



DARTS Pilot Project Final Summary

August 31, 2011

BACKGROUND

Both the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) and the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) have information collection and dissemination to the public as part of their mission. NTIS, however, is exempt from Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) obligations by the provisions of Title 44, United States Code, §1903 because its products and services "must necessarily be sold in order to be self-sustaining." NTIS receives no appropriations and operates under a cost recovery/self-sustaining business model.

NTIS maintains a permanent collection of approximately three million scientific and technical reports that are produced by or for Government agencies and that are useful to U.S. researchers, and business and industry. Many of these resources have not been made available through the FDLP. In the spirit of the shared public access missions of the agencies, there was joint interest in exploring how NTIS could participate in the FDLP through a pilot project by providing access to its electronic content.

THE PILOT PROJECT

At the October 2006 Federal Depository Library Conference the NTIS Director announced that GPO and NTIS were planning a pilot project for launch at the beginning of 2007. The pilot project included access to bibliographic records for approximately 240,000 publications from 1964-2000 from the Automated Document Storage and Retrieval (ADSTAR) system. Depository libraries were able to download at no charge the electronic documents for which links were available, and they could purchase tangible copies from NTIS. Participation was open to all depository libraries, but required submission of a verification form signed by the library director.

Though the pilot, known as DARTS (Depository Access to Reports Scientific and Technical), was to run for a year, from February 2007 to February 2008, depository library access to DARTS was extended with the hope of offsetting operating and maintenance costs from the purchase of these reports and other product revenue. With 400 depository libraries providing access to DARTS to their users, coupled with the recent 2011 migration of the National Technical Report Library to a new platform, it became clear that NTIS could no longer maintain the DARTS server, provide Federal depository libraries free access, and continue to be self-sustaining.

CONCLUSION

NTIS has decided to no longer maintain the server on which DARTS resides. The new platform, used for the National Technical Report Library (NTRL), cannot accommodate free FDLP access to scientific and technical reports and still allow NTIS to be self-sustaining and in compliance with their authorizing legislation. For this reason, the DARTS Pilot Project between NTIS and the FDLP will end September 30, 2011. FDLP item 0188-A-18 and class C 51.22/2: will be removed from the *List of Classes of United States Government Publications Available for Selection by Depository Libraries*.