

# Resources on Costs of Replacing a Federal Document Depository Library Collection

## A. Specific examples

1. "Valuation of Government Documents/Maps Collection," email message from Michael Cotter, East Carolina University, 4/22/99

Cotter calculated a figure of \$18 for bound documents (average price of items for sale from GPO bookstore was then \$13 but did not include historical items that are out of print or which may be reprinted commercially); \$10 per map; \$ .25 per fiche (duplicating cost, not purchase cost); \$19 per CD-ROM (averaged from 20 representative titles); \$34 per reel of National Archives films and \$50 per reel for other films). He then multiplied the number of each type of item in his depository's collection by the average prices for each. He used the 1998 Price List of Congressional Information Service, Inc. to estimate his institution's cost for commercially produced microfilm or microfiche of Congressional hearings, U.S. Executive Branch Documents, Statutes at Large, Congressional Record, U.S. Census, and similar publications. He also noted that the replacement cost of some items in paper, such as the Statutes at Large since 1923, did not figure in the replacement for bound volumes because if his depository were to lose the volumes, they would be replaced with microfiche instead of the bound volumes.

2. "Replacement value of documents collections," email message from Mary Fetzer, 4/1/99. Refers to Sandy Faull's January 1980 Documents to the People report of a small group of Government Documents Round Table (GODORT) members. Pp. 37-38 of the article describe how several sample collections were examined for the value of merely one year's receipts, plus an alternative method of taking number of documents received on deposit for a given year multiplied by the average per copy printing cost for a publication shipped (using a figure supplied at that time by the Superintendent of Documents).

A formula used by another respondent in the 1970s was to take a sampling of prices in the Publications Reference File (PRF) to get a cost per page estimate. Pages per inch were then calculated and multiplied by the linear length of the collection.

A third respondent used the Congressional Information Service price list to come up with replacement costs for those segments of the collection which CIS made available. Additional calculations were made for microfilm reels purchased from the National Archives and Records Service (NARS) at the cost of \$34/ reel.

3. "Value of Depository Collection," email message from Jim Vileta, University of Minnesota, Duluth, 10/25/93. Used the publication "New Books, Publications for Sale by the Government Printing Office" to compute average prices for paper documents. Indicated that, in the past, it was "commonly agreed" that \$100,000 was the average value for a full depository's collection. Suggested using \$12.34 (average paper document price for 1992/93) and multiplying by number of items in a selective depository's collection to arrive at value. [ Note: This recent update from Joe McClane, Chief, Bibliographic Systems, of GPO's Sales Management Division - " [ GPO's ] Tech Support says the average price per document in FY 2000 is \$15.13 This figure is based on publications and individual issues of subscriptions. The figure comes from Tech Support . . . The average price is derived from the statistics from the Superintendent of Documents Bluebook on the Sales Program and they are consistent with previous estimates given.

The usual caveats apply: This is the average for the SALES PROGRAM not the Depository Program. The figure includes individual issues of subscriptions rather than the entire subscription run price. There are many ways to count our sales publications. Also, this is a general average and due to anomalies in pricing and counting sales publications, it is not as precise as we would like. But, it our official estimate. "

4. "Value of spatial data holdings," email message from Barbara Levergood, University of North

Carolina, 1/30/01. Includes resources that sender identified as containing files that can be used in a GIS (with ArcView, MapInfo, Arc/Info, ERDAS Imagine, etc.). List of her institution's holdings includes the estimated value of each (based on current or actual selling price). Federal Depository Library holdings account for \$18,462 and are also broken down by title.

5. "Cost of replacing 'essential titles'", email message from Sharon M. Partridge, Jefferson County Public Library, Lakewood, CO, 12/26/00 (calculation performed in 1998)
6. "Cost Figures—Basic Government Documents for Law Libraries." Source "The Federal Depository Program in Law Libraries: Status Symbol or Essential Service?" 1995 Annual Meeting, American Association of Law Libraries, Pittsburgh, PA. Compiled by Susan Tulis.

**A. General information**

1. U.S. Government Subscriptions Catalog [https://orders.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/sale/subscriptions/index.html](https://orders.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/sale/subscriptions/index.html)
2. GPO Subject Bibliographies [https://orders.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/sale/sb/about.html](https://orders.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/sale/sb/about.html)
3. "Prices of U.S. and Foreign Published Materials," by Sharon G. Sullivan (Chair, ALA ALCTS Library Materials Price Index Committee). The Bowker Annual 2001. Latest version of an article feature which provides price indexes and percentage changes for trade publications. Useful to apply as an inflationary factor even though not specifically for government documents.
4. American Libraries. May issues include updated information on U.S. Periodical Prices and U.S. Serial Services. Again, not government documents but gives an idea of inflation rates.
5. Commercial publishers. Catalogs and price lists from publishers selling reprints, microforms, or electronic versions of U.S. government information.

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Mary Redmond, Council member, October 2001