

FDLP Tangible Print Publications: Condition Assessment Definitions

As depository library staff look at needs and offers lists they may wonder if a title being offered is in better condition than the one they have. Or libraries may have a needs list that includes titles they are looking for in order to replace a copy they have that is not in the best of condition or even unusable. FDLP eXchange, the national needs and offers tool, has a required field to include the condition of the materials being offered or for those that are needed.

GPO also has referred to collection condition assessments relating to preservation, and as a role for Federal Information Preservation Network (FIPNet) partners. Conducting a condition assessment is the process of gathering and analyzing data about the physical condition of library materials or collections for the purpose of identifying preservation actions and their priority according to collection development policies and practices.

Knowing the physical condition of the publication is vitally important as we look for and need the best copies available for access and preservation of Government information dissemination products.

To ensure consistency in the use of terms that describe the condition of tangible print publications, the LSCM Preservation Librarian developed the definitions for the condition options that are found in FDLP eXchange. These same terms and definitions, found below, will be used in the context of condition statements for the preservation of materials as well.

FINE

The publication looks new. The binding is tight without any sign of wear. The pages show no sign of tears, dirt, mold or marking of any kind. All maps and foldouts are present without any tears. Supplementary material is present, without any sign of wear and housed in the original pockets or enclosures.

GOOD

The publication shows signs of use. The binding may show signs of wear to cover boards, hinges, and spine, but all pages are tightly bound. Binding boards and pages may show signs of having been bumped and bent at the edges (dog eared), but no other damage is present. Maps and foldouts may show wear at the folds, but all information is clearly

legible. All supplementary material is present, but has clearly been used and may have been misfolded when returned to the pockets or enclosures.

FAIR

The publication shows signs of heavy use. Cover boards and spine may be loose, but are still attached. End pages may be loose or missing. The binding boards and pages may be scuffed or show signs of dirt, foxing, or other markings. The spine may be pulled away from the text block at the top. Pages, maps and foldouts may be torn, but all information is still present.

POOR

The binding shows signs of severe wear, such as loose or missing cover boards or missing spine piece. End papers may be loose or missing. The text block is loose within the cover boards. The binding has failed resulting in loose or missing pages. Pages are torn. Pages are brittle and cannot maintain an attachment within the binding. Maps, foldouts, and supplementary material may be torn or missing.