

Security, State Plans, Promotion, and Sales
Remarks by Francis J. Buckley, Jr.
Superintendent of Documents

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Introduction

Good morning, and welcome. I am happy to be here in Mobile today, and I am very pleased to see all of you here too. I would like to begin my remarks in a rather unusual way. I'd like to pay a tribute to one of us, a former documents librarian and, I'd say, citizen activist, Lois Mills. She was also a former member of this Council and a faithful attendee of these meetings both while she was working and after she retired. She passed away in December 2000.

I was privileged to attend a small memorial service for Lois last week as she was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. As the government documents librarian at Western Illinois University, she was renowned for the service she delivered to students, faculty, and the public. But her zeal for public causes, including the right for access to government information, led her to be active in state and local politics and in organizations ranging from the American Library Association, ACLU, and the Freedom to Read Foundation to educational, ecological, and animal rights organizations.

She was a model, not of a modern sergeant-major as Gilbert and Sullivan used the phrase, but of a real-life first-class sergeant in World War II who continued a life of public service as a teacher, school librarian, and university librarian. She was a recipient of the ALA/CIS Documents to the People Award and the GODORT James Bennett Childs Award, for a lifetime of contributions to government documents librarianship. She was a model for all of us to emulate as we work towards improving the Federal Depository Library Program and our delivery of access to government information to the public.

Now I'd like to talk about some of the accomplishments of the Federal Depository Library Program and some of the issues facing us. Federal depository libraries serve an estimated 9.5 million people each year, not counting those who use *GPO Access* outside the libraries. In FY 2001, GPO distributed 5.9 million copies of approximately 14,700 tangible products in print, microform, and CD-ROM formats to depository libraries.

Virtually every depository library also has access to the vast range of information made available online via *GPO Access*. In FY 2001, over 15,200 online titles and over 7,600 links to agency titles were added to *GPO Access*, for a total of well over 22,000 new online titles that year alone. There were 355 million document retrievals from *GPO Access* in FY 2001. All of this equates to a greatly expanded delivery of government information to users.

Information Security Concerns

The goal for the FDLP for many years has been to be as inclusive as possible while operating within our defined scope and principles, to identify public interest materials produced through GPO or agency publishing channels, to provide bibliographic control for the materials, and to provide the publications to depository libraries for public access. Following the events of September 11, our mission has not changed, but agency sensitivity to what should be distributed to the public is heightening.

The struggle to balance such liberties as freedom of speech and the right to know with concerns for public safety and national security is an old one. I would like to share a quotation with you

from the eighteenth-century author and lexicographer, Samuel Johnson: “Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.”

Without free access to knowledge, the integrity of our nation and its citizens would be “weak and useless” indeed. However, recent events have demonstrated just how “dangerous and dreadful” that same knowledge can be when it is not coupled with integrity. We must not make our citizens and fellow agencies weak through lack of knowledge. But we must not put that knowledge into the hands of those who lack integrity, because they are indeed “dangerous and dreadful” if they use sensitive public information for destructive purposes.

The depository program and the sales program have been at the center of some concern about access to unclassified materials which have been distributed but which may be used improperly. Since last September, agencies on their own initiative have been reviewing their titles to determine which are “sensitive,” and which non-classified information the agency had published should be withdrawn in the interest of national security. When and if agencies decide specific titles are “for official use only,” or “for administrative use only,” then that title no longer meets the criteria outlined in Section 1902 of Title 44, and therefore it is no longer in the scope of the program.

To establish general guidelines and criteria for this process, on March 19 of this year, the White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card issued a memorandum to the heads of executive departments and agencies calling for “action to safeguard information regarding weapons of mass destruction and other sensitive documents related to homeland security.”

He transmitted guidance from the NARA Information Security Oversight Office and the Justice Department’s Office of Information and Privacy for “reviewing Government information in your department or agency regarding weapons of mass destruction, as well as other information that could be misused to harm the security of our Nation and the safety of our people.”

He asked all departments and agencies to review their record management procedures and, when appropriate, their holdings of documents to ensure that they are acting in accordance with the guidance. In addition to discussing the extension of classification and reclassification of information “that would assist in the development or use of weapons of mass destruction,” the guidance establishes a new category of “Sensitive but Unclassified Information.”

This category is addressing “sensitive information related to America’s homeland security that might not meet one or more of the standards for classification...” The guidance suggests, “the need to protect such sensitive information from inappropriate disclosure should be carefully considered, on a case-by-case basis, together with the benefits that result from the open and efficient exchange of scientific, technical, and like information.”

But the guidance goes on to say, “All departments and agencies should ensure that in taking necessary and appropriate actions to safeguard sensitive but unclassified information related to America’s homeland security, they process any Freedom of Information request for records containing such information in accordance with the Attorney General’s FOIA Memorandum of October 12, 2001, by giving full and careful consideration to all applicable FOIA exemptions.”

Some agencies are in the process of adopting specific procedures to determine what publications may be released to the public. We'll hear about several of their efforts during this conference.

As you know, since the September 11 attacks, the U.S. Geological Survey CD-ROM entitled *Source Area Characteristics of Large Public Surface-Water Supplies in the Conterminous United States: An Information Resource for Source-Water Assessment, 1999* is the only tangible publication that we have requested be withdrawn from depository libraries.

Concerns have been raised regarding the sensitivity of some technical report titles in depository libraries. Some people have suggested that users of certain collections should be screened. There is no statutory basis, nor is it consistent with the public purpose of the FDLP, to impose access controls or restrictions on particular public documents.

Unless the publishing agencies ask that their titles be withdrawn from depository collections, depository libraries are required to provide full public access to all the depository material. There are no varying levels of access to Government information included in the Federal Depository Library Program; either it is a freely accessible public document, or it is not part of the program.

Security concerns also have great implications in the online environment. Government information on the web in electronic format is widely accessible, heretofore considered a good thing, but now it is being reconsidered.

In response to agency publishing on the web, the FDLP is identifying, pointing to, acquiring, creating metadata for, and in many cases archiving electronic publications from the agencies to provide ongoing free public access to these resources. This move towards a more electronic FDLP, coupled with heightened security awareness, has brought out concerns specific to titles distributed electronically. We are working to provide permanent preservation of and access to the Government information in our electronic collection.

In the print world, it is possible to assume that the document found in a depository library is as it was published, and that it is an official publication of the source agency. With our electronic collection, we must go to great lengths to ensure that all of our electronic titles are, and remain, the official content issued by the publishing agency.

The events of September 11 clearly demonstrate the strong need for redundancy of data storage at remote sites. We are in the process of establishing a geographically separate backup facility and mirror site for *GPO Access*. T.C. Evans will say more about this later.

But the FDLP/EC includes, in addition to the extensive data on GPO servers, pointers to thousands of titles on agency websites. We have addressed the issue of instability of agency site location by our use of Persistent Uniform Resource Locators (PURLs), and by capturing a copy of the online publication at the time of cataloging in a digital archive. If the link to the title is broken, we try to find the current one and redirect the PURL there, or redirect to an archived version if the title is no longer available at the agency site.

Since September 11, we have added one step to this process: before redirecting to our archived version, we must contact the originating agency to determine why the site is no longer available. If the site was removed because the agency deemed it to be sensitive material, then it has moved out of the scope of the program. If the site was removed for other reasons, such as lack of server space, then it remains part of the program and the PURL redirects to our archived version.

Less than 50 agency titles we cataloged and linked to as part of the FDLP/EC have been withdrawn by their originating agencies for a security review. However, we are aware that many more titles have been withdrawn on agency websites, including on some of the partnership sites we link to on GPO Access, such as the DOE/OSTI Information Bridge.

State Planning

Starting over 20 years ago, GPO encouraged depository libraries and state library agencies to work together to develop state plans for the delivery of depository services within their states or service areas. Since then, much has changed in the FDLP and in the way libraries receive and deliver information in general.

Now more than ever, it is essential that depository libraries work together to redefine program relationships, and to develop a support network that places initial reliance on state and regional resources. The transition to the E-FDLP has caused a major re-examination of the roles and responsibilities of GPO, and the regional and selective depositories. Users' expectation of instant gratification and immediate access to all information has put stresses upon traditional library services as well as government information programs in depository libraries.

A state plan is not a requirement of the program, but I believe that when libraries develop state plans, they are better prepared to provide information services to patrons, and the cooperative system it establishes among libraries implements, in a practical sense, the philosophy of the FDLP. State planning is one way that libraries can come together, in the spirit of resource sharing, to come up with ways to help each other, improve service delivery to their users, and stretch limited resources.

Last week I attended a meeting of the depository librarians in Georgia as they reviewed a final draft of a new state plan among themselves and with library directors and the state librarian. The synergy from the dialog there is going to lead to increased outreach activities in a joint effort between depository libraries and the State Library.

Efforts To Publicize and Promote the FDLP

In today's dynamic environment of information access, it is crucial to the future of the FDLP that both the library community and the public at large understand and appreciate its value as an information resource and point of service for everyone.

In response to the need for higher visibility for the program, and in response to a recommendation from the Council, we have drafted a new promotion plan for the FDLP. The

goal of this plan is to increase public awareness of the unique contributions and benefits of Federal depository libraries, especially in this time of increased availability of Government information online. Target audiences for this plan include the general public, business, government, and the library community.

The plan has a proposed campaign theme: *“U.S. Government Information – Make the Connection at a Federal Depository Library.”* The focus will be on free access to the public, the quantity and variety of Government information available in print and electronic formats in depository libraries, and the services provided by depository librarians in finding this information. Print and broadcast public service announcements, news releases and feature articles, and a variety of promotional materials will be used to publicize the campaign. Depository librarians, GPO bookstores and congressional offices will also use the promotional materials. We look forward to your comments regarding this new promotion plan.

Sales Program Update

For those who want to purchase Government publications, many of the titles that we distribute to depository libraries are also available through GPO’s Sales Program. Approximately 9,500 titles are available for sale at any given time, including books, CD-ROMs, and other electronic formats.

Publications are sold principally by mail, telephone, fax, and through our bookstores located in the Washington, DC area and around the country. Publications are also sold through the Consumer Information Center in Pueblo, CO. More than 1,800 sales orders are processed every day. Also, more and more orders are being placed through GPO’s secure Online Bookstore site at: <<http://bookstore.gpo.gov>>. The Online Bookstore’s Sales Product Catalog is searchable by publication title, subject, and keywords. All titles available for sale can be ordered through the Online Bookstore.

Unfortunately, as a result of the public’s increased ability to access Government publications free of charge over the Internet, as well as a reduction in the number of publications produced to sell, the Sales Program has been losing money for several years. Efforts to reduce costs, hold vacancies due to attrition, and raise prices have not been sufficient to keep pace with declining revenues. Many of you are aware that we have closed GPO Bookstores in six locations, and we are now considering closing as many more.

The decision to close locations is based on program performance. Despite increased marketing attempts, these locations have continued to have low sales volumes and do not generate sufficient revenue to recover even direct expenses. Residents of the areas served by these bookstores will not be deprived of access to U.S. Government publications.

Press releases announcing the closings encourage the use of local Federal depository libraries, the Online Bookstore, and telephone ordering via our toll free number.

Conclusion

In the evolutionary development of the FDLP and our distribution programs, we have seen many milestones and many changes, some more welcome than others. However, amid all this change, some things are not changing. The FDLP, *GPO Access*, and our sales program, as well as you and your libraries, remain committed to provide public access to official, public Government information.

I would like to encourage all of you to attend the sessions during the conference for more detailed information about the topics that I have touched on this morning. I want to thank all of you for being here today; I look forward to talking to many of you individually. Enjoy the meeting!