recorder, electronic reader, and assistance with oral communication.</p> <p>Tablets or mini-tablets should only be approved if a student has documentation demonstrating that the device is needed to perform multiple functions not performed by any other device (or combination of devices) at a similar cost.</p> <p>Tablet or mini-tablet purchase price should include a warranty (strongly recommended).</p> <p>Note: Only one computer package (i.e., desktop, laptop, tablet or mini-tablet) should be approved.</p>
CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISIONS (CCTVs)		
<p>Examples of stationary CCTVs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optelec • SmartView • MagniLink <p>Examples of portable CCTVs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optelec Traveller • Smartview Pocket 	One time	CCTVs should only be approved for students with limited vision.

TABLE 1: APPROVED SERVICES FOR THE CSG-PDSE GRANT AND APSD PROGRAM

DIGITAL VOICE RECORDERS/SMARTPHONES		
Examples of companies that make digital voice recorders and/or Smartpens include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sony • Olympus • Philips • Livescribe 	One time	To be used for the purpose of recording of class lectures/discussions, or storage of audio text files (e.g., text books).
SPELL CHECKERS		
Examples of spell checkers include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franklin Language Master 		For students who are blind or have low vision and LD students.
BRAILLE PRODUCTS		
Braille portable note taker	Once every 5 loan years (upgrade or replacement, whichever is less)	
Refreshable braille display	Once every 5 loan years (refurbishment or replacement, whichever is less).	Rather than replace their refreshable braille display every 5 years, students should be encouraged to it restored/refurbished. Servicing typically costs the fraction of the cost of a new model.
Braille embosser (printer)	Once every 5 loan years (upgrade or replacement, whichever is less).	
ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES		
FM Systems for use with hearing aids FM Systems for use without hearing aids Noise cancelling headphones Amplified stethoscope	One time	For students who are hard of hearing or have auditory processing disorders.
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PACKAGE		
A variety of assistive technology products (e.g., scan and read, talking dictionary, text	One time plus upgrades every 2 loan years	

TABLE 1: APPROVED SERVICES FOR THE CSG-PDSE GRANT AND APSD PROGRAM

to audio, e-text reader, screen magnification) included in a single package		
OTHER SOFTWARE		
<p>Voice Recognition Software</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dragon Naturally Speaking • iListen 	<p>One time plus upgrades every 2 loan years</p>	<p>Standard version: Speech to text software for individuals who can access the keyboard and mouse.</p> <p>Professional version: Speech to text software for individuals who cannot access the keyboard and mouse. Rationale outlining requirement for professional version must be provided.</p> <p>Medical version: For students in medical programs only. Rational outlining requiring for medical version must be provided.</p>
<p>Audio to text conversion software</p> <p>Digital recorder with Dragon Naturally Speaking bundle</p>	<p>One time</p>	<p>Allows for transfer of voice recorded notes to computer for conversion to text.</p>
<p>Screen Reading Software</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JAWs • COBRA • HAL 	<p>One time plus upgrades every 2 loan years</p>	
<p>Screen Magnification Software</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZoomText • SuperNova • MAGic 	<p>One time plus upgrades every 2 loan years</p>	
<p>Text to Speech Software</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kurzweil 1000 • OpenBook • ClaroRead • Kurzweil 3000/firefly • WYNN 	<p>One time plus upgrades every 2 loan years</p>	
<p>Assistive writing software</p>	<p>One time plus upgrades every 2 loan</p>	<p>Most include word prediction, dictionary spell check, and text-to speech.</p>

TABLE 1: APPROVED SERVICES FOR THE CSG-PDSE GRANT AND APSD PROGRAM

<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TextHelp • WordQ / SpeakQ • Write: OutLoud • Co:Writer 	<p>years</p>	
<p>Organizational/mapping software</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspiration • Draft Builder • Spark Learner 	<p>One time plus upgrades every 2 loan years</p>	<p>Brainstorm mapping, outline building, writing process.</p>
<p>Smartphone applications</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DyslexiaKey • Ghotit Real Writer 	<p>One time plus upgrades as necessary</p>	<p>Must include a description of the application and how it relates to a student’s permanent disability.</p> <p>Some smartphone applications limit user access to one year, after which the subscription must be renewed (typically to upgraded software).</p> <p>Requests for renewal should be automatically approved; the student is not required to re-submit a description of the application and how it relates to their permanent disability.</p> <p>Note: Funding is not provided to cover the costs of purchasing a smartphone or of data usage/contracts.</p>