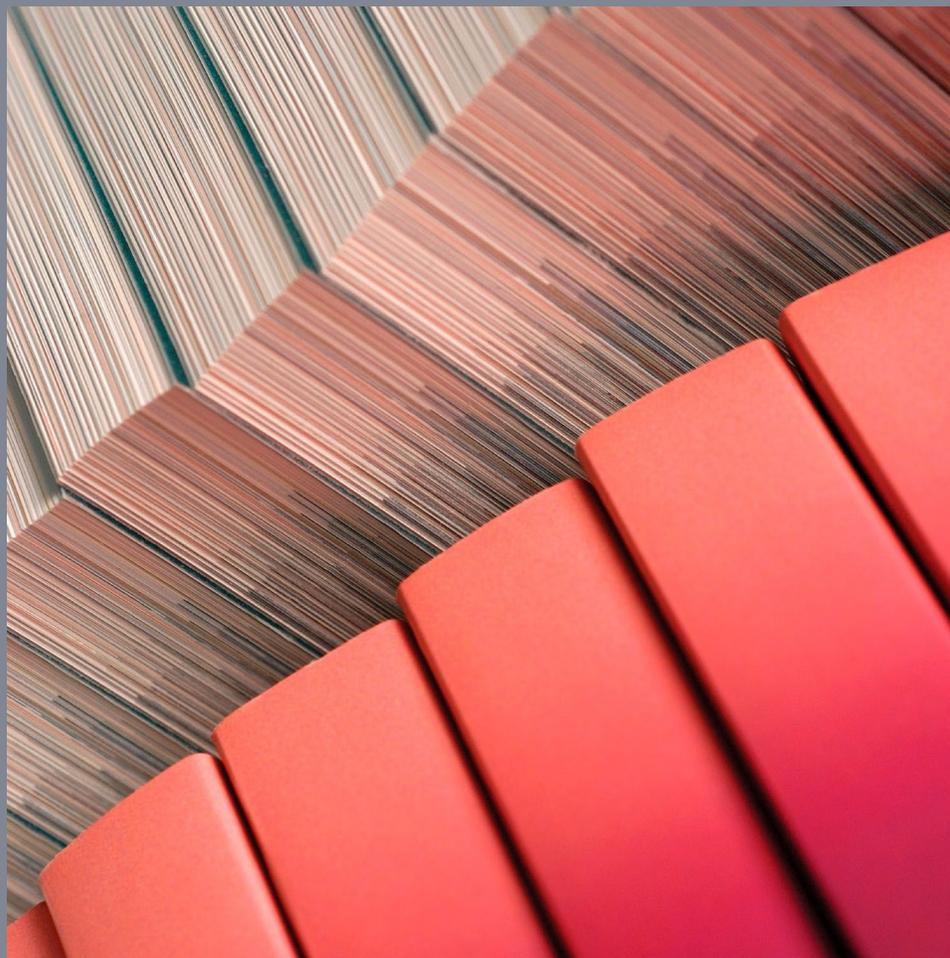


Recommendations & Commendations of  
the Depository Library Council  
to the GPO Director  
& GPO Responses, Spring 2019



FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM

<http://www.fdlp.gov>

## INTRODUCTION

This document presents the recommendations and commendations of the Depository Library Council to the GPO Director from the Spring 2019 Depository Library Council Virtual Meeting and GPO's responses.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS & COMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY COUNCIL TO THE GPO DIRECTOR AND RESPONSES FROM GPO, SPRING 2019**

### **Recommendation #1:**

**When H.R. 5305, the FDLP Modernization Act of 2018, was introduced in the 115th Congress, the requirement for conducting the Biennial Survey, or any provision to require assessment of depository libraries, was lacking. It is the sense, and recommendation, of the Depository Library Council that polling of the federal depository libraries should continue, preferably through the existing Biennial Survey process.**

**Furthermore, we recommend that GPO enforce consistency between surveys by maintaining a core group of questions which appear in every new survey and remain unchanged. Continuity between surveys is needed to analyze change over time. Repetition of identical question language and multiple choice answers allows for such an analysis. Questions retained in the core group should be chosen based on their value to change-over-time analyses**

### **Justification:**

The Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries is the means by which depository libraries periodically report their conditions to the Government Publishing Office. Periodic assessment of the condition of depository libraries is essential for the Superintendent of Documents and the Government Publishing Office to continue to support successfully depository libraries and for depository libraries to evaluate their own services. Administered in odd numbered years, all depositories are required by law to respond to the survey. The results provide GPO with a wealth of knowledge about libraries, their administration, and collections. In addition, the surveys help regional libraries better understand selective depositories in their area, and it contributes to training development. One of the most valuable results of the survey is the ability to identify trends and common issues or needs.

### **GPO Response:**

Since 1947, GPO's Library Services & Content Management (LSCM) has used the Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries as a tool for depositories to meet their legal obligation under Title 44 USC §1909 to "report to the Superintendent of Documents at least every two years concerning their condition." Surveying has been an effective mechanism, along with onsite assessment and self-reporting, for determining conditions and seeing trends in depository libraries. The statute provides flexibility in reporting and investigation mechanisms, allowing change as necessary.

Currently, LSCM plans to continue use of the Biennial Survey, paired with other assessment methods, as it is the mechanism where Federal depository libraries self-report and provide direct feedback to GPO. Because the Biennial Survey has been conducted for many years and the questions have varied over time, longitudinal analysis can be a challenge. LSCM will strive to develop a core group of questions suitable for longitudinal analysis, but will continue to modify the survey questions as needed to best suit the current environment and apply other assessment methods to obtain quality data that can be used to assess and improve depository libraries and the FDLP.

## **Recommendation #2:**

The Depository Library Council recommends that GPO continue to provide guidance to and develop requirements for digital only depository libraries, to include the customer service model for that type of library. In addition, Council recommends that each digital only depository adopt the following best practices:

- **Display the FDLP Logo on the library’s website and on each page which references federal government documents.**
- **Provide links to the following [basic collection](#) resources, with clear instructions on how to access each title on the library website, and maintain regularly:**
  - [Budget of the United States Government](#)
  - [Catalog of U.S. Government Publications](#)
  - [Code of Federal Regulations](#)
  - [Congressional Directory](#)
  - [Congressional Record](#) (daily)
  - [Federal Register](#) (daily)
  - [govinfo](#)
  - [Statistical Abstract of the United States](#)
  - [United States Code](#)
- **Display the name, title, phone number, email and address of a contact person for the digital depository on the library’s web page.**
- **Maintain the same level of policies, staff training, provision of reference services, and promotion of services as required of all FDLP libraries.**

## **Justification:**

With increasing interest in digital only depositories and with more depository libraries opting for fewer tangible items and more resources in electronic format, Council believes it is vital that GPO provide guidance for these libraries.

## **GPO Response:**

LSCM’s approach to digital depository libraries is evolving to better meet the changing needs of nationwide Federal depository libraries. Recognizing that one size does not fit all, one of LSCM’s main objectives is to support FDLP libraries by offering the flexibility that is needed to best serve local communities and patrons. For some libraries, this means more tangible publications; for some it means all digital publications. Since each library has unique opportunities and challenges, LSCM’s aim is to help each library tailor their collections to their individual needs, space, staff, and patrons.

With this in mind, LSCM is in the process of updating existing guidance for libraries related to selection and has recently offered a new method for libraries to select tangible materials called “Special Opportunities to Select.” In addition, staff in LSCM are developing informational materials regarding flexibility in depository collections and determining how to best make these resources more visible and accessible. LSCM is also working to develop best practices for library consultations related to collection flexibility.

That said, best practices such as displaying FDLP logos and contact information on library websites, providing and maintaining links to the basic collection and other Federal resources, and maintaining an excellent level of customer service and access to resources, regardless of collection size and format, will continue to appear in FDLP guidance and be communicated by LSCM staff. LSCM will ensure that the DLC and the community are informed and given opportunities to provide feedback as we explore new and better ways to serve and manage the FDLP in the digital environment.

**Commendation:**

**The Depository Library Council commends the Government Publishing Office (GPO), particularly Lisa Russell, Melissa Fairfield, and other contributing staff, for making a concerted effort to gather user feedback throughout the rollout phase of the FDLP eXchange; provide detailed documentation and guidance, including the helpful Tip of the Week; and conduct focused in-person and virtual training for individuals as well as the larger community. The Council also commends the GPO for their continued focus on improving the eXchange platform, particularly through the virtual discussions as they have allowed the depository community a chance to come together around common issues and topics and to hear about upcoming improvements and fixes.**

**GPO Response:**

The Superintendent of Documents and LSCM staff sincerely thank the Council for their complimentary commendation and echo the thanks and appreciation for the dedicated FDLP eXchange team.