

**Remarks from the
Managing Director, Library Business Unit
Richard G. Davis**



**Fall Federal Depository Library
Conference and DLC Meeting
Arlington, Virginia
October 19, 2009**

Good Morning,

First, I want to welcome you to the Fall 2009 Federal Depository Library Conference and Depository Library Council Meeting.

As I always like to reiterate, throughout the meeting, I want to encourage you to approach me or any member of our staff and talk with us about any of the important initiatives underway at GPO. I am always available for questions or comments, and if you think of any after you return home, you can always e-mail me directly at rdavis@gpo.gov.

I also want to take an opportunity to welcome our new Council members.

- James Jacobs from Stanford University
- Jill Morierarty from the University of Utah.
- Dan O’Mahony from Brown University.
- Ann Sanders from the Michigan Department of Education.
- Camilla Tubbs from Yale University

We are delighted to have you on Council. All of our new council members get to go through a two-day “boot camp” as we call it at GPO before they arrive here, and I hope that experience proved valuable for each of you as well.

At this year’s Spring Depository Library Council Meeting in Tampa, Florida, the Depository Library Council put forth a set of recommendations for GPO, and our Council Chair has asked that I take some time to mention those recommendations and GPO’s response to them at a strategic level. This will help set the stage for the remainder of the conference, which we have set up to discuss these in much more detail with GPO staff throughout the sessions.

Recommendation #1: New Models for the FDLP

“To meet the goals of providing no fee, permanent public access to government information, Council recommends that GPO seek funding to hire an outside consultant to deliver a range

of models on how libraries can better provide government information to the public in the 21st century for consideration by Council. This consultant report will reconsider the operations of the FDLP in the context of the electronic age and possible future technologies. This reconsideration will address how best to maintain and utilize tangible legacy collections and U.S. government digital assets to best meet the information needs of the American public.”

In your packet, it is noted that funds were not made available to GPO as part of the recent Omnibus appropriation to use for this purpose. But the good news, and an update, is that we did just receive funding requested as part of our FY 2010 appropriation to support this council request. GPO and council will now need to work together, based upon feedback from this conference, on a spend plan that GPO can submit to our oversight committee, the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP), to pursue next steps. Additionally, I think that the Ithaka S+R interim summary report that was recently released should be discussed during this conference as a building block towards this consultant initiative.

Recommendation #2: Collaborative Digitization Projects

“Council further recommends that GPO maintain a list of libraries volunteering to participate in collaborative digitization projects according to GPO standards and that GPO take the lead in coordinating these projects.”

As Bob has already discussed, GPO has been working with the library community, other Federal agencies, and the public on a national digitization project with the goal of digitizing all retrospective federal publications back to the earliest days of the Federal Government. The objective is to ensure that the digital collection is available, in the public domain, for no-fee permanent public access through the FDLP. The goal of the project will ensure that the collection is digitally reformatted for both preservation and access purposes.

As a result of the non-award of the digitization contract GPO was seeking to do at no-cost to the government, and the fact that the one bid we received was withdrawn from further consideration, we are developing new alternatives. I think it is important that we not in any way give up on this.

In recent days, something very interesting has happened. In our FY 2010 budget, GPO received funding associated with digitization. \$500,000 dollars, in fact. When the budget request was submitted months ago, it was our hope that funds would be approved to complement an award of the contract to complete the digitization of miscellaneous materials not covered in the contract, and also for transporting materials for digitization. Again, working with Council, we need to request JCP approval on a spend plan for how we can actually make use of these funds for digitization now—and I am looking for flexible creativity. We are also discussing having an industry day to gauge further interest in this, perhaps leading to another procurement. An industry day will enable us to dialogue on some of the issues raised in discussions as we were seeking approval of this process in recent months, pertaining to handling personally identifiable information, standards for digitization, and processing of content in FDSys as part of our authentication standards. We will also invite library participation into this process, which will enable further evaluation of potential partnership agreements on digitization that we have some recent inquiries and interest expressed on.

Recommendation #3: State-Based Grant Program for Digitization

“Council further recommends that to encourage collaborative digitization projects, GPO request funding for a state-based grant program for depository libraries to fulfill the goal of digitizing the legacy collection.”

Unfortunately, GPO does not have the authority to provide a state-based program for funding digitization efforts. GPO’s General Counsel’s Office investigated the possibility of entering into a partnership with another Federal agency that has the capability to provide grants. It was determined that no legal authority exists for GPO to enter into such partnerships. The General Counsel further concluded that expending appropriated funds on digitization would require formal contracts, which would go through the normal competitive bidding process.

Though unable to provide grants for digitization projects, GPO continues to proactively encourage collaboration on digitization projects. In July we released a focused request for the FDLP community to create entries for their digitization initiatives in the Registry of U.S. Government Publications Digitization Projects. We would like your feedback during this conference on what is needed to improve this registry and better promote it beyond actions we have already taken.

Recommendation #4: Disposal Process

“Council further recommends that GPO report at the Fall 2009 meeting on best practices for the streamlining of the disposal process.”

Our working group is taking a two-pronged approach to address the disposition of depository materials and Needs & Offers (N&O) processes:

1. Best Practices and Education

We collected and compiled all the current discard procedures from regional depository librarians. A presentation will be made today at 4pm. The intent of the presentation is to clarify any misunderstandings of what is required or is not required of depository libraries in the disposition of materials process. In doing this we also hope to spark ideas for discussion and streamlining this process in the various depository library regions.

After the meeting this information will be made available on the FDLP Desktop. Additionally, an OPAL session will be planned so this information can be shared, in an interactive fashion, with those who cannot be at the Council meeting.

2. Develop an automated tool to streamline the N&O process

We also support the development of an automated tool for streamlining the needs and offers process. Additionally, suggestions for and discussion about desired features of the tool were solicited through the FDLP Community site. Part of the presentation this afternoon will be devoted to obtaining additional ideas and suggestions. The feedback provided to us is very important as it will be used to develop the requirements document for the tool.

In early August a discussion forum was established on the FDLP Community site to obtain comments and suggestions from the depository library community on both of these paths.

I want to encourage you to use of this forum. We want to have an end result that is most useful to you in terms of user requirements, and we cannot do this without your input.

Recommendation #5: Retooling the Item Selection System

“Council further recommends that GPO retool the current depository library item selection system. This should allow for the following: (1) greater granularity of item numbers assigned to different formats of the same titles or series (i.e., every format available for distribution would have its own unique item number, so depositories could select only desired formats); (2) the ability to select (EL) only item numbers without risking receiving unwanted tangible publications; (3) a thorough revision of List of Classes removing all item numbers for titles and formats no longer distributed; (4) the ability to receive only specified formats of “general publications”.

In order to accomplish this effectively, we must move off the legacy mainframe application (DDIS), which does not have the flexibility needed to meet the current selection needs of the depository community. At present GPO is writing a requirements document for the DDIS replacement, and we also have approved FY 2010 funds now to do this. We want you to review item selection white papers with fresh eyes and provide us with input on alternatives and recommendations for item selection mechanisms that will factor into these requirements.

In the meantime, to address concerns we are:

- Providing selectivity of online materials by removing them from tangible product item numbers and creating their own item numbers where possible;
- Continuing routine clean up work on the *List of Classes*;
- Changing workflows for maintaining the *List of Classes* so they are more systematic so GPO can realize business process improvements and efficiencies.

There will be a session tomorrow morning at 10:30am devoted to this issue.

Recommendation #6: Public Access Assessments

“Council further recommends that GPO continue implementation of the new model of Public Access Assessments, including site visits when appropriate.”

Recent Public Access Assessment (PAA) activities include:

- GPO is doing assessments based in part on biennial survey data. Additionally, any library can request an assessment at any time.
- We are in the process of adding two additional assessment librarians to assist with PAA and other consultative services. This will literally double our staff size. The job announcement closed, and we are awaiting a list of qualified candidates to make selections.
- We are visiting libraries in coordination with depository meetings, presentations, and other events. These informal visits are another opportunity to share best practices and consult with depository librarians.
- To highlight activities, the PAA page on the FDLP Desktop was reworked and now includes the PAA Project Summary.

- A new Web page highlighting outreach activity is also now available. FDLP on the Go is a listing of places and events where LSCM staff have visited or participated in programs.
- Four Self-Study modules have been drafted and are available for use by depository coordinators from the Tutorials section of the FDLP Desktop. While the Self-Study is completely separate from PAA reviews, it is extremely helpful for new coordinators and others interested in the depository operation to learn more about the FDLP and a Federal depository collection.

Recommendation #7: Quality Control

“Council further recommends that GPO improve quality control in the following three areas: (1) classification, (2) cataloging, and (3) tangible distribution.”

We have developed a large project team under Laurie Hall and Robin Haun-Mohamed to address quality control issues in classification, cataloging, and distribution (both paper and microfiche). There are four main goals for improving quality control in all three specific areas:

1. Implement quality control checks,
2. Conduct an assessment of types of errors reported through askGPO from March 2009 through June 2009,
3. Identify staff training needs, and
4. Maintain statistics on the number of askGPO questions received in these areas.

As of the end of September 30, 2009, the following tasks have been completed:

- An assessment of questions received through askGPO in categories related to classification, cataloging, and distribution (both paper and microfiche) was conducted in order to identify the types of errors being reported and training needs;
- Work with GPO’s Quality Assurance unit to develop an ongoing quality assurance plan for cataloging;
- Staff conducted 100% quality control checks of classification of tangible publications from June 2009 through September 2009; an ongoing quality assurance plan for classification is being developed;
- Depository Distribution implemented four new quality control checks into their daily workflow;
- A project to review and remove duplicate bibliographic records from the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) was begun in June and is ongoing; and
- Additional training was also held for staff who create brief bibliographic records in the CGP to help improve the quality of their work.

Budget Matters

GPO received appropriations through the Omnibus Appropriations Act for 2009 for several items of note. All of the contracts for these items were awarded by the deadline date of September 30, 2009 by GPO.

1. Data Storage

The expenditure of funds was made to provide for more data storage of FDLP content to further our goal as serving as a repository to help ensure permanent public access to federal government publications within scope of the FDLP.

2. Educational Instruction Modules For Depository Libraries

The expenditure of funds was made to provide specialized FDLP online educational program modules, to supplement external outreach, assessments, and other on-site visits.

3. Systems Modernization

The expenditure of funds was also made to address our conveyor system and case sealer issues in depository distribution, which were antiquated and could no longer be supported by service contracts. This will aid in the continuation of depository shipments.

4. Cataloging and Indexing

The expenditure of funds was made to assist with work in the Cataloging and Indexing part of Library Technical Information Services, with the goal of increasing the production of cataloging records and growing the Catalog of Government Publications. Specifically, this includes work for the further creation of bibliographic records for the historic shelflist and the automatic distribution of bibliographic records from the CGP to federal depository libraries.

Looking ahead, as I previously mentioned, we have received additional funding from the FY 2010 appropriations, and are going to submit a spend plan to JCP for approval on these initiatives.

These include digitization and legacy system migration of course, but also continuation of work on Cataloging and Indexing to increase record production, data storage, the consultant and other activities.

I want to encourage council in considering recommendations for this conference, to think about priority implementations for funds GPO has received already based on prior recommendations, and the need to work together on spend plans for those funds. Likewise, I am requesting that council advise GPO on recommendations for priorities for the FY 11 budget submission, that needs to be in draft by mid-November.

Upcoming Events

I'd like to remind you of GPO's next important event. GPO's Spring 2010 Depository Library Council Meeting will be held April 26-28 in Buffalo, New York.

I want to thank you all for your time today and for your continued dedication to Government documents.

I will now turn the program back over to Bob Tapella to announce our library of the year award winner. We will also celebrate this at our 3:30 p.m. break today.