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## Survey of Selected ARL Member Contributions to the Federal Depository Library Program

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To gauge the investments that Association of Research Libraries (ARL) depository libraries make in providing access to government information, ARL conducted a survey of its U.S. depository members this past January. Respondents included both regional depository libraries (those required by law to collect and maintain permanently all non-classified government information available via the depository program) and selective depository libraries (those libraries selecting only those resources of interest to their community of users). The survey confirmed that each ARL participating institution makes significant contributions in personnel, equipment, facilities, and resources (including resources purchased beyond those provided by GPO such as commercial online services) to ensure that citizens across the United States have effective access to Federal information resources. The survey found that:

- Each regional library invested approximately \$306,000, and each selective institution provided an estimated \$280,000 in FY 1991-92 in support of the Federal Depository Library Program. These figures do not include facilities management, overhead, or storage costs. The FY 1991-92 figures are consistent with earlier data collected minus the facilities management, storage, and overhead costs.

The survey was designed to provide a snapshot of the resources that ARL depository libraries invest and the costs they incur in receiving, maintaining, providing access to, and preserving Federal information resources. Furthermore, the survey gathered data from participating libraries concerning use of the collection.

I note that 22 of the 53 regional depository libraries are ARL institutions and that data for 20 of those libraries are reported in this survey. And as you all know, regional libraries are required by law to collect, maintain permanently, and provide access to all government information products and services available via the GPO program. The survey found that of the average \$306,000 annual expenditure by each ARL regional library:

- approximately \$113,000 was spent in professional staff costs and \$99,000 in non-professional staff including student assistants;
- approximately \$58,000 was spent to support commercial electronic products and services such as Legi-Slate and MARCIVE;
- another \$19,000 was spent for microforms equipment; \$8,000 for collection maintenance and processing equipment; and \$9,000 for electronic products and services equipment to support access to services such as the Electronic Bulletin Board from the Department of Commerce, Internet access, and to numerous government-generated CD-ROMs.

Statistics on use of the collections indicate that each ARL regional library:

- answered on average well over 26,000 reference questions and circulated over 19,000 items to other libraries in their states. Five libraries reported circulating an average of 45,000 items per year.

Costs and levels of service among ARL selective depositories was only slightly less than among ARL regionals, presumably because, on average, the acquisition rate for ARL selective depository libraries is 70% of the material offered through the program. As noted earlier, the survey found that in FY 1991-92 each ARL selective depository spent an estimated \$280,000 in support of the Federal Depository Library Program. Of that expenditure:

- about 70% (\$201,000) was invested in staff.
- 16% was spent on commercial electronic products and services.
- and the remaining 14% was spent on microforms equipment; collection processing, and maintenance; electronic products and services equipment, to support access to services such as the Electronic Bulletin Board from the Department of Commerce, Internet access, and numerous government-generated CD-ROMs.
- Use of collection statistics reveal that ARL selectives answered well over 25,000 reference questions and circulated over 20,000 items to users. Ten of the selective ARL libraries responding averaged over 51,000 items circulated in FY 1991-92.

When you add, subtract, multiply and divide all of these numbers, they indicate that over all, ARL depositories invested an estimated \$26,500,000 in FY 1991-92 in their depository library operations. Interestingly enough, this is almost an identical sum spent by the Federal government on the entire Depository Library Program -- and the Federal figures include overhead cost, the ARL figures do not.

When you add in the expenditures of all other depository libraries with those of ARL libraries, it quickly becomes apparent that state and local government, colleges and universities, and other entities funding depository libraries assume a considerable portion of the financial responsibilities associated with providing public access to Federal information.

A second point of note is that these figures suggest that ARL depository libraries spent about 20% of their budgets on electronic products, services, and equipment. Undoubtedly, as more Federal information migrates into electronics this percentage will only increase. The implication is that depository libraries are positioning themselves to accommodate electronic information products and services -- assuming that information is made available to them through the Depository Library Program.